Paco Rabanne sells archive dresses as NFTs with Selfridges

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Paco Rabanne and Selfridges are embracing NFTs with an innovative project that brings the French label’s original concept of 12 Unwearable Dresses from 1966 to a new audience.

Selfridges has debuted the NFTs from 27 April, selected from the Paco Rabanne archive, with the 12 digital dresses “rendered with remarkably realistic detail”. They can be purchased at universenft.live “powered by Selfridges”.

And as well as connecting with consumers via technology, Paco Rabanne said it’s committing to preserving and extending its past into the future. It will be “improving the storage conditions of its archives, expanding its archive
extending its past into the future. It will be “improving the storage conditions of its archives, expanding its archive through new acquisitions, and securing rights to archival media”.

This is all part of its awareness of its heritage “while advancing boldly in new virtual realms” and with the Selfridges project being “significant in the brand’s cultural timeline”, a book and exhibition will also be forthcoming.

The dresses in the new NFT project are also shoppable online within the flagship Selfridges store via a screen in an immersive space that also showcases Op Art works from Victor Vasarely. Additionally, it features pieces from the SS22 collection for which Julien Dossena drew inspiration from the artist.

Purchases can be made using a regular credit card for those without a crypto wallet, and a custodial wallet will be created using a layer-2 blockchain framework.

The companies said that “revisiting the past through a future lens, the project offers a significant evolution in the experience of fashion – one where couture-level workmanship is re-transcribed through technological innovation”.

And Paco Rabanne added that “the project offers an unparalleled opportunity for early adopters and fashion collectors alike to own and virtually wear an historic garment that transcends time”.

The dresses themselves span 30 years of Paco Rabanne and include a sleeveless apron dress of wooden beads in a cascade of pastel hues from SS70; an haute couture gown assembled from geometric reflective laser discs from SS88; and a cosmic tutu in silver metal and transparent plastic from AW96.

The company is offering various levels of exclusivity via the 12 creations with 56 of one piece available and just two of two others. The latter have been selected to be “faithfully realised according to the same techniques as the past”. They include a couture cape from SS69 composed of 5,600 plexiglass diamonds and assembled with 10,000 metal rings that took 200 hours to recreate in the atelier; and a black metallic ‘Samurai’ top, miniskirt, and headpiece from AW90 that features more than 5,000 bead elements reproduced from the original mould.

They’ll be offered as an exclusive Paco Rabanne experience that includes a visit to Paris, where each dress will be fitted, and an invitation to the runway show.