

Gaultier: Kimono deconstruction for the 21st century



By [Godfrey Deeny](#)

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If you only ever get to go to one couture show in Paris in your whole life you could do a lot worse than get invited to Gaultier Paris.

Jean Paul's latest spring-summer 2019 couture show was all about deconstructing the kimono, taking a voyage of the mind and of fashion. Couture as a proper laboratory.

His soundtrack jumped back and forth between Charles Trenet's classic French summer tune, *La Mer*, and chunks of Japanese pop – most notably *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence*. And the clothes did too.

One second there was this absolutely divinely well cut blazer, nautical sailor's top and track pants worn by a smoldering Japanese beauty: a latter day Lady Macbeth seducing in *Throne of Blood*. The next moment a sultry Asian in a Breton sailor's kimono mix.

Dita Von Teese even made a wildly applauded appearance – in a semi-sheer femme fatale ballgown with insect wings

Gaultier, who speaks excellent English, albeit with an accent you could cut with an Opinel knife, loves a good multi-lingual pun in his always-extensive program notes. Gaultier is so in love with fashion he literally names every one of the looks in his every show.

So, this season, we had a tennis club outfit that was named "You Better Work Beach". Or a great cascading jersey dress with bow and spike shoulders, entitled "Orange is the New Blast".

Gentlemanly Jean-Paul also thanked for her embroideries Mariko Kusumoto, the Japanese artist who uses translucent fabrics to create baubles, orbs and mini glassy spheres. Her touches gave the collection a curious and fresh look, adding to the sense of intelligent experimentation.

Enhancing the moment, Gaultier packed his front-row with authentic Paris icons: from Blanca Li, the fantastic, indie Spanish dancer; deep-voiced TV legend and one time Roxy Music album cover heroine, Amanda Lear, and fashion's favorite French actress Catherine Deneuve.

Like we said, if you only get one crack at couture – Jean Paul Gaultier delivers punches in terms of fashion, people, humor, wit, tailoring and love.

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