

## BOTTEGA VENETA WINTER 24 – SHOW NOTES

*“Monumentalism of the everyday: a sense of allure and confidence in the pragmatic, utilitarian and purposeful. How daywear is perceived in this nighttime world; silhouettes are simplified and recognised like monoliths in the dark. In a world on fire, there is something very human in the simple act of dressing.”* Matthieu Blazy

In a burnt, barren landscape a new journey begins, yet it is one of regeneration for creative director Matthieu Blazy. Here, there is an urgency of purpose in a reincarnation of what has been, together with what is to come: reshaped, recut and given a sense of essentialism in a new beginning. These are clothes and accessories for people who have somewhere to go and have something to do.

There is an embracing of negative space this season. Embellishment is kept to a minimum, utilising a purposeful plainness at times, inspired by the roots of Bottega Veneta pre-Intrecciato. There is a visual simplicity without surrendering the sumptuousness of touch and feeling, particularly through fabrication. Decoration is integral, woven into the fabric of the collection. A memory print shows the layers of time and what we carry on. A notebook weave is a hopeful idea of writing a new future. Silhouettes from different eras and seasons combine and are compressed to make something distinctly now and what will be: rounded, enveloping, utilitarian, protective. Materials echo this process, heated and moulded, boiled and shredded, wool bouclés, cashmere and fil coupés become something other: practical, resilient, humble, flame-like.

At the same time, honesty in materiality and silhouette means the clothing is no longer pretending to be something other than what it really is: there is a simplicity in jersey suiting; a pragmatism in power-shouldered knits; truthfulness in cotton calico shirting; comfort and protection in supple leather.

Accessories have a sense of inheritance and essentialism: a grandmother's croco, a mother's clutch, a father's Oxfords. They are inherited from a time of non-disposability and a more meaningful relationship with objects that go beyond fashion and stand the test of time. The new Liberta bag, the plain Andiamo, Hop and Cabat reflect this, slipping quietly into the everyday.

The colours of night dominate the colour palette, together with those of fire: carbon black, burnt orange, burgundy, fondant, dark tan, drab olive, ash grey, red, and white. Occasionally shot through with daytime light, sky blue and pale sun; in this new, sombre world there is still light and hope.

The snake, the flame and the flower are recurring leitmotifs, representing resilience and rebirth. There are abstract flower prints on cascading handkerchief hemmed skirts and simple shirting; the looks become the flower itself together with startling, bouncing 'flower dresses' comprised of laser cut micro plissé – 'barren blooms' that grow in the desert and other hard, desolate places. Painted flame patterns envelope leathers as well as their movements abstractly mimicked in sinuous fil coupe looks, echoing the transformative paradox of fire. The use of snake as both motif and material travels throughout the entire collection; from the encircling bags, via the new interpretation of the snake belt, to spiralling enamel statement earrings.

Jewellery is fit for an archaeology of the future, articulated and jointed with the use of ancient materials such as ceramic, glass, leather, wood, lapis and Dalmatian stone. Here infinity wires become torques and snakes swallow their own tails, with a sense of the eternal return.

*“We all watch the same news. It is hard to be celebratory at this point. Still, the idea of rebirth is beautiful, too. These are the flowers that bloom after the earth is burnt – they give a sense of hope. They come back stronger than ever. Here, elegance is resilience.”* Matthieu Blazy