

Fashion & Culture
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Chanel Fall-Winter 2014/15 Ready-to-Wear Show



For this very special show, Chanel turned the Grand Palais in Paris, into a mini supermarket as a runway for the show. All products and objects in the background were custom-made for Chanel, using signature Chanel characteristics, and influenced by a typical supermarket environment.

Being a Ready-To-Wear collection, the concept of a ‘supermarket runway’ is extremely effective, because a supermarket is an everyday and casual setting, so the clothes are viewed as easy-going, comfortable, that can be worn on a daily basis.

In addition, the fact that the runway is on the same level as the crowd instead of being elevated makes the viewer feel as though the clothes are more attainable/approachable, and can possibly feel as though they can apply them to their everyday life.

As mentioned above, these are some of the custom-made details from the supermarket setting:



These are “supermarket products”, all with Chanel logos or details added on top. (Coca-Cola, Ketchup, Spaghettini, etc).



Their signature Chanel bag wrapped up into a typical meat wrapper.



Lastly, the famous Chanel bag chain mixed with leather is used to create a normal and everyday market shopping cart.

The clothes themselves are very comfortable-looking and casual, just like their setting. Most outfits consist of either a jumpsuit, a tracksuit, or sweatpants paired with custom-made sneakers. This appearance is quite surprising for a high-end brand like Chanel, especially the large rips and holes in some of the fabrics.

However, being Chanel, a certain level of elegance, glamor and luxury is expected. So to add these, some noteworthy details are added to all outfits. For instance, most models are wearing either colored leather gloves, or leather pants, and of course, the signature top-quality Chanel fabric is included in pretty much all pieces. In addition, the use of color is very effective in the show. Most pieces are colorful, but even the monotonous-colored outfits, are striking and very detailed. All colors are included in the show; pink, orange, blue, green, yellow, etc. Combined with the colorful supermarket, the show is a visual feast.



Questions

Questions I would ask the designer of this collection, Karl Lagerfeld:

1. Do you believe that casual, everyday clothes are officially becoming a new trend? If so, do you think that they will ever overpower the typical luxurious image that most high-end brands became famous for?
2. How do you plan to move Chanel to the 'casual' trend becoming popular nowadays, whilst also make sure that the clothes remain superior, chic and glamorous, like all Chanel clothes? Do you think this show was a successful approach to this?

Question I would ask the class/anybody viewing the show:

1. Can you imagine yourself wearing these clothes? Do you think that the show's every day and casual atmosphere affects this?
2. Would you actually buy a piece from a collection like this? Do you think that it is worth it to buy such an expensive piece of clothing that looks so casual?
3. Do you think that the everyday setting and approachable casualness to the collection makes the clothes lose their value?

References

The whole background setting of the show reminds me of the work of Photographer *Andreas Gursky*:



Also, the use of leather and ripped holes reminds me of Punk/Rock style. This is a Picture of *Iron Maiden*:



I was actually surprised because after I noticed a similarity to Andreas Gursky's supermarket photographs, I read that Lagerfeld was influenced by those exact photos. I believe that the concept of mass production in Gursky's photograph fit in perfectly with the colorful collection and also made the collection very relevant and applicable to our everyday lives. Furthermore, the abundance of color, details, and patterns provided by the mass of products in a supermarket rack, worked perfectly with the colorful designs of the collection. Overall, this gave the collection a young, fit, and happy aura.

Even though this collection mirrored the casual and more fit lifestyle that has developed in recent years, I believe that Lagerfeld lightly kept the concept of punk/rock by adding either a touch of leather (leather gloves, leather pants, bags, etc) and raggy textures with holes in the designs and outfits.