

THE FASHION WORLD OF JEAN PAUL GAULTIER FROM THE SIDEWALK TO THE CATWALK

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts develops and produces
the first international exhibition devoted to the celebrated couturier

Montreal, June 14, 2011 – From June 17 to October 2, 2011, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) will present *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*, the first international exhibition devoted to the celebrated French couturier. Gaultier launched his first prêt-à-porter collection in 1976 and founded his own couture house in 1997. Dubbed fashion's *enfant terrible* by the press from the time of his first runway shows in the 1970s, Jean Paul Gaultier is indisputably one of the most important fashion designers of recent decades. Very early, his avant-garde fashions reflected an understanding of a multicultural society's issues and preoccupations, shaking up – with invariable good humour – established societal and aesthetic codes.



Gaultier Paris lace label, for haute couture
© Jean Paul Gaultier

More of a contemporary installation than a fashion retrospective, this major exhibition, which features 140 ensembles and numerous documents, is particularly innovative in the theatrical *mise en scène* and multimedia approach provided by UBU/Compagnie de création's animated mannequins. "I think the way people dress today is a form of artistic expression. Saint Laurent, for instance, has made great art. Art lies in the way the whole outfit is put together. Take Jean Paul Gaultier. What he does is really art," said Andy Warhol (*Mondo Uomo*, 1984).

Initiated, developed, produced and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the designer's own label, this exploration of Jean Paul Gaultier's creative world has been organized in collaboration with the Maison Jean Paul Gaultier, which provided the Museum with exclusive access to its archives. Following its presentation in Montreal, the exhibition will embark on an international tour, with presentations at the Dallas Museum of Art (November 13, 2011 - February 12, 2012), the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, de Young (March 24 - August 19, 2012), the Fundación Mapfre – Instituto de Cultura, Madrid (September 26 – November 18, 2012), and the Kunsthall Rotterdam, the Netherlands (February 9 – May 12, 2013).

"I wanted to create an exhibition on Jean Paul Gaultier more than any other couturier because of his great humanity," explained Nathalie Bondil, Director and Chief Curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. "Beyond the technical virtuosity resulting from exceptional expertise in the various skills involved in haute couture, an unbridled imagination and ground-breaking artistic collaborations, he offers an open-minded vision of society, a crazy, sensitive, funny, sassy world in which everyone can assert his or her own identity, a world without discrimination, a unique 'fusion couture.' Beneath Jean Paul Gaultier's wit and irreverence lie a true generosity of spirit and a very powerful message for society. His humanist aesthetic touches me deeply."



Jean Paul Gaultier
Jean-Baptiste Mondino
© Jean-Baptiste Mondino

The exhibition – which the couturier considers to be a creation in its own right rather than a retrospective – features approximately 140 ensembles, mainly from the designer’s couture collections, but also from his prêt-à-porter line, along with their accessories. Created between the early 1970s and 2010, these pieces have, for the most part, never before been exhibited. Many other exhibits are also being presented for the first time. Sketches, stage costumes, excerpts from films, runway shows, concerts, videos, dance performances and even television programmes illustrate Jean Paul Gaultier’s fashion world. The many artistic collaborations that have characterized Gaultier’s world is examined: in film (Pedro Almodóvar, Peter Greenaway, Luc Besson, Marc Caro and Jean-Pierre Jeunet) and contemporary dance (Angelin Preljocaj, Régine Chopinot and Maurice Béjart), not to mention the world of popular music, in France (Yvette Horner and Mylène Farmer...) and on the international scene (Kylie Minogue and especially Madonna, whose friendship with Gaultier has led her to graciously lend two iconic corsets from her 1990 *Blond Ambition World Tour*). Fashion photography is also a major focus of attention, thanks to loans of, in many cases, never-before-seen prints from contemporary photographers and renowned contemporary artists (Andy Warhol, Cindy Sherman, Erwin Wurm, David LaChapelle, Richard Avedon, Mario Testino, Steven Meisel, Steven Klein, Mert Alas & Marcus Piggott, Pierre et Gilles, Inez van Lamsweerde & Vinoodh Matadin, Paolo Roversi and Robert Doisneau...).

Keenly interested in all the world’s cultures and countercultures, Gaultier has picked up on the current trends and proclaimed the right to be different, and in the process conceived a new kind of fashion in both the way it is made and worn. Through twists, transformations, transgressions and reinterpretations, he not only erases the boundaries between cultures but also the sexes, creating a new androgyny or playing with subverting hypersexualized fashion codes.

Under the leadership of Nathalie Bondil, Director and Chief Curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the exhibition *Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* is curated by the MMFA’s Thierry-Maxime Loriot.

