

# WOOD WOOD AUTUMN/WINTER 2023 *HEAVEN OUT HERE*

Meet us on the dance floor, is the resounding statement from WOOD WOOD's design team for AW23. Rave culture has always reverberated with a sense of community – a space to exist organically, bathed in colourful light, undulating basslines and free of restraints. At the core of WOOD WOOD's DNA has always been this idea of gathering together for a common cause, so the brand's latest offering hinges on this concept.

Staged at Simian, an independent exhibition space in Copenhagen, WOOD WOOD set out to recreate a rave-like atmosphere. Essentially, an invitation for guests to relinquish all inhibitions and immerse themselves in the creative vision of the label's new design team. With menswear headed up by Dominic Huckbody who launched his career at the likes of Burberry and Martine Rose, and womenswear under the direction of Cecilie Engberg who was formerly at Balenciaga, the pair have organically managed to carve out an aesthetic direction that's centred around niche subcultures and steeped in subversiveness.

"Heaven Out Here" is the overarching sentiment – a phrase that wouldn't go amiss on an old-school rave flier. The graphic phrase is spelled out across studded belts, rhinestone embellished hoodies and a football-inspired scarf, emphasising themes of togetherness and continuity. Essentially, a message designed to last all night and well into the days that follow. The halcyonic hues of a club space also permeate the collection, with vibrant red and acid-green shades featuring across statement denim pieces for both men and women.

The menswear offering turns tailoring on its head for a subversive aesthetic that's equal parts refined and rebellious. Business-like silhouettes meet Y2K-inspired tropes for a culture clash that's emblematic of the rave scene. Traditional pinstripe shirts have been reinvented to include stripe detailing with swirl and heart motifs borrowed from tattoo etchings for a boundary-defying, contemporary look. Similarly, a subtle cotton stitch becomes a trompe l'œil imitation of sequin embellishment, offering a tamed take on a typical night-out fabric. Elsewhere, playful, asymmetrical cuts, wrap around-finishes and contrast stitching elevate tailored blazers, waistcoats and pants. Perhaps the most standout styles are the knitted pieces – ranging from a round-neck jumper with a multicoloured tessellating pattern reminiscent of a light-up nightclub floor to a classic polo-neck in a fluffy cashmere finish.

As for womenswear, T-shirts, hoodies and a cut-out dress tell a graphic story – printed with images of club-goers lost in a hedonistic trance. Distressed floral prints decorate flowing, longline dresses as a subtle nod to grunge and a repeated collection feature from WOOD WOOD's womenswear designer. A crushed two-piece top and bandeau dress in icy blue is inarguably 90s/early 00s in nature, while a power mesh and lace ruched dress references the same era – managing to straddle the boundaries between sexy and sporty. In a similar vein to the menswear selection, robust blazers and longline coats include removable nylon layers for a technical twist. Not to be missed are the bustier top and matching dress in shiny, acid green: the significance all in the shade.

Accessories-wise, waffle-knit balaclavas and padded scarves that can be neatly packed away take centre stage. Shearling gloves and a corresponding scarf echo elements of the collection: a vintage-style leather jacket with a detachable shearling collar, as well as longline jackets with inner linings made from the same fabric bolster the textural aspect of the collection. Forward-thinking fluffy hats and belts studded with the word "HEAVEN" feel distinctly experimental. All in all, WOOD WOOD AW23 is rife with styles that are ready to party.

*"We explore the ritual of dressing up and making a pilgrimage to join a congregation of strangers who seek all the same thing, to escape. Safe spaces and the sense of belonging that this provides, along with the protection and preservation of these spaces remain imperative to our values as a brand".*

Cecilie Engberg and Dominic Huckbody, WOOD WOOD Design Team.