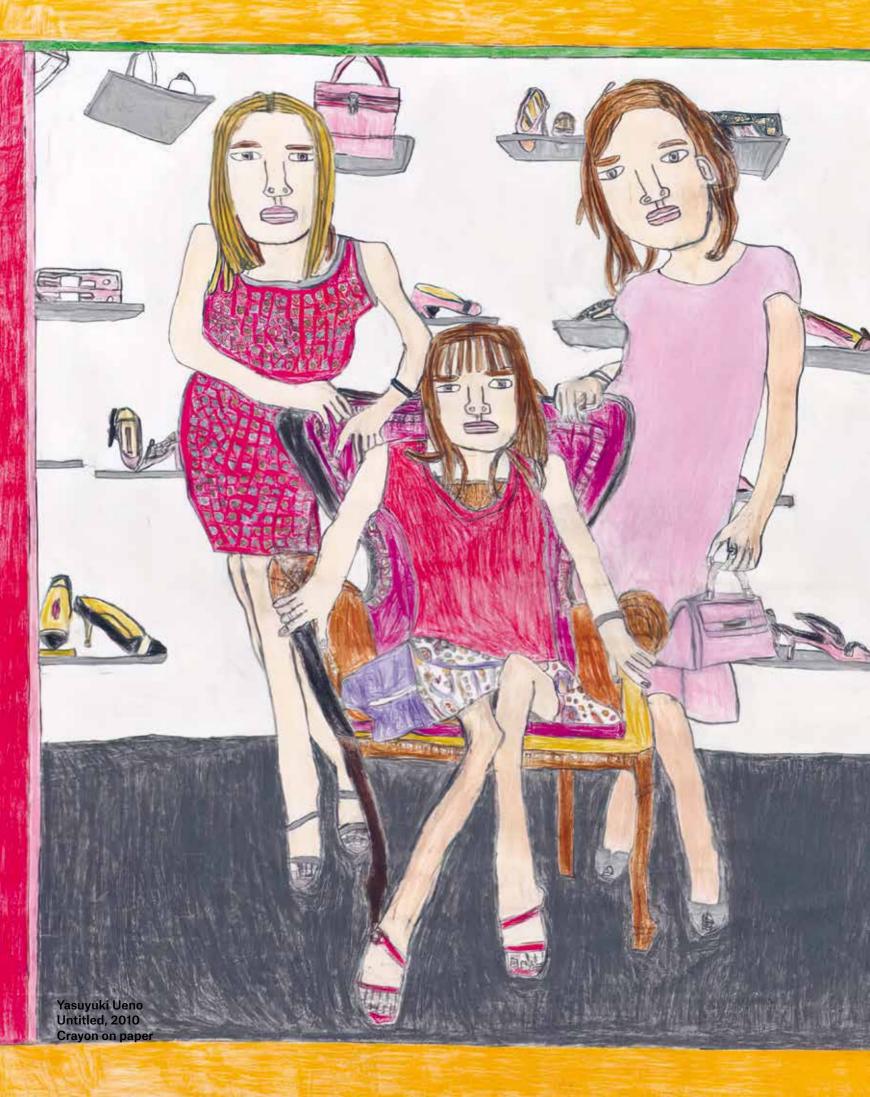
## FASHION & THE PSYCHE

HANNIBAL







# MIRROR

FASHION & THE PSYCHE

# MRROR

HANNIBAL

Mannequins in Maison Martin Margiela's showroom Autumn-Winter 1994-95

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## PREFACE

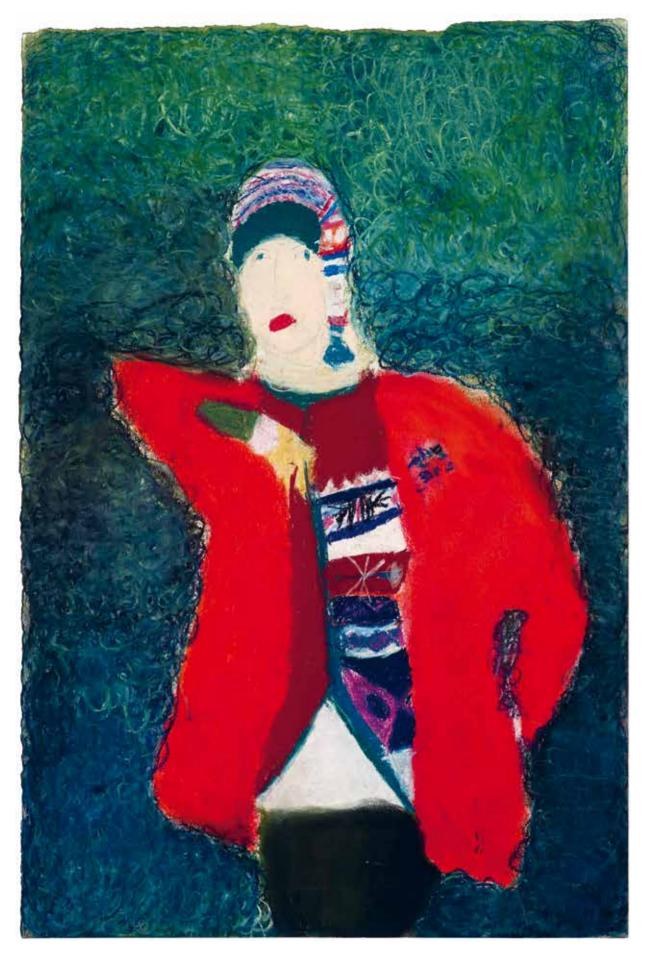
In autumn 2022, MoMu Antwerp and Dr. Guislain Museum are joining forces for the first time for an ambitious dual exhibition entitled *MIRROR MIRROR* — *Fashion & the Psyche*, which examines the link between fashion, psychology, self-image and identity. What happens when a fashion museum and a museum about the history of and current attittudes towards psychiatry and mental health find common ground?

Although our collections and subject matter are ostensibly very different, a collaboration between our two museums had been on the cards for guite some time. Those who think that one museum focuses on the body while the other deals with the mind, and that these are two separate entities that do not influence each other, ignore the complex interaction between these two components of our identity. In fashion, designers face ever-increasing pressure, dictated by the ever-faster pace of successive collections. During the coronavirus pandemic, the problem of this pressure and the forms of psychological suffering that it causes, for both established names and the newest generation of designers and fashion students, came to the fore. The growing focus on all things digital in our society, and thus also in fashion, also gave rise to new, often disrupted relationships between the body and the mind, and the body images that we apply in our society. The exhibition at MoMu revolves around the personal experience of the body. Themes include body dysmorphia (a body perception disorder); the lavered meaning and history of human replicas such as dolls and mannequins; and the symbiosis between art, fashion and technology in the form of cyborgs and avatars.

