The upcoming Hyères festival, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, is already looking to be an exceptional edition. For the first time, the International Festival of Fashion and Photography will take place over the course of five days instead of four, and will have, as is already well known, Chanel as its guest of honor.

The maison’s artistic director, Karl Lagerfeld, will be joined by his two closest collaborators, Virginia Viard, director of Chanel’s studio, and Eric Pfrunder, the house’s image director, who will serve respectively as presidents of the festival’s fashion and photography juries.

Held at the Villa Noailles, which was built in the 1920s by architect Robert Mallet-Stevens for art patrons Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles, this year’s event will be particularly glamorous, welcoming numerous celebrities and VIPs including Caroline, Princess of Hanover, Carine Roitfeld, and French actress Anna Mouglalis, who will serve on the fashion jury.

The main exhibitions to be held during the festival and then continuing afterwards until May 24 at the Villa Noailles as well as in the city of Hyères, will indeed on Chanel and Karl Lagerfeld. Several haute couture models will discuss Chanel’s incredible creative experimentation and expertize in terms of the various specialized trades it employs (embroiderers, feather-workers, jewelers, glove makers, shoemakers, goldsmiths, hatters). Karl Lagerfeld, meanwhile, will present a selection of his photographs.
Among some of the other notable exhibitions and performances: a photography exhibition by Cécile Bortoletti focused on the designs by festival winners; an exhibition by the 2014 winner for photography, Lorenzo Vitturi; and an exhibition by accessories designer Erik Halley, who has been invited to creatively rearrange the Villa Noaille’s permanent collections.

Also worth noting: the collective Jogging, founded by photographer Olivier Amsellem and Charlotte Brunet, will exhibit on the Villa Noailles’ ground floor, in partnership with architect Rodolphe Parente and designer Jean-Baptiste Fastrez. The duo Antoine + Manuel, meanwhile, composed of graphic designers Antoine Audiau and Warosz Manual, will offer a history lesson for the event’s 30th anniversary, which was originally called the "Festival of Young Designers'..."

Another highlight of the festival: the **Rencontres internationales du textile et de la mode** organized by the French Federation of Couture with the support of the DEFI and in association with the French Institute of Fashion. Conferences, debates, master classes ... The Rencontres, celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, will take several different forms this year, while focusing on the theme of sustainable development.

This essential and challenging issue for fashion houses raises many questions that will be debated on Saturday, April 25 by Giusy Bettoni, founder of the eco textile hub C.L.A.S.S.; Marie-Claire Daveu, chief sustainability officer and head of international institutional affairs of Kering; and Hervé Fretay from fragrance manufacturer Givaudan.

Four students from four different schools: Louise Bernard (Ecoles des Ponts Paristech), Alaric Bey (IFM), Massimo Filacchione (ESCP Europe) and Emma Lecocq (Sciences Po Paris), have also been invited to develop a project focused on the theme that will be presented during the festival.
Another topic to be discussed at the meetings: the role of Instagram in fashion. A hot topic chosen by the French Federation of Couture "to open up the dialogue to the general public," according to the latter. Is Instagram the latest marketing tool being used by an ever-more sophisticated marketing machine, or is it the intimate expression of a personal view?

To respond to the question: Same Same but Different founder and president Michel Campan, Jean Charles de Castelbajac, designer Felipe Oliveira Baptista, executive director of Luxe Corp Uche Pézard, and Simon Gate Jacquemus, founder of the eponymous designer brand.

The Rencontres will also focus on photography, with a discussion with photographer Sølve Sundsbø and the Festival’s photography curator, Raphaëlle Stopin, as well as a presentation featuring the work of ten finalist photographers.

Finally, it will be possible to discover or rediscover the work of a dozen former competition finalists at the space "The Formers".

By Dominique Murct