

FERRAGAMO

CINEMA

For Autumn-Winter 2023, Maximilian Davis returns to Hollywood, the second home of Salvatore Ferragamo, to draw upon the wardrobes of stars who the house worked with throughout the 1950s. Seen through the lens of clean-cut modernity, their hyper-feminine beauty adopts an alien futurism; the volumes and silhouettes of the era distinctly displaced.

“It’s how Ferragamo started, making shoes for films in the 1930s, and that grew into building relationships with movie stars like Sophia Loren and Marilyn Monroe in the 1950s,” explains Davis. “I was interested in using their glamour and beauty, and their way of dressing, as a reference, but looking at how we could make it feel modern for today.”

Explored with the linear precision which defines Davis’ expression, mid-century silhouettes find a graphic purity: a ball skirt now seen in optic white nylon; a cocoon cut adopted from fifties couture applied to a cropped technical bomber and shirting. Double faced tailoring offers a sharp, cinematic clarity or, shrunken and nipped at the waist, updates tradition through the ease of its stretch wool gabardine. Bakelite jewellery is reconceived in transparent resin, and the wide skirts of swing coats, or off-shoulder cuts, evolve the historic codes of feminine glamour for a new era.

A vocabulary of slashes disturbs a classic sensibility: sharply-sliced suiting, or leathers which unzip to reveal flashes of colour, speak both to Davis’ exacting aesthetic and the disruptive spirit of fifties greasers. The codes of bikers’ wardrobe appear interspersed throughout, in flocked velvet or coated metallic denims, white viscose tanks and brogues swollen at the toe.

Exotic prints taken from the archives are scanned and manipulated before appearing screen-printed onto shearling, or leather and ponyskin accessories, with a slight distortion “to make them feel like heirloom pieces, taken from the past but brought into the future.” The ornate language of an archival shoe, originally manufactured in 1956 in 18 carat gold, is revived through key details: its angular shape informing the kick-heel of stilettos, its twisted rope appearing as a top-handle strap. A handbag silhouette from SS98 is reworked in new proportions and with new hardware; the Wanda bag appears in myriad new incarnations.

The graceful evolution of scarf dressing, a key code of Ferragamo, appears in a contrast to strict silhouettes. “I wanted to introduce the more romantic side of the fifties, and the two elements appear to contrast so directly – the ethereality against the rigour – that they somehow go hand-in-hand,” explains Davis. The emergence of that languid elegance, expressed in bat-wing sleeves and Renaissance draped details, presents a counterpoint to the high-octane, fetishistic glamour of shimmering lamé minidresses and patent leather that emerges through the close of the collection. “This is my take on what people from the 50s would think of the future: alienated metallics and high shine,” says Davis.

That sentiment consolidates the spirit of the season – the imagining and re-imagining of disparate eras and cinematic aesthetics which, through the new Ferragamo lens, find resolute modernity.