

NOT FOR THE FAINT OF FASHION: THE RELIGION OF RICK OWENS

RICK OWENS



TEMPLE SS26

RÉGNE
magazine

Rich Owens

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In Rick Owens' SS26 TEMPLE, the clothes did more than dress bodies — they sermonized. Amid the dim, industrial light of Palais de Tokyo, one look in particular anchored the entire show's conceptual power: a hyper-textured, silver-laced coat worn with voluminous black shorts and sculptural leather gloves. It wasn't just a standout — it was a thesis.

Backstage, the model wearing the look stood with quiet gravity, like a high priest awaiting procession. The coat shimmered, but not in a glam, red-carpet sense. Instead, the glittering surface was harsh and granular — like crystalized ash or cosmic debris. It reflected light in fragments, mimicking shattered mirrors or broken sanctuaries. This wasn't sparkle for vanity's sake — it was a study in sacred ruin. The texture, rough and irregular, clashed beautifully with the coat's precise tailoring. Shoulders were built out and curved upward, evoking armor, wings, or something mythic. Think: cathedral gargoyle meets sci-fi archangel.



The shorts, in stark contrast, were minimal — heavy black nylon with a structured drop. They provided balance to the ornate coat, grounding the look in Owens' recurring tension between decadence and discipline. Paired with matte black gloves that extended just past the wrist, the ensemble became a form of ceremonial wear — not for worshipping gods, but for confronting them.

Rick has long spoken about clothes as emotional exorcisms — and here, the coat wasn't protection, but exposure. It forced the viewer to confront its discomfort. It said: I shine, but I'm not soft. That contradiction — between surface and substance — is a signature of Owens' work, and it resonated deeply in TEMPLE, a collection that stripped masculinity to its essence, then rebuilt it with brutal tenderness.



From a conceptual lens, this look can be read as a meditation on what it means to wear strength. Owens doesn't design for the mainstream man — he designs for the mythologized one. The exaggerated collar, the coarse glitter, the imposing silhouette: it's less fashion, more sacred artifact. And yet, backstage, the model wore it not with arrogance, but quiet power. Shoulders back, jaw relaxed, gaze forward. There was no performative swagger — just presence.

In a sea of distressed satins, sheer panels, and architectural trousers, this look stood as the anchor — a literal and figurative center of gravity. It whispered of alien royalty and post-human resilience, all while asking a very Owens question: What if fashion is our only armor in a crumbling world?

The clothes, as expected, were not merely worn — they were inhabited. Oversized silhouettes, distressed textures, sheer fabrics revealing vulnerability beneath strength — it was clear these pieces weren't designed just to fit bodies, but to frame attitudes. One model, cloaked in a sequined mesh robe that shimmered under the raw overhead lighting, carried himself with an ethereal poise, like a priest of some lost future. Another, in exaggerated flared trousers and shredded knits, looked like he'd been resurrected from the ruins of fashion week itself — and liked it that way.

What made the backstage energy especially magnetic was the absence of chaos. This wasn't the frantic flurry of pins, powders, and panic often seen before a show. Instead, it was controlled — devotional, even. Stylists adjusted garments with quiet reverence. Owens himself moved through the space with the calm certainty of a prophet, rarely speaking, always watching.

