

Comme des Garçons' road to Romania

Following a collaboration with Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi, Comme des Garçons unveils a concept store in Bucharest – and yet the brand's connection to the region is not new



JUNE 11, 2026

Text Madeleine Rothery

Comme des Garçons Shirt at Entrance, Bucharest





GALLERY / 9 IMAGES

When Comme des Garçons Shirt reached out to Dan Perjovschi about collaborating, the Romanian artist wasn't familiar with the brand. His drawings – fractured words and figures rendered in thick black lines – have brought many opportunities his way, but something in this particular email caught his attention. What he wanted in return was neither money nor exposure: he said he would only take part on the condition that his fee go, in full, to a children's cancer hospital in Bucharest that he has funded for over a decade. "Great idea," was the instant response from Adrian Joffe, president of Comme des Garçons International. "We'll double the fee."

The resulting collaboration was first presented at CDG Shirt's SS26 runway show, then brought to its other home at Entrance, a concept store in Bucharest, as part of Bucharest Design Festival, where it hung alongside previous CDG collaborations, select runway looks, and the label's storied archival print. There was no brief: Perjovschi sent 12 drawings, ten of which were used. His graphic wordplay – *Love, World Hope, Hu(man)it(y), Tomorr(now)* – is scattered like graffiti across cotton poplin and jersey, gingham and quilted olive, the letters resolving into the little figures that animate them. He had all but forgotten the project by the time he stumbled on a video of the show. "I'm usually a bit grumpy about how people use my drawings," he admitted, "but this time – this is very, very cool."

Perjovschi's instinct – to play with words, cleanly and hopefully, and to refuse to make anything smaller than it is – is rooted in his upbringing. The artist was 28 when Romania's revolution erupted in December 1989, the country finally opening up after more than two decades under Ceaușescu's dictatorship: no free speech, no free expression, no free movement, and a visual culture engineered around the suppression of the individual mind. Since then, the almost unthinkable liberty that followed has never left his hand.

For decades he has drawn in notebooks, on walls, across the pages of the political magazine *22* (named for the date in December the regime fell). Almost all of it is made to be erased – drawn straight onto the wall or window, and painted over when the show comes down. He works, as he puts it, for "some kind of virtual somebody," though the work itself has been shown everywhere from the Palais de Tokyo to MoMA. One drawing he has remade since 2000 reads simply, "I'm not exotic, I'm exhausted": a retort to the way the West receives artists from the East, as though they are legible only through their hardship. He keeps remaking it because he believes it still holds true.

Several pieces in the SS26 collection bear a pun he developed for the occasion: “Non-Toxic Garçon.” Its target is the cult of misogynistic social media personality Andrew Tate, who sheltered in Romania while under investigation for rape and human trafficking. “It disgusted me,” Perjovschi says, “that Romania could let someone like that hide out here – that there were still such toxic men.”

It is easy to forget how the major fashion capitals of Europe are concentrated in the west of the continent; the industry orbits around Paris and Milan, while entire cities are consigned to the margins – cities with no shortage of appetite, only of access. And CdG has understood this longer than most. The guerrilla stores it ran between 2004 and 2008 – planted with deliberate perversity in Krakow, Ljubljana and Reykjavik rather than the obvious capitals – were an early articulation of the same conviction the Bucharest show extends nearly two decades on.

Freedom is the thread that runs through every aspect of this collaboration – moving in every direction at once. It runs backward, to the revolution of 1989 that set Perjovschi free to draw; inward, to a hospital built on the belief that a child should come there to learn, not simply to be treated; outward, to a brand that gave him total freedom and asked for nothing; and sideways, to a city the fashion world rarely visits. Standing before *Non-Toxic Garçon*, the pun opens slowly and then all at once, the brand name repurposed as a satirical slogan– a garment doing what Perjovschi’s drawings have always done: cutting through the noise.