

THIERRY MUGLER : *BEYOND COUTURE*

The first exhibition dedicated to creator Thierry Mugler,
to be presented at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in March 2019

Montreal, October 26, 2017 (Rev. May 23, 2018) – The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) is pleased to announce the presentation, in March 2019, of the first exhibition on French creator Thierry Mugler. Conceived, produced and put on tour by the MMFA, this exhibition will reveal the multiple universes of this undeniably artistic figure – visionary couturier, director, photographer and perfumer – in a retrospective of his work, especially his ready-to-wear and haute couture creations.

This impressive exhibition, premiering in Montreal, will bring together more than 130 outfits, most of them never shown before, created between 1973 and 2001, as well as many unseen archive documents and photos by great artists and photographers.

The exhibition trace the path of an exceptional creator who revolutionized fashion with morphological and futuristic cuts, and glamorous, sculptural and elegant silhouettes; strict lines and super-heroine shoulders; and a corseted waist dressing a sublime, sensual and powerful woman in constant metamorphosis. The exhibition offers a dive into his singular imagination, to encounter by turns his perfectionism, Hollywood-style prestige, dreams, exotic creatures, eroticism, and science fiction. It will explain his audacious choices, such as using innovative materials in high fashion such as metal, fake fur, vinyl and latex.

Nathalie Bondil, Director General and Chief Curator of the MMFA, said: “The Museum is pursuing its major exhibitions in the world of high fashion. Metamorphoses, super-heroines and cyborgs are already present in Mugler’s work: he perceived very early the trans-human revolutions on the way. His streamlined and elegant creatures, and dangerous and alluring women, people a universe of glamour and seduction at the frontiers of reality.”

Thierry Mugler has staged some of the most spectacular fashion shows of his time. He created the costumes for the staging of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* by the Comédie-Française and the Festival d’Avignon, and the *Zumanity* show by the Cirque du Soleil. He has dressed a galaxy of stars, such as Diana Ross, David Bowie, Lady Gaga, Liza Minnelli and, in Quebec, Diane Dufresne and Céline Dion. He has also created costumes for Mylène Farmer and Beyoncé for their tours and videos.

As a photographer and film-maker, he created the emblematic 1990s clip *Too Funky* by British singer George Michael, as well as short films starring actresses Isabelle Huppert and Juliette



Binoche. Over the course of his career, Thierry Mugler has had many collaborations with filmmakers, architects such as Andrée Putman for his boutiques, and renowned photographers and artists, such as Helmut Newton, Dominique Issermann, Guy Bourdin, Herb Ritts, Peter Lindbergh, David LaChapelle and Pierre & Gilles.

Creator **Manfred Thierry Mugler** observed that: “I have always been fascinated by the most beautiful animal on the Earth: the human being. I have used all of the tools at my disposal to sublimate this creature: fashion, shows, perfumes, photography, video... I am not a person who dwells in the past, but the MMFA, through Nathalie Bondil, was the first to propose me to stage my creations and imagine together a free, global and reinvented artistic vision. How could I refuse?”

“The work of Thierry Mugler is as distinctive as it is avant-garde. It has an architectural, hyper-feminized style that sublimes the curves of the femme fatale. This creator knows how to distinguish himself through constant innovation and audacious silhouettes that have marked an era, and found a place in the history of fashion. His singular style, a kind of futurist version of *New Look* with a touch of fantasy and fetishism, is still a powerful influence on today’s generation of couturiers,” explained **Thierry-Maxime Lorient**, exhibition curator.

An exhibition initiated, produced and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, in collaboration with the Groupe Clarins and the Maison Mugler.

It was curated by Thierry-Maxime Lorient under the direction of Nathalie Bondil, Director General and Chief Curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Born in Québec (Canada), Thierry-Maxime Lorient worked in the fashion industry for more than a decade before becoming an exhibition curator. He curated the MMFA exhibitions *Love Is Love: Wedding Bliss for All à la Jean Paul Gaultier* (2017) and *Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* (2011-2016). He produced the exhibitions *Peter Lindbergh: A Different Vision on Fashion Photography*, presented at the Venaria Reale de Turin, and *Viktor & Rolf: Fashion Artists*, presented at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), in Melbourne. He also authored the books that accompanied these exhibitions.

A New Exhibition about Fashion at the MMFA

With this exhibition, the MMFA pursues an ongoing fascination with the world of fashion that led it to present *Yves Saint Laurent* (2008) and *Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* (2011-2016), a phenomenal exhibition which has been seen by more than 2 million people in 12 cities around the world. It has also presented *Love is Love: Wedding Bliss for all à la Jean-Paul Gaultier*, which brings together 36 wedding dress creations by the French couturier, an exhibition which will travel to the Néstor Kirchner Cultural Centre in Buenos Aires next spring.

Acknowledgements

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Photo: Thierry Mugler, *La Chimère* collection, haute couture fall-winter 1997-1998. Model: Adriana Karembou. *La Chimère* ensemble: Sheath dress resembling a mythical beast, with an articulated gold body made from scales, feathers and horsehair embroidered with rhinestones. *La Chimère* collection, haute couture fall-winter 1997-1998. Photo © Patrice Stable

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About the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

The MMFA welcomes a million visitors annually. Quebec's most visited museum, it is one of the most popular museums in Canada, and ranks eighteenth among art museums in North America. The Museum's original temporary exhibitions combine various artistic disciplines – fine arts, music, film, fashion and design – and are exported around the world. Its rich encyclopedic collection, distributed among five pavilions, includes international art, world cultures, decorative arts and design, and Quebec and Canadian art. The MMFA complex includes Bourgie Hall, a 460-seat concert hall. The MMFA is one of Canada's leading publishers of art books in French and English, which are distributed internationally. The Museum also houses the Michel de la Chenelière International Atelier for Education and Art Therapy, the largest educational complex in a North American art museum, enabling the MMFA to offer innovative educational, wellness and art therapy programmes. mbam.qc.ca