

CHRISTOPHER KANE
SPRING SUMMER 15

*This show is dedicated to the memory of
Professor Louise Wilson OBE*



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SHOW PRODUCTION
GAINSBURY AND WHITING

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ASSISTED BY CLEMENCE LOBERT

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MAKE UP
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PANALUX, BRITISH HARLEQUIN FLOORS

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NAOMI, FIONA, CAROLINE, RACHAEL, EBUN, TANYA, LEA

IMAGE COURTESY OF EZRA PETRONIO FOR SELF SERVICE

NARS

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"Soon after Louise died, we found a box of photos dating back to my time on the MA at Saint Martins," says Christopher Kane. "There were pictures of me in Louise's office, of Tammy trying on clothes I was making in my bedroom... Because of those 18 months on the MA, because of meeting and being taught by Louise, I am where I am today. There were dresses that I was making then, things that were not shown, that featured coils, cords and ropes. I decided to revisit them, that simple cord idea sparking other thoughts. There are 'controlled explosion' dresses, with explosions of tulle intrinsic to their structure, like they are about to take off. There are other explosions, where dresses are deconstructed and seeming to fall apart, their boning exposed – these have been developed and grown from really old drawings from that time. We have started to revisit ourselves in our collections; this is something that has changed. Here, we are looking back to our time with Louise, but also looking forward. Finding those pictures from the MA, this collection was meant to happen."

At first a teacher and later a close friend, Louise Wilson was a fundamental influence that helped shape the thinking and the ambitions of both Christopher and Tammy Kane. Her love, support, no-nonsense criticism and boundless humour helped them and their house grow to what they are today. She is greatly and sadly missed.

There is always a sense of the autobiographical in Christopher Kane's collections, and while Spring-Summer 2015 is permeated by a mixture of remembrance and celebration for the time that was spent with Louise Wilson, there is also a more general sense of coming-of-age and moving on in a revisitation and refining of the designer's past.

From the back-to-school colour palette – dominated by Bordeaux and largely borrowed from the uniform of Kane's secondary school, Taylor High – to the perversely proper femininity that has become a recurring hallmark of the house, Spring-Summer 2015 marks a general passing of time. Here, the schoolgirl and the ultra-chic woman become one, each immersed yet emerging from the other.

There is a combination of hard and soft, of the romantic and the real in the collection, where the brutal and minimal is combined with the exaggerated and decorative. Experiments abound in the construction and architecture of clothing; explosions of silk tulle are controlled by thick, structured viscose while silver metal bars bind tumbling silk georgette.

The cord motif that runs throughout – and features in some of Kane's earliest design experiments – is a subtle nod to bondage. Here, the photographer Araki is a long-time influence – the designer achieved his ambition of working with him late last year – and yet the cord motif is a tie that binds the collection and also encompasses the designer's career. It is brought to startling culmination in silk-satin embroidered rope lace, combining the concerns of the structural and decorative that entwines the entire offering.

As accessories, the leather goods echo the mixture of the perverse and the proper that is found in the collection, at the same time resonating its tonal palette. Box calf and structured viscose are formed into stripped down, three dimensional, geometric shapes for the bags; zips are exaggerated in length and brushed metal diamond components decorate both bags and shoes – a nod to signature Kane fastenings from previous clothing collections, particularly Autumn-Winter 2008. Silver metal bars from this season's clothing also find their natural extension here.