A celebration of Gaultier’s daring inventiveness and humanist vision, this exhibition pays tribute to his cutting-edge fashion and explores the audaciously eclectic sources of his ideas. This multimedia installation is organized along six different thematic sections tracing the influences – from the streets of Paris to the world of science fiction – that have marked the couturier’s creative development: *The Odyssey of Jean Paul Gaultier*; *The Boudoir*; *Skin Deep*; *Punk Cancan*; *Urban Jungle*; and *Metropolis*.

The Museum is innovating by collaborating with the Quebec-based UBU/Compagnie de création for the design and animation of a poetic, playful multimedia creation. Denis Marleau and Stéphanie Jasmin came up with the idea of animating thirty faces through an ingenious projection system. Wearing remarkable wigs and headdresses by Odile Gilbert, founder of the Atelier 68 in Paris, these mannequins are placed throughout the galleries, surprising visitors with their lifelike presence. A dozen celebrities, including Gaultier himself, models Ève Salvail and Francisco Randez, singer and filmmaker Melissa Auf der Maur, soprano Suzie LeBlanc and TV host Virginie



Molded heads for the Jean Paul Gaultier exhibition mannequins
Foreground : Jean Paul Gaultier
Background : Francisco Randez
Photo : MMFA Christine Guest

Coossa have lent their faces and sometimes even their voices to this innovative project, produced for the first time by a museum. A particularly innovative *mise en scène* was designed with the architectural and stage design firm Projectiles, Paris, which also designed the Miles Davis retrospective presented at the Museum in 2010.

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts published a major monograph – the first on Gaultier – in collaboration with Abrams for the English edition and Éditions de La Martinière for the French edition. Produced under the general editorship of Thierry-Maxime Loriot, this magnificent large-format art book (424 pages and over 550 illustrations) comes in a slipcase. The book's graphic design was entrusted to the Montreal agency Paprika, which has been awarded many prestigious international awards. This comprehensive monograph brings together archival documents and over fifty interviews with Gaultier's muses and colleagues, as well as the artists he has created costumes for: Pedro Almodóvar, Catherine Deneuve, Madonna, Helen Mirren, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, Martin Margiela, Pierre Cardin, Dita Von Teese, Marion Cotillard, Kylie Minogue, Polly Mellen and Tom Ford, to name just a few. It features many previously unpublished illustrations thanks to the collaboration of renowned fashion photographers and the Maison Jean Paul Gaultier. The publication also includes two interviews with Gaultier, one by Florence Müller, an art historian based in Paris, and the other by Thierry-Maxime Loriot, the exhibition curator, as well as an interview with Valerie Steele, fashion historian and director of New York's Museum at Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT). An essay written by Suzy Menkes, journalist and fashion editor at *The New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*, looks at Gaultier's fashion shows and examines their visionary reflection of society's evolution over the past thirty-five years. This volume is available exclusively at the Museum Boutique and Bookstore this summer. It will be distributed internationally in September 2011.



The exhibition ***The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*** was initiated and produced by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with the Maison Jean Paul Gaultier.

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The Museum would like to thank the Maison Jean Paul Gaultier, Madonna, Mylène Farmer and Kylie Minogue for their exceptional loans.

With this exhibition, the Museum is celebrating Montreal's fifth year as a *UNESCO City of Design*, a metropolis of designers and creativity.

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts also wishes to express its gratitude to Québec's Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine, the Conseil des arts de Montréal and the Canada Council for the Arts for their ongoing support.



Jean Paul Gaultier *Classique* Eau de toilette

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The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' International Exhibition Programme receives financial support from the Exhibition Fund of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts Foundation and the Paul G. Desmarais Fund.

Images of a number of works in the exhibition are available on the Museum's website at the following address: mmfa.qc.ca/media.

About the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has one of the highest attendance rates among Canadian museums. Every year, its 600,000 visitors enjoy its encyclopedic collection, unique in Canada and free to all, and its original temporary exhibitions, which combine artistic disciplines (fine arts, music, film, fashion, design) and feature innovative exhibition design. The Museum designs, produces and circulates many of its exhibitions in Europe and North America. It is also one of Canada's leading publishers of bilingual art books, which are distributed worldwide. More than 100,000 families and schoolchildren take part in its educational, cultural and community programmes every year. In 2011, the Museum will open a fourth pavilion – the Claire and Marc Bourgie Pavilion of Quebec and Canadian Art – and a 450 seat-concert hall housing a rare collection of Tiffany stained glass – Bourgie Hall. At the same time, the Museum's rich collections will be reinstalled in the three other pavilions devoted to world cultures, European and contemporary art, as well as the decorative arts and design. Music is now an integral part of the Museum, providing another perspective on the visual arts, through musical audioguides and other innovative activities organized in co-operation with the new Arte Musica Foundation. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is a private, non-profit institution that must generate the funds for nearly 50% of its annual operating budget and nearly 100% of the acquisition of works for its collection.



Stéphane Sednaoui
Jean Paul Gaultier pour la vie, 1987
Digital print
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