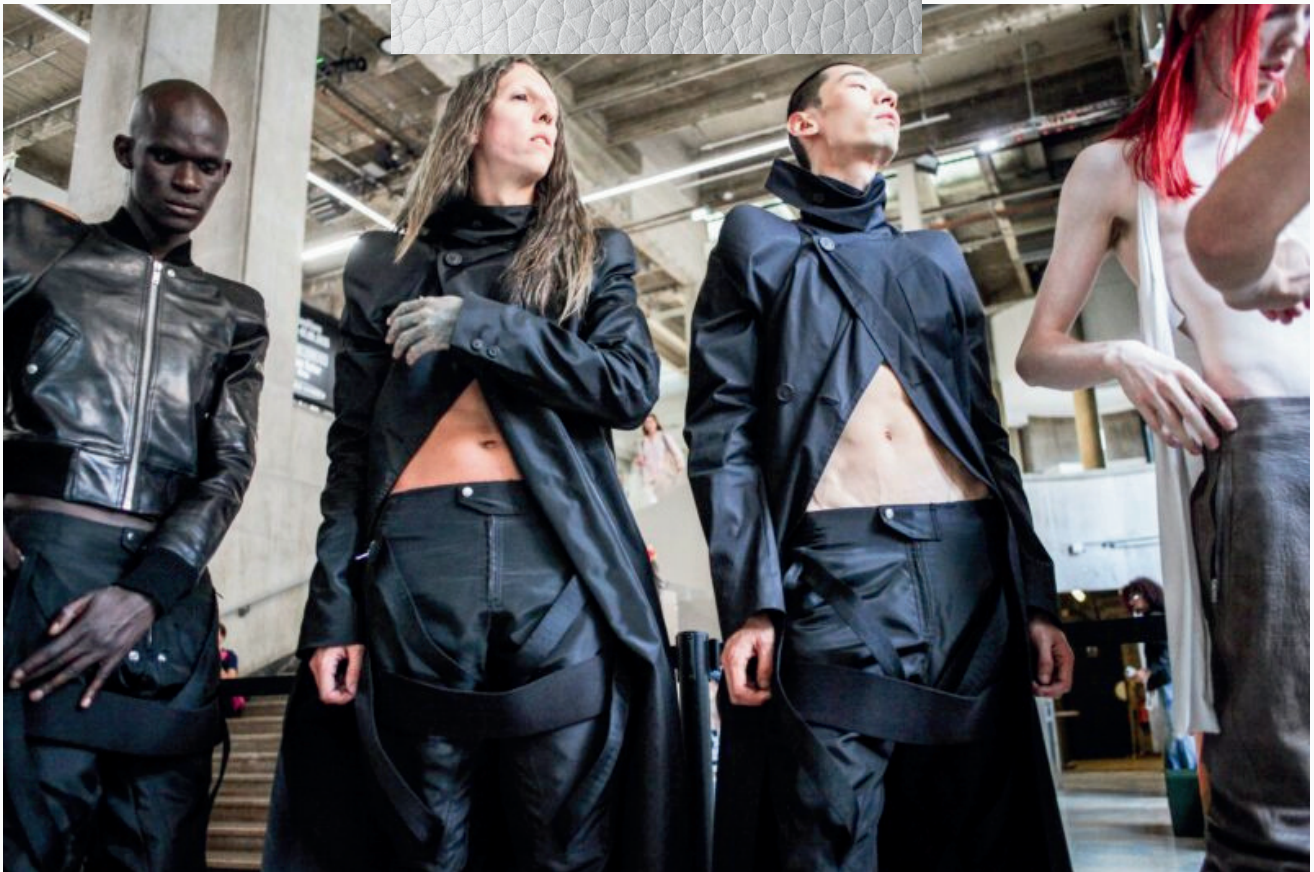
There was also an undeniable brotherhood among the models — not in the locker-room sense, but more like fellow monks in a shared sartorial pilgrimage. The garments may have looked severe on paper — heavy leathers, wet-look nylons, and sheer panels cut with mathematical precision — but in motion, they breathed, draped, revealed, and concealed with grace. Every layered look seemed to carry a whisper of something sacred and dangerous.

In the world of Rick Owens, where garments are ritual, gender bends, and shadow reigns, TEMPLE felt like a reminder: fashion isn't only about what you wear — it's about what you carry.

