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# Cariatides Couture as Christian Dior prepares for restoration

The art of using artistic references to inspire groundbreaking fashion has rarely been better expressed than in the latest haute couture show of Christian Dior where the underlining theme was the complimentary professions and skills of architecture and fashion.



Christian Dior - Haute  
Couture - Fall/ Winter 2019-  
2020 - Paris - Photo: Dior

Make that Arch-i-couture following the latest memorable show by Dior's couturier [Maria Grazia Chiuri](#) for the house, staged in a set designed by Penny Slinger inside the marque's grand salons on Avenue Montaigne.

Ironically, the show was staged just days before the house begins a massive reconstruction of its historic headquarters on Avenue Montaigne.

The collection harked back to the glory days of Monsieur Dior, and his obsession with black - since three quarters of the looks were in that color. However, this was very much Dior on Chiuri's terms - focusing on a classy take on modern femininity.

She referenced the famed architectural critic Bernard Rudofsky, who saw clothes as creative constructions that imagined entirely new shapes for the human form.



Christian Dior - Haute  
Couture - Fall/ Winter 2019-  
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Chiuri put her atelier through their paces with some stupendous looks, made with exact interior corsetry and extravagant flou dresses. Most tellingly some fantastic Scottish Widow femme fatale flared to the floor dresses in fab combinations of mesh; girandoles of knotted chiffon; chenille; lacquered feathers; intense guipure and woven laces.

"It's respecting and hailing all the great women and muses of the house of Dior," said Chiuri, whose only lament was that she had to stage a second show, due to the restricted space inside the historic Dior salon.

The salons were reinvented brilliantly by Penny Slinger. A giant Jack

and the Beanstalk faux redwood in charcoal creeping up four floors up through the stairway; fabulous black and white paintings and a string quartet in white Grecian robes playing Vivaldi.

“A dress is a work of architecture, conceived to render more sublime the proportions of a woman’s body,” Monsieur Dior was even quoted as saying in the program notes.



Christian Dior - Haute  
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Monsieur, as they refer to him at Dior, would surely have loved the finale. A last passage featuring an exactly proportioned replica corset in gold of 30 Avenue Montaigne, the original building Dior chose after the war to house his couture house.

Where the wrecking ball will move in shortly, and the houses’ flagship boutique will shutter for over a year. In the meanwhile, Dior will open a giant pop-up at 127 Avenue des Champs-Élysées, above which will be senior executive offices.

“I’ll be above the shop with my own key to go down. And we’ll open on Monday, July 15, the morning after Bastille Day,” said CEO Pietro Beccari, in an ebullient mood after an impressive show.

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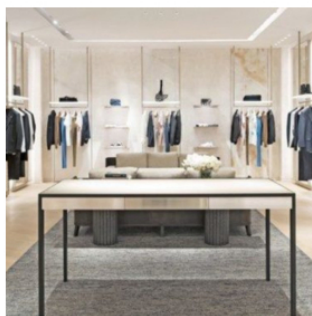
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