

Iris van Herpen

Sculpting the Senses

—
Press release



MUSEE

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DÉCORATIFS

Solve Sundsbø for Iris van Herpen. *Hypersonic Speed Top*. *Capriote Collection*. 2018. Iris van Herpen private collection

29 Nov 2023
— 28 April 2024


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Iris van Herpen Sculpting the Senses

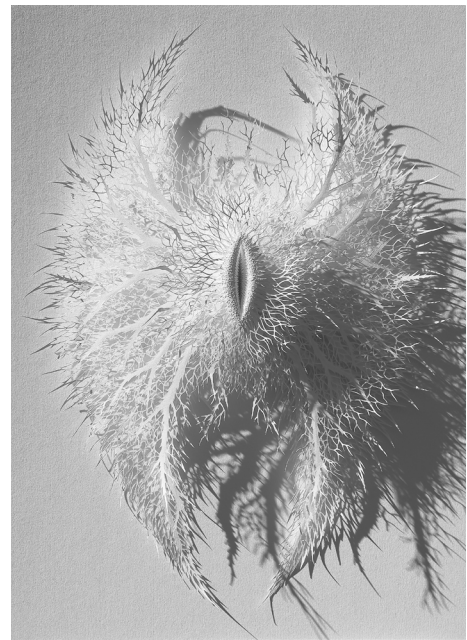
1. Carla van de Puttelaar
for Iris van Herpen —
Various collections
2020
Iris van Herpen
private collection

2. Rogan Brown —
Fallen Angel Wings
2014
© Rogan Brown

Held at the Musée des Arts décoratifs, from 29 November 2023 to 28 April 2024, the exhibition *Iris van Herpen. Sculpting the Senses* pays tribute to one of the most forward-thinking fashion designers. A pioneer in the use of new technologies in her discipline, Iris van Herpen transgresses conventional clothing norms, while embracing both traditional Couture craftsmanship and innovative techniques.



1.



2.

Ranging from micro to macro, the exhibition questions the place of the body in space, its relationship to clothing and its environment, and its future in a rapidly changing world. A selection of over one hundred haute couture pieces made by Iris van Herpen dialogue with works of contemporary art, by artists like Philip Beesley, the Collectif Mé, Wim Delvoye, Kate MccGwire, Damien Jalet, Kohei Nawa, Casey Curran, Rogan Borwn, Jacques Rougerie and design pieces by Neri Oxman, Ren Ri, Ferruccio Laviani, and Tomáš Libertíny, in addition to items from the spheres of the natural sciences, such as skeletons and fossils, thereby instilling a unique resonance with historical pieces. The exhibition will be presented in the Christine & Stephen A. Schwarzman Galleries, and curated by Cloé Pitiot and assistant curator Louise Curtis, with the scenography entrusted to the Studio Nathalie Crinière.



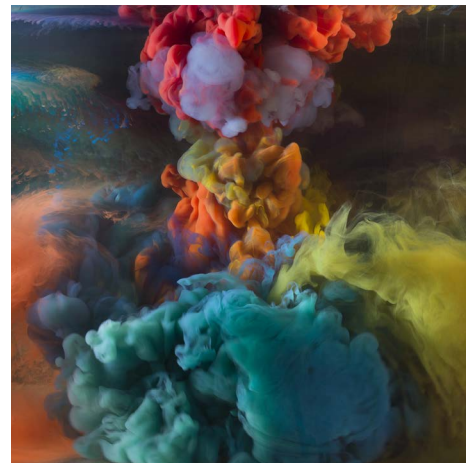
3.

3. Warren du Preez
& Nick Thornton Jones
for Iris van Herpen —
Cosmica Dress,
in collaboration with Kim
Keever (print)
Shift Souls Collection
2019
Iris van Herpen
private collection

4. Kim Keever —
Abstract 46682
2019
© Kim Keever

Born in 1984, Iris van Herpen grew up in the village of Wamel (Netherlands) in harmony with nature and the living world, which are, along with the classical dance she practiced intensively from an early age, the founding elements of her relationship to the body and clothing. After a formative period with Alexander McQueen and Claudy Jongstra, she founded the Maison Iris van Herpen in Amsterdam in 2007, combining the subtleties of craftsmanship with the pioneering spirit of innovation, decompartmentalising and opening up her practice to a host of other disciplines, resulting in sensorial design that capture the intricacy and diversity of a natural world.

Four years later, she joined the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture* in Paris. The year 2010 marked a turning point in her career: she presented her first 3D-printed dress from the *Crystallization* Collection, currently conserved by the *Musée des Arts décoratifs*. In the manner of the iconic piece made in collaboration with Daniel Widrig and the *Materialise* company, Iris van Herpen contemplates fashion as an interdisciplinary language and a dynamic entity, the result of the cross-pollination of various fields: art, chemistry, dance, physics, architecture, biology, design, and technology. By collaborating with creatives and thinkers of all stripes, she seeks to challenge our notions of *Haute-Couture*.