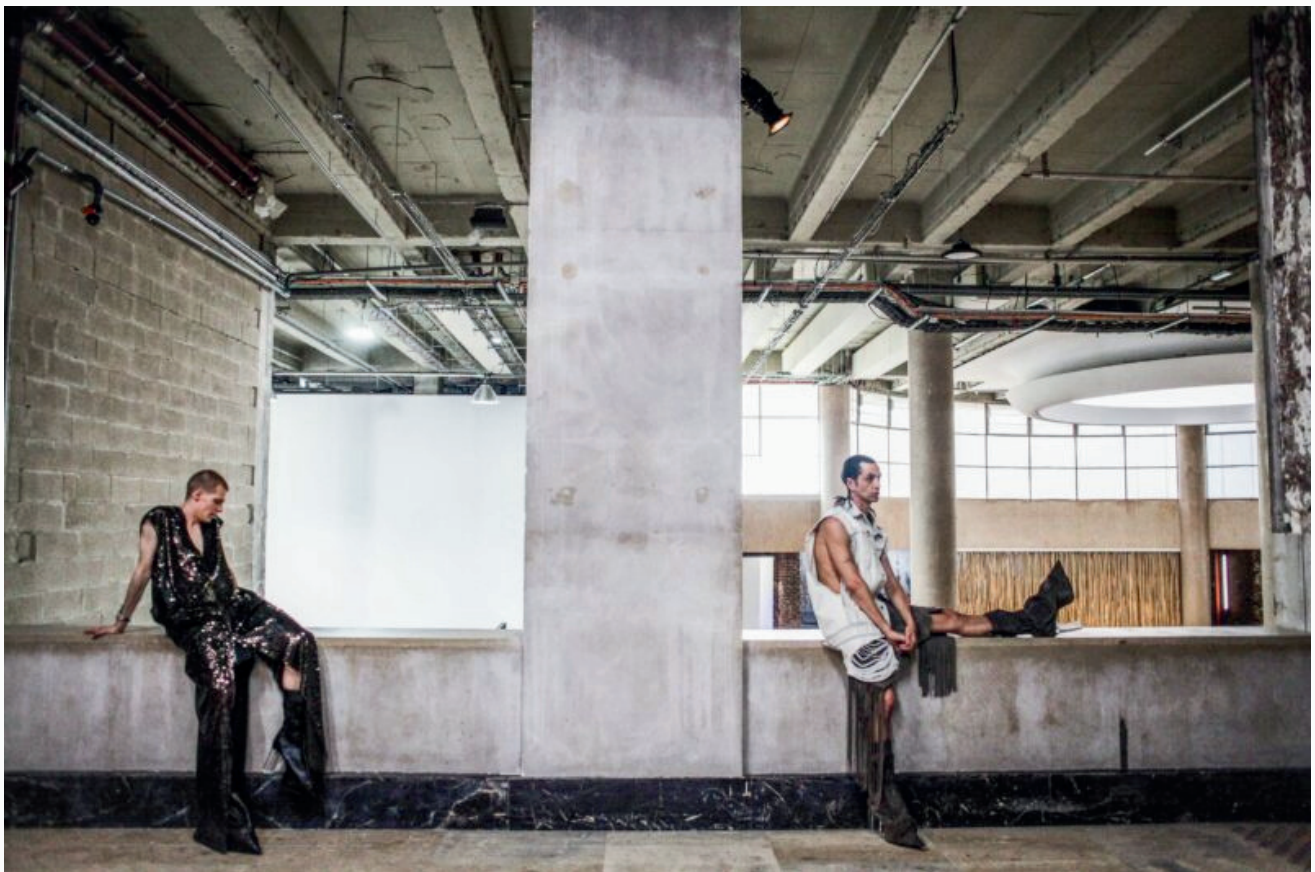
BACKSTAGE



Rich Owens



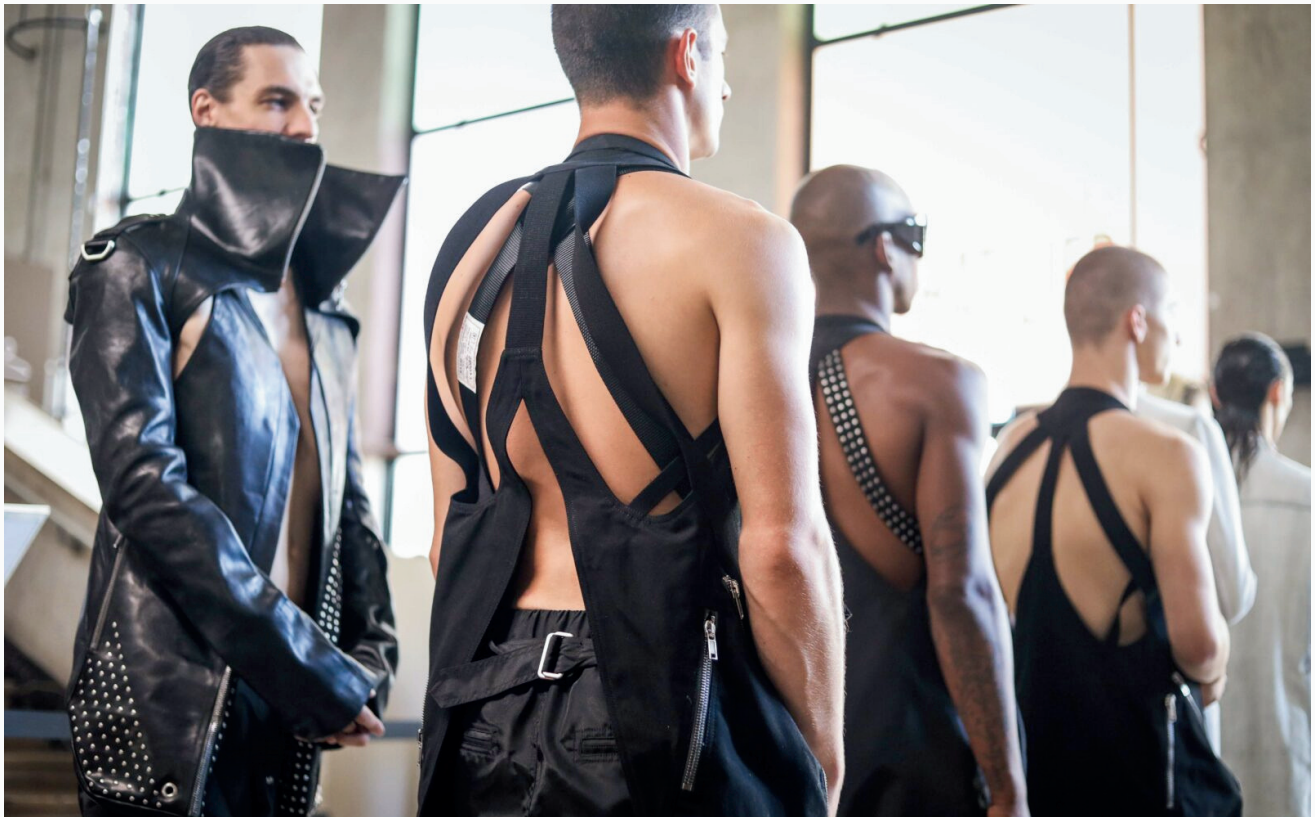
BACKSTAGE



TEMPLE SS 26

BACKSTAGE

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If the Rick Owens SS26 TEMPLE show taught us anything, it's that fashion can be both a sermon and a spectacle. Set against the raw, monolithic architecture of the Palais de Tokyo — all concrete veins and brutalist bones — this wasn't just a runway. It was a

Models descended wide cement staircases like solemn warriors, their silhouettes magnified by echoing steps and the cavernous space that swallowed sound. And then came the moment: water. Not metaphorical, not subtle — actual water. Pools rippled at the base of the staircase, shallow and glassy at first, until models began walking, splashing, and even plunging into it. With each step through the water, garments clung, swayed, or resisted — a dramatic dance between fabric and force. Some models waded slowly with god-like poise, others threw themselves into the fountains as if shedding an old identity. This was not a runway — it was a rebirth.

But let's talk about the clothes. Because in a show like this, water isn't just for drama — it's narrative. The garments were made to interact with the elements. Sheer, distressed silks and mesh robes transformed once wet — revealing, sticking, and shifting with the body. Leathers darkened and glistened, morphing from matte armor to reflective skin. Rick didn't just allow the water to change the clothes — he wanted it to. He designed with that evolution in mind.

