

A R E A

FABULOUS FRUITS

SS23

For SS23, we started exploring the beauty of fruits and their symbolic meaning of arts and pop culture and looked at the different stages fruit is represented in mediums such as painting, sculpture, dance, and performance.

When fresh and vibrant, fruit typically represent abundance, fertility, vitality, and youth. However, when in state of decay, fruit can stand for mortality and the cycle of life. We interpreted these concepts through various embroideries, embellishment techniques, metalworks, and construction through motifs of grapes, bananas, and watermelon.

GRAPES - The grape has historically symbolized abundance, fertility, and indulgence, though, this season we translated the motif into something more sensual and darker like lace hosiery.

Couture Crystal Grape Vine

We developed the vine construction of a grape into hand-made jet-black metal stalks that are set in with thousands of black Swarovski cabochon crystals. This concept is explored as dramatic collars, earrings, and full body grape vine harness.

Grape Lace & 'A' Plumetis

As a starting point, we transformed classic floral Chantilly lace into scattered grape lace bodysuits and hosiery, almost like a second skin. Then, we experimented with the idea of decay, so we frayed circular grape-like cut outs in the lace by embroidering ostrich and rooster feathers around the edge creating burst of distressed grape holes.

Couture Fruit Flies

Exploring the themes of decaying fruit, we crafted fruit flies into beautiful couture jewelry and as embellishments on a sculptural black wool silk tuxedo.

BANANAS - This fruit symbolizes sex, death, and freedom. Suggestive and controversial, we explored this theme through embroidery, drape, and construction.

Embroidered Bananas

Our research started with iconic banana pop culture references and artworks. Most notably, Andy Warhol's sexually charged album cover for The Velvet Underground & Nico (1967), showcases a ripe peel-away banana that reveals pink flesh underneath. This specific artwork was reworked by The Guerrilla Girls who took Warhol's banana and duplicated it into a big 'zero' highlighting the lack of female representation in art. This art poster became a call-to-action demanding female artists to be recognized in a male-dominated industry. We took these iconic bananas and created an artwork of rich yellow crystal and beading with decaying brown spots in paillette sequins. The bananas in the collection are positioned into a plunging halter top and cut-out miniskirt in our signature embroidery.

Couture Draped Bananas

We wanted to highlight draping and a less-structured side of AREA. Yards of fluid silk jersey are finely pleated into flat banana panels and connected by gold faceted caps. They come together to create a fitted pleated cut-out banana gown.

3D Bananas

An important banana reference we studied is the Banana Skirt worn by Josephine Baker. Once Josephine Baker arrived in Paris, she felt there was a craze for black culture and entertainment, and so she used stereotypes around her identity and persona to build up a character she would destroy during her performances, constantly deconstructing and reconstructing notions of race, gender, and sexuality through performance. Her groundbreaking invention of the banana belt would become a powerful tool that would reclaim her identity and grow her into an international superstar, which was especially rare for black women in the 1920s. In celebrating Baker's historical impact, we constructed 3D bananas out of structured black velvet and ombre denim and finished the tips with sculpted 24K gold caps. These 3D bananas shapes were then then multiplied into rings of dégradé bananas to create a monumental velvet pyramid banana gown.

Watermelon - This fruit symbolizes life and love, abundance, and fertility.

Couture Sliced Watermelon

Fruit changes in appearance by the way it's cut and so we applied this concept to couture dressmaking. We started thinking of a melon sliced in quarters, and how we could blow those proportions up into sculptural couture pieces like a black double-duchesse and rose paillette flesh embroidery or a dramatic black constructed hood tuxedo, both finished with golden metal seeds.

COUTURE FRUIT BASKET

This season washed denim is draped into a fluid gown with bursting raw denim fruits finished with gold caps.

Creative Director: Piotrek Panszczyk

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Casting: Dan von der Graf / Andrea Prato

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Makeup: Sam Visser

Nails: Yukie Miyakawa

Music: Senjan Jansen

Production: REPLICA

PR: Lucien Pages Communication

Thank you to Mr. Smith