



Giorgio Armani Privé

Synonymous with greige and other subdued Milanese shades, Giorgio Armani explored myriad possibilities of black in his fall Privé couture collection, from light-absorbing velvets and glistening, lacquer-like fabrics to all manner of jet beads and other sparkly embellishments.

The show started off a bit wobbly with velvet jodhpurs – eek! – their bulging out-seams demarcated with crystals, and then quickly settled into a soigné groove, delivering all manner of sleek black evening pants – always a good idea.

He livened them up with taut jackets in mottled jewel tones or tapestry prints scattered with crystals; sparkly, cage-like capes, or nubby tweed toppers trimmed with ostrich feathers, keeping this show firmly rooted in festive occasions.

He leveraged black's graphic appeal to the max with his mostly slender evening gowns, a jutting quiver of feathers, big floppy bows or undulating, stiffened collars adding drama. "Seductive black" was the title he gave to the collection – and to a heady, bespoke perfume dispatched with the show invitation.

Throughout, he tossed in elements of the masculine wardrobe such as tailcoats, waistcoats, cummerbunds, bowties and military frogging, while also playing with illusion panels, plunging necklines and bare backs, doing sexy the Armani way.

For the first time in his long career, the Italian designer did not take the bow at his Emporio Armani and Giorgio Armani shows during men's fashion week in Milan last month as he was recovering at home from an ailment. ►

He also wasn't in Paris on Tuesday night, following the advice of his doctors to extend his rest, even though he said he felt ready to travel.

"I can't deny that I miss it, but I know I can count on the capable hands and minds who have always been by my side," the designer said in quotes shared with WWD just before the Privé show. "I oversaw every aspect of the show remotely via video link, from the fittings to the sequence and the makeup.

"If I've come this far, it's thanks to the iron focus and obsessive attention with which I manage everything," said the 90-year-old designer, celebrating 50 years of his namesake company in 2025.

He admitted that focusing on black was

hardly an easy assignment.

"For a designer, black is the most classic of colors and, at the same time, the most demanding. When you work with black, you cannot afford to make mistakes: every detail must be perfect, because black reveals the very essence of a garment."

Even though he wasn't there, you could certainly feel his exacting hand, and his zeal to continue experimenting. Had he taken the bow, do you think he might have traded his trademark navy T-shirt for black? – Miles Socha







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