

Chanel Opens a New Season of the Paris Opera Ballet With a Grand Gala at the Palais Garnier

Chanel celebrates the Paris Opera Ballet season with a grand gala at Palais Garnier, with Ashley Graham, Anamaria Vartolomei, and Harris Reed guests.



The house behind the tutus continued its support for the French cultural institution. PARIS — Chanel may be on the brink of a new era, with the highly anticipated debut of new creative director Matthieu Blazy early next week, but it has recommitted to the classical arts with its support of the Paris Opera Ballet.

“It was so poetic – the emotions, the set, the costumes, everything felt so precise and so rich, and I felt the dancers were very generous towards us,” said French actress and longtime Chanel house ambassador Anamaria Vartolomei. “The story was beautiful, and the first part was like a Disney movie.”

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The performance of the classic Romantic-era ballet “Gisele,” starring Germain Louvet and Sae Eun Park, enchanted guests, as did the lush flowers and dream-like setting of the gala dinner and dance inside the Palais Garnier. It also opened with the debut performance of the modern piece “Requiem for a Rose,” by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa.

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The “Mickey 17” actress has been sporting a gamine cut, after chopping her long locks for an upcoming role. Now she's in the period where she is trying to avoid a '70s style shag cut, but still having fun with the hairstyle. She will attend Blazy's debut for the French fashion house at the Grand Palais on Oct. 6.

Vartolomei has worked with the house since she was 12 years old, first with Karl Lagerfeld and then with Virginie Viard. “It's a big, big change for the house,” she said of Blazy's debut. “I'm very curious about what's in his mind. Because he never gives interviews. And I'm curious to know, what are his references and inspirations? Where does he go? What does he dig into? He's a very mysterious person, so I'm excited to finally see how he imagines the Chanel woman.”

Despite being on the cusp of fashion week, the crowd also drew the city's creatives, including Alain Paul, who will show on Wednesday morning; Nina Ricci 's Harris Reed, who will show Friday evening, and curator Sarah Andelman, who is behind both the Zara 50th anniversary exhibit and the Virgil Abloh exhibit at the Grand Palais.

Ashley Graham, who was named the face of Nina Ricci 's Venus fragrance in August, was invited by Reed to enjoy the evening.

“This is my first Parisian ballet, and I was blown away,” she said. She recently wrapped her Broadway run as Roxie Heart in “Chicago.” Graham will have to miss the Nina Ricci show, however, as she has a product launch this week in New York, which she kept under wraps on Saturday.

The gala event was also supported by sponsor Rolex , and the evening raised 1.5 million euros to support the French cultural institution.

“We come together to reopen the dance spaces at a time when they are sometimes fragile. It is valuable to come together around a moment like this. Dance, like music, transcends differences — it brings us together and reminds us that beauty, collective effort, and sharing can still uplift us,” said Opera director general Alexander Neef, taking the stage.

The evening opened with the traditional Défilé du Ballet, bringing over 300 dancers — including the Étoile star dancers, the Corps de Ballet, and students of the École de Danse — parading onstage.

With this 11th edition, Chanel continued its partnership with the gala, which began in 2018. In addition to the gala, Chanel has committed to supporting the Opera's Junior Ballet and the restoration of its four venues, as well as created custom costumes for the young dancers with detailing by renowned ateliers Lesage and Lemarié.

Étoile dancers also appeared in custom tutus and tiaras originally designed in 2021, featuring the house's signature white satin camellias. The floral touch struck Vartolomei.

“When you see the costumes and the details, such as the camellia, it's such a Chanel touch, but it means so much,” she added.

“Everything is taken to the extreme point of involvement. To me, this is what really elegance is, is that you have the intelligence to understand and do it in a very generous way – just doing it for the beauty of it.”





Other guests –i ncluding Belgian pop star Angèle, Amira Casar, Alton Mason and Charlotte Casiraghi – gathered in the Grand Foyer for a seated dinner catered by chefs Antoine Villard, Hanz Gueco, and Zélikha Dinga, paired with Taittinger Champagne.

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