Of course, not all clothing and style stem from a designer, whether they're well known or not. Instead they are created in isolation, in the privacy of one's living room, say, or in a mental hospital. In the past, psychiatric patients have sought to escape the world of psychiatry and also the uniformity that society attempted to impose on our sense of what is 'normal'. The 'madmen' hoped to (metaphorically) flee the hospital in their own individual way, using their own clothes as a form of escape. In Dutch, the word for madness is waanzin (literally: waan-zin or 'madnesssense'). The word implies a creative value that can never be covered by the notion of mental vulnerability. Instead, this creativity assigns a necessary 'sense' or meaning to the madness. The 'madness', meanwhile, represents so much more than a small part of the identity or personality of someone who is suffering from psychosis. Madness can thus be meaningful, in the form of the artistic creativity that may give the patient a way out, an escape from the suffering. Vice versa, are we ------ who do not suffer from psychosis ------ willing to develop a language for ourselves to understand the rationale of madness? The exhibition at Dr. Guislain Museum highlights the joy and freedom that the 'twisted' mind brings us, even more than we expected. It brings together a group of exceptional artists, each of whom use clothes or textiles in their own way, to create a place for themselves in the world. Their creations are mostly hidden or occasionally revealed to just a handful of people. In some instances, they are also worn with pride on the catwalk that is the street.

*MIRROR MIRROR — Fashion & the Psyche* came about thanks to the enthusiasm of many. First and foremost, we wish to thank the curators of MoMu and Dr. Guislain Museum: Elisa De Wyngaert and Yoon Hee Lamot, respectively. Our sincere thanks also to graphic designer Paul Boudens, exhibition designers Bart Van Merode and Roel Huisman, and exhibition designer Tuur Demaegdt. We also wish to extend our gratitude to the many lenders, and the photographers and writers who contributed to this publication, as well as to Hannibal Books.