Outfits ranged from monastic layers to futuristic rags, with exaggerated collars, trailing hems, and sculptural cuts that felt lifted from both ancient ritual and sci-fi prophecy. One model wore a translucent tunic embroidered with silver — it shimmered under the overhead lights, then collapsed beautifully against his frame once soaked. Another, draped in layered grey suede, moved like a wet statue, his posture rigid as stone but softened by the weight of water dragging the fabric. That tension — between control and surrender — was exactly the point.

Rick Owens has long challenged the idea of masculinity as something rigid and dry. In TEMPLE, he drowned it — literally. Water, here, symbolized cleansing, transformation, vulnerability. By making his models walk (and fall) through water, Owens stripped away the pretense. The runway became a baptismal font. The fashion? A second skin, imperfect and evolving.

And the models? Their posture was pure ritual. Shoulders drawn back, chins lifted, eyes locked forward — not with arrogance, but with conviction. You could tell each one had been chosen with purpose. Their body language responded to the garment — those in soft, collapsing fabrics moved fluidly, sensually. Those in hard-lined coats and sculpted leather strode with resistance, their tension mirrored in clenched hands and sharp turns. The synergy between clothing and wearer was choreographed, but never forced. Each model became the garment. Or maybe the garment became them.

Let's just say it: if Paris is a church of fashion, then this was the mass — and Rick, the high priest in sequined robes. The fountains weren't aesthetic decoration — they were altars. And each model, soaked and silent, was a disciple of a new kind of masculinity: mythic, raw, reimaged.

So next time someone says "Rick's shows are too much," just smile and remember: fashion isn't meant to stay dry.



In fashion, a label is usually the loudest part of a garment. It's where most designers scream their name, stamp their legacy, and broadcast their brand in fonts bigger than the garment itself. But then there's Rick Owens — the dark poet of Paris — who has made an entire religion out of saying less. And in the SS26 TEMPLE collection, his label became more than just a tag. It became a sacred symbol, hidden in plain sight. Let's rewind a bit.

The traditional Rick Owens label isn't a label at all in the typical sense. No logo, no typeface, no shiny metallic thread. It's simply a long, ivory-beige grosgrain ribbon, sewn vertically into the inside neckline. For years, it's been the calling card of the Rick cult — a minimalist code that whispers instead of shouts. A piece of non-information that, ironically, says everything. It's not just a brand signature — it's an ideological stance. In a landscape of consumerist maximalism, Rick's label says: "You either know what this is, or you don't need to."

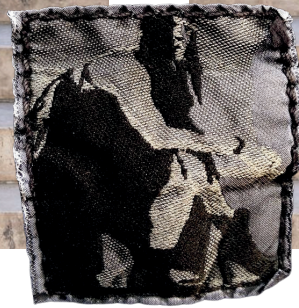
But for SS26 TEMPLE, something shifted. Not dramatically — because Rick isn't one for theatrics without purpose — but intentionally. The iconic grosgrain loop? Still there... sort of. But moved. Muted. Reimagined.

Instead of being front and center at the nape of the neck, many of the garments this season bore a new iteration: a flat, white-on-white stitched label, often hidden under a hem, buried inside a side seam, or sewn horizontally at the edge of a jacket lining. If you weren't looking for it, you might not even notice it. And that's exactly the point.

Because TEMPLE wasn't just a show — it was a ritual. The concrete brutalism of the setting, the models ascending monumental staircases and walking through shallow pools of water, the dripping hems and soaked trousers — it all hinted at rebirth. Baptism. Cleansing. In this context, a bold logo would've been jarring. Too loud. Too corporate. And Rick, ever the anti-brand brand, isn't interested in giving you easy recognition. He wants discovery.

The way the models moved — slow, ethereal, almost trance-like — reflected this philosophy. Their postures weren't those of dominance or commercial seduction. They weren't "selling" the clothes. They were inhabiting them. Their slouched shoulders, their bare chests, the deliberate, almost devotional pace... it all told the story of wearers who are becoming part of the garment — not just displaying it.

