

# NOMA

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### FASHION THAT DEFIES CONVENTION

*NOMA's First Fashion Exhibition Examines Archetypes of Womanhood*

**NEW ORLEANS, LA** – Showcasing rare pieces from one of the world's largest private collections of Alexander McQueen fashion, the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) presents *A Queen Within - Adorned Archetypes*, on view from February 21 through May 28, 2018. NOMA's first major fashion exhibition will feature contemporary designers showcased in an immersive gallery presentation. This exhibition's bold couture explores different archetypes of femininity, and how these mythic characters manifest through storytelling in fashion over the past decade.

Designer Alexander McQueen (1969-2010) was a master of building narratives through his collections and runway shows. Inspired by his sensitivity to historical and literary research, *A Queen Within* uses fashion to explore seven archetypal personality types of a Queen, or metaphorically, of a woman: The Mother Earth, Sage, Magician, Enchantress, Explorer, Heroine and Thespian. These themes are derived from recurring motifs in myths and fairy tales of world literature. The story of each feminine archetype—its powers, its weaknesses, its significance—is articulated in *A Queen Within* through pioneering fashion, photography, and artwork.

“The designers featured in *A Queen Within* showcase the competing, complimentary and often contradictory roles within the ideals of contemporary womanhood,” said Susan Taylor, the Montine McDaniel Freeman Director of NOMA. “The exhibition explores the complicated symbolism used by avant-garde designers while bringing a major fashion exhibition to New Orleans. This exhibition definitively demonstrates that fashion *is* art.”

*A Queen Within: Adorned Archetypes* features more than 100 experimental gowns, headpieces, jewelry, and shoes by more than 50 of the world's most insightful contemporary designers, artists and photographers. The exhibition includes household names like McQueen, Prada, Chanel and Comme des Garçons intermixed with other boundary-pushing fashion, like Chromat's body-positive architectural looks, Rich Mnisi's experimental videos and Iris van Herpen's dresses that boldly use new technology.

“This exhibition shows beauty, certainly, but also pain, humor, power, and weakness,” said Mel Buchanan, NOMA's RosaMary Curator of Decorative Arts & Design. “A *Queen Within* references the past and foretells the future, exploring how fashion can be about the complex human condition.”

*A Queen Within* shows fashion's possibility as an art form, full of glamour, wit and escapism but also innovation and pressing social issues. "A Vivienne Westwood coat is from a collection that called for people to unite in an effort to save Venice, and the rest of our planet, from the effects of climate change. Minna Palmqvist's mannequin busts capture the beauty of nonconforming bodies, showing how fashion's pioneers are moving away from the standard size zero dress form. Gypsy Sport's gender-fluid work is seen as the voice for a new generation that calls for a more global, inclusive world. The exhibition also highlights photographers and artists such as June Canedo, Raúl de Nieves and Joanne Petit-Frère, who use the adorned body to depict stories from communities around the world and place them in a global historical context," said exhibition curators Sofia Hedman and Serge Martynov of MUSEEA.

*A Queen Within: Adorned Archetypes* is an exhibition developed by Barrett Barrera Projects and MUSEEA, toured internationally by Flying Fish. Presentation of this exhibition at the New Orleans Museum of Art is sponsored by the Eugenie and Joseph Jones Family Foundation. Additional support provided by Ashley Longshore, Joseph: A Women's Fashion Boutique, and Millie Davis Kohn.

### **Exhibited Designers, Artists and Photographers**

69, Adidas, Alexander McQueen, Anrealage/Kunihiko Morinaga, Arvida Byström & Maja Malou Lyse, Ashish, Bea Szenfeld, Bourgeois Boheme, Carcel, Chan Luu, Charlie le Mindu, Chromat, Cindy Hsin-Liu Kao & Jimmy Day, Comme des Garçons, Cooper & Gorfer, Cutecircuit, Daan Roosegaarde, David LaChapelle, Diana Scherer, Fantich & Young, Gianfranco Ferré, Gucci, Gypsy Sport, Hassan Hajjaj, Herdentier, Hideki Seo, Iris van Herpen, Jalila Essaidi, Joanne Petit-Frère, Jordan Askill, June Canedo, Keta Gutmane, Louise Linderoth, Maison Martin Margiela, courtesy of Maison Margiela, Maja Gunn, Maiko Takeda, Maimouna Guerresi, Michael Drummond, Minna Palmqvist, MuSkin, Omar Victor Diop, Pam Hogg, Prada, Raúl De Nieves, Reformation, Rich Mnisi, Sandra Backlund, Serena Gili, Slow Factory, Tabitha Osler, this is Sweden, Tommy Hilfiger, Viktor&Rolf and Vivienne Westwood.

Special commissioned headdresses by Charlie le Mindu.

### **About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden**

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses nearly 40,000 art objects encompassing 5,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 AM to 6 PM; Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM every Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20th century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 9 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit [www.noma.org](http://www.noma.org).

Wednesdays are free admission days for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission every day through the end of the year, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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