4.

Conscious of the issues of her time, for the past number of years, she has privileged eco-responsible manufacturing methods, as evidenced by certain creations made from recycled plastic or 3D printed cocoa beans. In 2012, the Groninger Museum devoted a first major exhibition to her work. Today, Iris van Herpen is internationally recognized as one of the most remarkable and surprising fashion designers of her generation.

Iris van Herpen's commitment to slow fashion and thoughtfully allow her multi-disciplinary to transcend boundaries, inspiring a reimagining of our relationship with fashion and extending the realm of imagination.

Celebrating her unique approach, this retrospective, organized around nine themes, identifies the essence of her work, merging fashion, contemporary art, design, and science. The theme of water and the origins of life, omnipresent in the designer's work, opens the exhibition. Her latest collection, entitled *Carte Blanche*, showcased in this space, dialogues with David Spriggs' work *Origins*, literally inviting the visitor to immerse themselves in the designer's aquatic universe. Water is also touched on in terms of the scale of the immensity of the ocean with the wave realized by the Collectif Mé. A special space reveals the natural environments invisible to the naked eye already unveiled in the 19th century in the illustrations of Ernst Haeckel or in the remarkable glass models by Léopold and Rudolf Blaschka. Works by Ren Ri and Tomáš Libertíny, made by bees, contrast with the fragility Rogan Brown's paper works.

5. Wim Delvoye —
Nautilus
2017
© Adagp, Paris

6. Luigi and Iango
for Iris van Herpen —
Skeleton Dress,
in collaboration
with Isaie Bloch
Capriole Collection
2020
Iris van Herpen
private collection



5.



6.

The theme of the skeleton is inaugurated by the *Skeleton* dress echoing the hybrid skeleton of a work by Japanese artist Heishihiro Ishino. The place of the body is also evoked at the heart of organic and architectural networks, represented by means of a dress, a metaphor for a Gothic cathedral, but also by Ferruccio Laviani's *Gothic cabinet*, and a documentary by Yann Arthus-Bertrand and Michael Pitiot entitled *Terra*, committed to the defence of life and the interconnections between ecosystems. Next, visitors are invited to leave the physical dimension of their body to explore the sensory world and through photographs by Tim Walker, a sculpture by Matthew Harrison. Finally, the shadows of mythology around the theme of the medusa created by Phillip Beesley enter into a dialogue with works by Kate MccGwire, EcoLogicStudio and a piece of Samurai armour. In the next section dedicated to new nature, the installation *Living Shadows* by Beesley comes to life as a derivative of physical dress and infiltrate its surroundings. An installation by Casey Curran offers a reflection on the place and the physical and spiritual future of human beings.



7.

7. David Uzochukwu
for Iris van Herpen —
Hydrozoa Dress
Sensory Seas Collection
2020
Iris van Herpen
private collection

The exhibition ends with a presentation of Iris van Herpen's works as if projected in the immensity of the cosmos. Her dresses dance across the sky, with bodies floating through space and time. The photographic works of artist Kim Keever, as well as images of nebulae encourage visitors to experience the world in a more holistic fashion.

8. David Uzochukwu
for Iris van Herpen —
Sensory Seas Dress
& *Nautiloid Dress*
Sensory Seas Collection
2020
Iris van Herpen
private collection

Three spaces bring the exhibition to a close: an evocation of Iris van Herpen's studio, in which visitors are immersed into the atelier process through hundreds of material samples, a cabinet of curiosities presenting her accessories (shoes, masks, and hairstyling items), alongside elements from the natural sciences and videos, and a room celebrating the living and moving body through videos of the designer's catwalk shows.



8.

The exhibition is accompanied by a sound composition created by Salvador Breed, which challenges the senses and further immerses the visitor in this journey around the body and the themes close to the designer.

Much more than an exhibition devoted to Haute Couture, *Iris van Herpen. Sculpting the Senses* takes visitors on an immersive journey through this singular and hybrid universe, punctuated by the designer's research and experiments.

Useful Information

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Louise Curtis, Assistant curator,
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[#Expo_IrisvanHerpen](#)

— Les Arts Décoratifs

**The not-for-profit organization
Les Arts Décoratifs brings together
the Musée des Arts Décoratifs,
the Musée Nissim de Camondo,
the Camondo School, the Ateliers
du Carrousel, and the Library.**

Johannes Huth, President
Sylvie Corréard, Chief executive
officer
Christine Macel, Director
of Museums, Deputy chief
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— Musée des Arts décoratifs

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→ Tuesday and Wednesday,
11 am–6 pm

→ Open late on Thursdays until 9 pm

Admission

→ General admission: €14

→ Concession: €10

→ Free for under 26

— Musée Nissim de Camondo

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and Tuesday to Friday 10 am – 6 pm

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