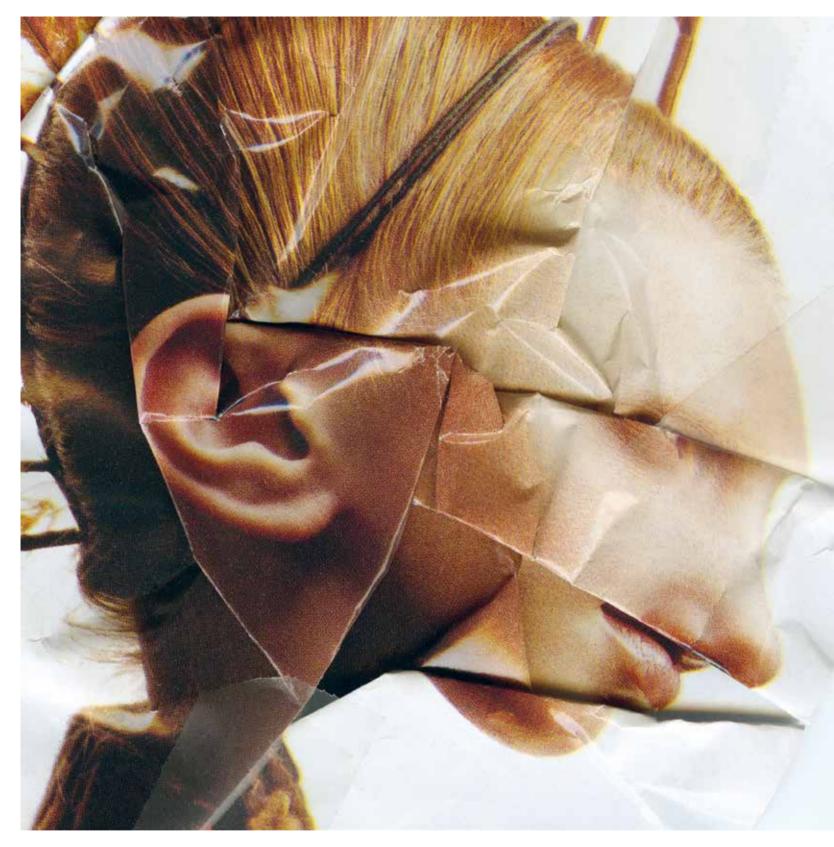
Finally, we want to thank the two amazing museum teams that contributed their experience to this ambitious project, along with the volunteers, interns and production teams.



Pascale Vincke Untitled, 1995 Dry pastel on paper

Dries Van Noten Autumn-Winter 2022-23





11 11

# REFLECTION REPLICA AVATAR

'Fashion & the Psyche', a story in two chapters and in two locations. That was the idea behind the close collaboration between two institutions, each with its own unique history, collection and expertise. After several long discussions with curator Yoon Hee Lamot of the Dr. Guislain Museum, we decided to examine the relationship between fashion and psychology from our own singular perspective. The *MIRROR MIRROR* exhibition at MoMu places a strong emphasis on the body, telling a story in three parts. The body is under constant monitoring: it is exposed to the observing glances of others, but also to our own, often merciless, subjective gaze. Therefore the exhibition at MoMu opens with the theme of **REFLECTION**. Visitors are invited to reflect on how we look at ourselves in a dynamic scenography with mirrors and fragmented glass pavilions. How do contemporary fashion designers and artists imagine, rethink and transform the human body? How do they challenge conventional beauty ideals? Can clothing and art mentally protect, liberate or empower us?

