Selfridges in NFT deep dive with Paco Rabanne

By Nigel Taylor - January 14, 2022

Fashion, art, retail and technology are drawn together in a first-of-its kind, multi-layered cultural collaboration featuring the work of artist Victor Vasarely and fashion house Paco Rabanne at Selfridges' flagship London department store.

As the exhibition-meets-retail space at The Selfridges Corner Shop opens, the technological element will see it becoming world's first retailer to sell fixed price non-fungible tokens (NFTs) over the counter.

In partnership with the Fondation Vasarely and Paco Rabanne, Selfridges presents Universe, a celebration of the abstract work of the optical art movement pioneer, best known for his geometric designs.

Spanning three months, Universe will include an exhibition of 55 works by the artist, with 37 available for sale, alongside a series of specially commissioned NFTs created by London-based NFT platform Substance later this month.
The NFTs feature either rare artworks by Vasarely or the 'Unwearables', the first 12 dresses ever created by Paco Rabanne.

Visitors will be able to experience the optical tricks, illusions and kinetic energy of Vasarely’s work across the Oxford Street store, including the storefront where each of the 24 windows will be individually wrapped in Vasarely’s designs.

Visitors can explore the “ground-breaking concept” in-store and on @theofficialselfridges to shop art works and fashion pieces from Paco Rabanne, “as we continue to look at new and exciting ways to reinvent retail”, said Selfridges.

Substance has also created a virtual reality environment (metaverse), in which visitors will be able to interact with Vasarely’s calibrated patterns. The metaverse will be accessible online at Decentraland and NFTs will be available to purchase in the store or online via Substance’s platform from 28 January.

Celebrating the influence of Vasarely on its work, Paco Rabanne’s pieces from both its archive and the new season are also on display.

The house’s creative director, Julien Dossena, was inspired by Vasarely’s expressive art style for SS22, “utilising the artist’s celebrated optical illusion prints across co-ordinated outfit combinations” including bold psychedelic-printed tops and skirts to geometric-print wide-leg trousers.

Ready-to-wear and accessories from the new Paco Rabanne collection will launch throughout the season at Selfridges, available to buy or rent.

Funds raised from the sale of NFTs will go to the Museum Fondation Vasarely in Aix-en-Provence, France, for the artist’s archive and large-scale installations, to support restoration of key artworks.

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