

# Avant- garde

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**WHO:** Comme des Garçons, Gareth Pugh, Bernard Willhelm, Victor & Rolf, Yohji Yamamoto, Lady Gaga, Nikki Minaj, Björk, Katy Perry, Ziggy Stardust, Elton John circa “Captain Fantastic,” fashion bloggers, Daphne Guinness and the late, great friends Alexander McQueen and Isabella Blow.

**WHAT:** Revolutionary, flamboyant, **experimental**; avant-garde fashion is certainly all of those things and more. Inherently inventive, more and more eyewear collections and eyewear designers are being tasked with being more innovative in order to push outside the norm, **shake up the status quo** and grab the attention of the consumer.

**WEAR:** (Top to bottom) New Zealand designer **Karen Walker** is a fashion world darling, designing for the anti-“it girl”, the brand is known for taking extremes and pushing them together; that philosophy is evident here in the Bunny sunglass, an oversized round with a high, single bridge, in orange crystal. Fashionistas the world over collectively gasped when the **Fendi FS5198** from Marchon walked down the runway on several models during the label’s Spring 2011 show. Often runway styles never actually make it into production but those ladies (and even some men!) are in luck, Marchon has heeded their call and made the style available for all. Experimental fashion is all about turning the expected on its head and the MJ369/S from **Marc Jacobs** by Safilo has literally done just that. Appearing almost upside down at first glance, the construction of the MJ369/S challenges everything we know about the traditional construction of eyewear. Avant-garde is almost synonymous with over-exaggerated details and the cat-eye Nikita sunglasses from **Tom Ford** by Marcolin are extremely exaggerated, so pointy and high in fact at the upturned tips that perhaps a better name for these white frames would have been the Everest. Believe it or not the SPR27N is actually the tamer of the two styles **Prada** released into their Minimal-Baroque capsule collection from Luxottica and it still packs quite the design wallop with its chunky round construction and scrolling, curved temples.

**WHY:** Fashion only moves forward when someone is willing to take a risk, luckily it seems more and more designers are vying to be that “someone.” **Pushing boundaries** is the foundation of avant-garde fashion, and as more designers emerge who are willing to do that coupled with the general public’s better understanding and appreciation of design, **more fashion-forward products** are bound to be the result. Given the inherent design limitations a pair of eyeglasses presents, it’s the perfect foil for making this marriage more palatable for the consumer.

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