In that way, the label, hidden and ghost-like, felt more like a relic than a brand stamp. As if these weren't just clothes but sacred vestments — and the label was the only trace of who made them. Faint. Nearly forgotten. But undeniably present.



Compared to mainstream labels (think Balenciaga's graphic punch or Gucci's maximalist logos), Rick's approach is almost spiritual. Where others brand for visibility, he brands for intimacy. The SS26 TEMPLE garments weren't meant to be "recognized." They were meant to be felt. The label placement echoed that: something you glimpse mid-movement, like a secret only revealed when you're paying close attention — or when the water soaks the hem just enough to expose the white thread.

The contrast is striking. Other designers tag the outside of the garment — a stamp of power, of ownership. Rick tags the inside, or better said, the soul. His labels are for the wearer, not the watcher. And in this collection, that intimacy was pushed even further: the label wasn't an invitation to join a trend — it was a reminder that you're stepping into a ritual.

Some might say it's impractical. Some might not even notice. But that's the thing about Rick Owens. He doesn't design for everyone. He designs for those who look twice. For those who listen to silence. For those who find beauty not in the spotlight — but in the shadows just behind it.

So yes, the Rick Owens label may have been harder to find at TEMPLE. But maybe that's because it's no longer just a label. It's a philosophy sewn into thread. And if you ask us, that's the kind of signature that doesn't fade — even after the water dries.















In Rick Owens' world, accessories don't decorate — they declare. And in his latest ritual of concrete, water, and shadow, the accessories spoke louder than any slogan ever could. Gloves became shields, boots became altars, and eyewear? Well, let's just say no one was hiding — they were ascending.

Let's begin with the gloves — Owens' eternal symbol of restraint, power, and quiet defiance. Cut in supple black leather or gleaming latex-like textures, they weren't there to flatter. They controlled. Clean-lined and sculptural, they framed the wrist and forearm with a certain devotional precision. Some looked like surgical tools reimagined as couture, others recalled something ceremonial — the kind of gloves worn not to protect the hands, but to keep what they touch sacred. In a show where bodies were soaked and vulnerable, the covered hands created a tension: polished, armored, untouchable.

And then there were the boots. Monolithic, merciless, unapologetically heavy. These weren't shoes made for streets. They were meant for temples, ruins, and alien catwalks rising from water. You could hear them before you saw them — the thick soles slapping against wet concrete like a war drum. Some pairs rose to the knee in padded leather with exaggerated platforms, while others were more minimal, hugging the ankles with sculptural roundness. They didn't just complete the looks — they grounded them in Rick's signature contradiction: vulnerability encased in aggression. The models didn't walk in them — they stomped, glided, floated. The boots said: I may be drenched, but I'm not drowning.

Eyewear played its own silent sermon. Angular, alien, sometimes wrapping entirely around the face, the sunglasses muted all human expression. Eyes — often the only soft detail on a Rick model — were gone, replaced by hard curves, black lenses, and mirrored surfaces. Some pairs were so wide they looked like tech relics from a forgotten dystopia. The result? A beautiful erasure of identity. These weren't "accessories" in the commercial sense. They turned wearers into statues, ghosts, gods. Above the gaze, beyond the stare.

And then — barely there, but impossible to ignore — the metal. Jewelry was minimal but brutal: sharp cuffs, spiked earrings, industrial rings worn like sacred relics. Nothing glittered. Everything glowed. The pieces weren't styled for luxury. They were worn like objects with a past — as if unearthed from some alien excavation site or ancient crypt. Each one held weight. Purpose. Memory. Together, these accessories didn't add to the clothing — they extended its message. Every glove was a gesture of control. Every boot, a weaponized step forward. Every pair of sunglasses, a denial of vanity.

They framed the body not as fashion's object of seduction, but as a sacred vessel — part myth, part machine, all intention. Because in Rick's universe, details aren't added last. They're built into the ritual. And if you missed them the first time — well, darling, that's on you.



Rich Owens

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THE LOOK VS THE SCENE

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