Fashion designers such as Comme des Garcons, Issey Mivake, Molly Goddard, Walter Van Beirendonck, Martin Margiela, Hussein Chalavan, Noir Kei Ninomiva, Simone Rocha, and JW Anderson embrace all kinds of body types, by combining arotesque, unexpected proportions and volumes in their designs. Their sculptural creations and voluminous garments often conceal the wearer's body shape, leaving the observer to imagine what it might look like. This floating, open space between the body and the garment ——— or the Japanese concept of *ma*gives the wearer the space to breathe and move freely. The silhouettes become a protective architecture. We asked hair stylist and artist Cyndia Harvey to create custom wigs for the designs on display. Harvey specialised in afro hair in London's hair salons from a young age, then for many years was an assistant to industry legend Sam McKnight. Since then, she has branched out on her own, working with numerous leading names in fashion and with artists such as FKA twigs, Kendrick Lamar and Frank Ocean. Harvey's creations celebrate the beauty and creativity of black hair styles. The fashion designs on display engage in an intimate dialogue with contemporary art. Artists such as Genieve Figgis (whose paintings are described in Lucy Moyse Ferreira's essay), Genesis Belanger and Antony Gormley explore body image, body dysmorphia, the fragmentation of the body and the ephemeral boundaries between the body and space in their respective oeuvres. Tschabalala Self's life-size textile paintings question the iconographic meaning of the black female body in contemporary culture. This first theme is all about breaking free from beauty standards, and the important and empowering role that fashion and art can play in this process.

Every day we are confronted with replicas of the human body. Sometimes we recognise ourselves in them, and sometimes we don't. **REPLICA**, the second theme in the exhibition, unravels the layered meaning and history of dolls and mannequins. The various objects and stories that have been gathered for MIRROR MIRROR are described in my essay, and are presented in a humansized doll house. The artists and fashion designers in the exhibition consciously toy with the ambiguity between the living and the lifeless that is so typical of dolls and mannequins. They use replicas as an instrument to comment on our neoliberal, capitalist society. In a feminist art context, they are used to undermine symbols of femininity and the power structures of the patriarchy. In times of crisis, dolls can also play an important part in conveying political and social messages. In the context of a fashion museum, mannequins are an important theme. In MIRROR MIRROR, they are more than just placeholders for the living body ——— life and movement are often sorely lacking in fashion exhibitions ——— they become objects with a deeper meaning and impact that hope to stimulate reflection and artistic experimentation.

In the final theme, the physical body is cast off. **AVATAR** touches upon the increasing symbiosis between art, fashion and technology in the form of cyborgs and avatars. Like the physical replica, the avatar is a human surrogate, a product of our digital culture. Mara-Johanna Kölmel's essay highlights how the art world has been experimenting with CGI since the 1970s, whereas the use of these technologies and the embracing of video games and NFTs are relatively recent developments in the fashion industry. Fashion avatars appear in immersive artworks by Ed Atkins, Pierre Huyghe and Melik Ohanian, and Lynn Hershman Leeson's feminist photo collages. By using post-human figures, these artists and fashion designers are able to discuss the changing position of the physical body in an increasingly artificial, digital, technological reality. By testing and bridging the sharp divide between the physical and the virtual, these avatars transform our self-image and our perception of the world.

> MIRROR MIRROR — Fashion & the Psyche (both exhibition and publication) does not set out to tell a comprehensive story about fashion and the psyche. However, this endlessly fascinating subject opens up a new way of looking at the body, promoting an open dialogue on body images, mental health and well-being in the fashion industry. The exhibition presents a unique symbiosis between art and fashion, which has found its place in MoMu. Finally, the exchange with the Dr. Guislain Museum paves the way for more inspiring and empowering partnerships and collaborations between cultural institutions in the future.



Dries Van Noten Autumn-Winter 2022-23

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Martin Margiela's Barbies with their hand-dyed wigs

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Melina Riccio Untitled, undated Mixed media

## FASCINATION INTIMACY PERFORMANCE

Fashion, psychiatry and outsider art: a combination that seems anything but obvious. And yet it is. Most people agree that clothes are about much more than just bodily protection or warmth. Nothing sits closer to your skin than clothing. It is a mediator between us and the world, the exteriorisation of who we are or who we want to be. Fashion gives us an opportunity to belong, to develop a shared identity but also to stand out. The cooperation between MoMu and the Dr. Guislain Museum touches upon this intimate relationship, examining it from various perspectives. Whereas MoMu focuses on personal experience of the body, the Dr. Guislain Museum goes in search of creations by artists for whom a garment is inextricably linked to their inner feelings. These pieces never make it to the shelves of shops. They are merely cherished by their creator. These designers do not design or sew a piece to simply wear it, but to *live* in it.

