

Showstoppers

Saint Laurent brings back glamazon, Burberry gets a fresh perspective

POWER PLAY

SAINT LAURENT SS18

"That girl of Saint Laurent – she wants to have fun!" So said Anthony Vaccarello of the woman he envisioned wearing his SS18 collection. But, as it turned out, 'fun' wasn't the half of it. This was a show about power, eroticism and daredevilry – a love letter to liberal Paris and the excess of the 80s. In the crowd, the mood was one of hushed expectation – due in part, perhaps, to the dream-like open air setting beneath the glittering Eiffel Tower, but mostly to the fact that this was Vaccarello's first show since the death of his friend, business partner, and French icon, Pierre Bergé. When the lights went up, what played out was the designer's tribute to his late comrade and the house archive. Models stomped the runway in thigh-grazing boots festooned with dark marabou trim, each look a concoction of extremities: necklines were slashed, hemlines micro-mini, silhouettes voluminous. A sharp-shouldered, all-in-one look worthy of Grace Jones brought an iridescent flash of hummingbird blue to an otherwise largely muted colour palette, its plunging deep-V tapering to a waist-cinching belt. With its hot pant hem and splashes of gold and violet, it epitomises Vaccarello's celebratory, self-referential approach. "Even if it's cliché," he explained, "I want to push the cliché so far it's beautiful."



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FUTURECRAFT

BURBERRY SS18

Christopher Bailey took a more worldly approach for Burberry's SS18 collection, combining the classical cornerstones of the heritage label with a raw, British street style influence. Former east London court, Old Sessions House, served as the backdrop for the show, and provided a fittingly high-low aesthetic of stripped patchwork walls, glimmering chandeliers and a grand staircase. Yes, there were the usual elegant longline trenches and cosy Fair Isle sweaters, but in between were sorbet-coloured anoraks, tech fabric joggers and pink faux fur jackets. Caps were everywhere – rendered in green and red plaid as well as the house check, which was back with a vengeance, seen on turtle-neck minis and hooded macs – and plastic textures were similarly prevalent, appearing on translucent trenches, blouses and pencil skirts. Homespun, craft-like looks, as seen on the likes of new-gen superstar Kaia Gerber, brought a dash of Sunday carboot sale to proceedings, with shaggy knits in contrasting textures layered over one another, snuggly cardis dribbling over-long sleeves. A supersize plaid tote, large enough for dedicated shoppers, rounded off the market girl look. All-in-all, a more honest and eclectic offering from the Royal warranted brand.

