



Louis Vuitton: Snakes and ladders chic from Pharrell

Pharrell Williams threw the dice in his latest show for Louis Vuitton, presenting a snakes and ladders collection in a massive fashion and music happening outside the Pompidou Center on Tuesday night.

Godfrey Deeny



A display that started 90 minutes after its scheduled 8 p.m. hour, as a plethora of stars kept arriving - climaxed by cowgirl clad Beyoncé accompanied by a heavily dreadlocked Jay Z.

Which instantly led the 50-piece orchestra to kick off the action with thundering kettle drums and trumpets. Models then appeared, marching along the giant catwalk. Painted in a huge Damier print, each square two meters wide, every second one overprinted with numbers like in the kids' board game.

Marching inside a truly massive set built in the cobblestoned Place Georges Pompidou. Normally, it's a deeply slanted rectangle; this evening it was a perfectly horizontal football field-sized set with bleacher seats done in Vuitton's signature brown.

The front-row was a gridlock of stars: Spike Lee, A\$AP Rocky and Bradley Cooper. Nearby, fellow LVMH designers Nicolas Ghesquière and Jonathan Anderson.

Half the clothes and half the bags finished in naive childish prints of mini elephants, giraffes or hippos.

Though untrained in sartorial skills, Williams sent out scores of suits, many of them impressive, from the snappy pop star double-breasted jackets worn with flared trousers, to the micro blazers and wide pleated pants, very "David Live" album cover in Paris.

Pharrell once again employed his trick of having staff wheel around his latest trunks – in steps and ladders patterns this season. As were dégradé leather and nylon back packs.

For more couture moments, multiple dressing gown coats and one herringbone mink blouson worn by a model carrying a movie camera-shaped logo clutch. Talk about high roller chic. Gamblin' men throughout, one dude even held a carpet bag in his hand.





The music rising to crescendos regularly aided by an impassioned voice choir, as a steady cam operator went into a frenzy on the catwalk.

This marked the fifth show for Vuitton by Pharrell Williams, and his latest mega bash. This time outside one of the world's most visited buildings. Designed by Sir Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, the Pompidou was built to be a Factory of Culture.

Like the famously unadorned art museum, the Vuitton invitation was spartan – a small recycled cardboard box. Though it contained a louche insider secret – a set of dice marked with the show address. And, of course, they were contained inside the neatest, saddle stitched leather pouch.

Craft and cool in equal measure, in Pharrell's LV.