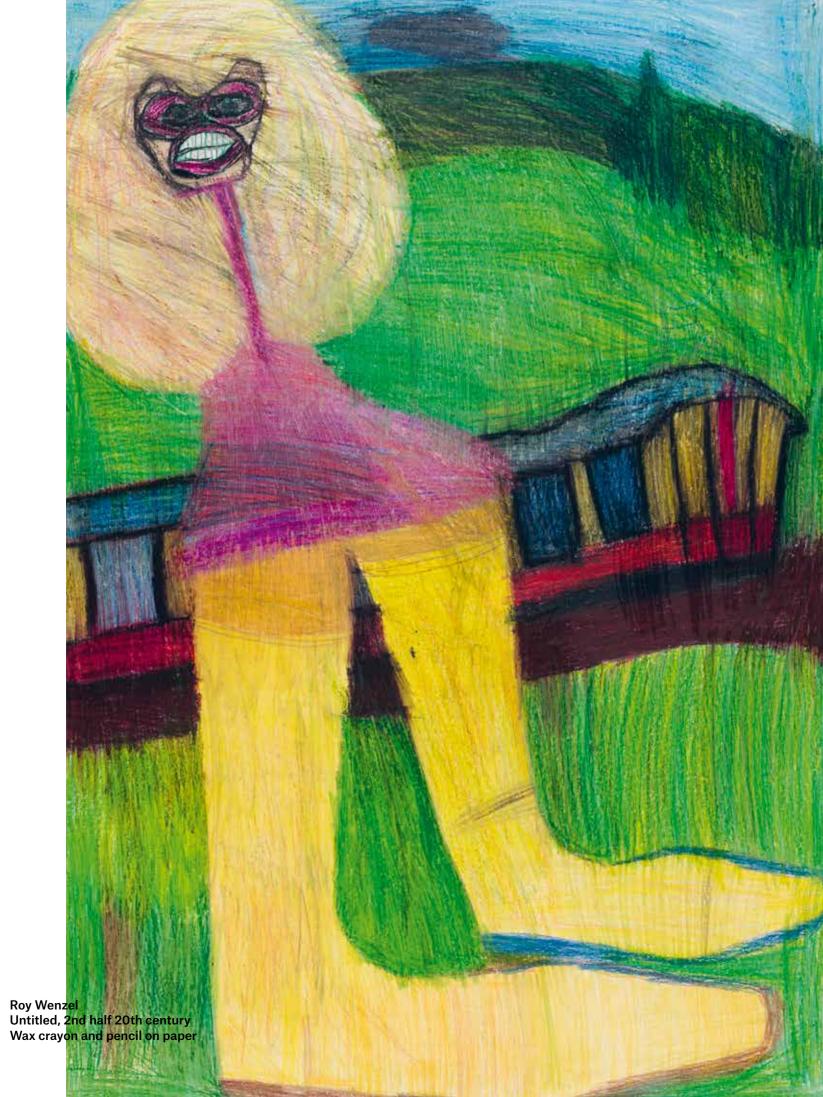
The Dr. Guislain Museum was developed around the history of psychiatric care. Until the 1960s, patients in many psychiatric hospitals wore only institutional attire. When they arrived, patients were required to relinquish their personal clothing and possessions. The patient's uniform was supposed to enhance a sense of belonging and to avoid conflicts about possessions. For some, it became an additional obstacle to escape. Not everyone was equally prepared to relinquish their identity, as evidenced by the many examples of personalised hospital uniforms: some patients tore up sheets to create a new, improvised shell; others made adjustments to the uniform or even created a completely new outfit. In her essay, Monika Ankele delves deeper into this, starting from the voice of the patient that she encountered in medical files and in personal documents such as letters and drawings. Renate Stauss, in her essay, examines three garments that were worn in psychiatric institutions, and three therapeutic settings, demonstrating that medical and fashionable clothing have a caring, therapeutic function as well as a controlling and normalising one.

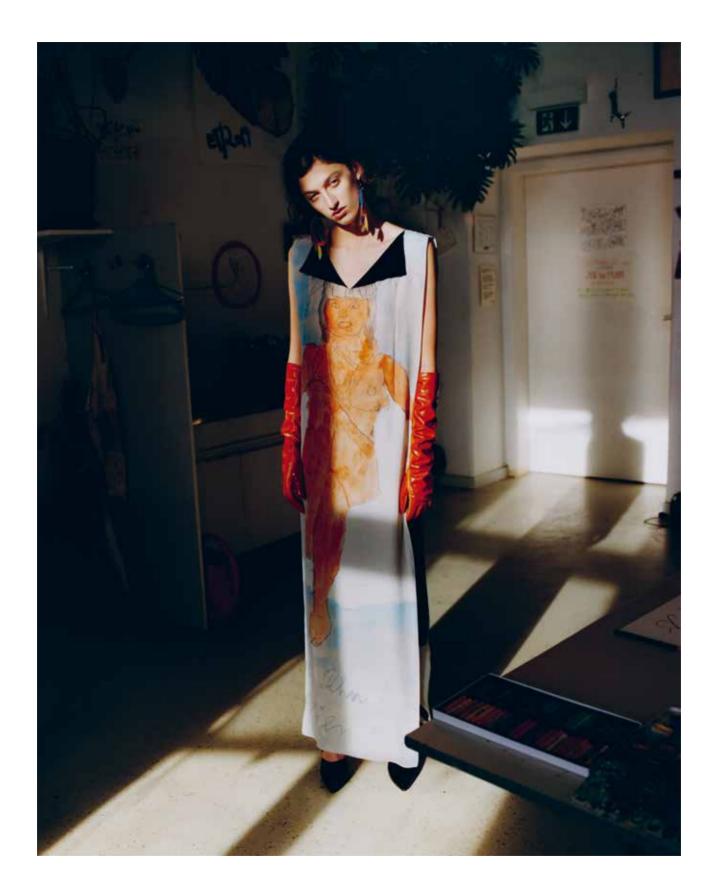
Everyone agrees that clothing is inextricably linked to identity. Many works by outsider artists attest to this; outsider art (despite much criticism of the term) is still frequently used to designate artists who work outside the official art circuit. I discuss this in more detail in my essay, using examples to showcase work that either has a link to the artist's intimate life or is made to be seen by an audience. On the topic of **INTENACY**, we present work that has a strong connection with its maker and sometimes is only seen by its maker. These artists often create work for reasons related to their life story. It is a way of preserving their past and identity within the isolated setting of the mental hospital. Clothing is also a symbol of certain social groups. It is associated with gender and, in some cases, the desire for another gender identity can be symbolised by stereotypical images. At times, clothing is so intimate that it is only tolerated in one's private life. What role does a garment play in the pursuit of an intimate desire and can temporary transformation provide a way out?

Clothing can also be created to convey a message, with the street becoming a catwalk where you can be seen and heard. Messages of pacifism and sexual liberation are proclaimed day after day as the ultimate **PERFORMANCE**. Rituals and the special clothing that is used for them are another form of performance. We get married in a wedding dress, but we don't wear our Sunday best to clean the house. Each ritual comes with the appropriate ritual dress that plays a role in a very personal ceremony.

Finally, the exhibition unites the fashion world and outsider artists in their **FASCINATION** for each other. Some take a keen interest in fashion, using their own particular techniques and materials, while others look to fashion magazines for inspiration. Because the fashion world is all about experimentation, it is easy to see why it would be interested in artists who are difficult to pigeonhole. Christopher Kane, for example, for his pre-fall and fall 2017 collections, was inspired by the artists of the Art Brut Center Gugging, which is affiliated with a mental hospital near Vienna, and by the amazing UFOs of Ionel Talpazan. Every year, the Japanese designer Masahiko Maruyama of NUDE: MM launches a collection for the label Distortion3, working with artists from Atelier Yamanami, a studio for people with disabilities. Then there's the Outsiderwear Festival, which took place in Amsterdam in July 2021. At the initiative of the artist Jan Hoek, artists and fashion designers engaged in various collaborations; Bas Kosters worked with Ayse Somuncu of the Bijzonder Amsterdams textile workshop, for instance, and Tom Van Der Borght with Nielsjan Tavernier of Kunstwerkplaats de Zandberg.

The extent to which clothing and mental well-being are connected became very apparent when we were developing this exhibition, during the coronavirus pandemic. As our opportunities to meet and enjoy ourselves disappeared, so our most beautiful clothes made way for sweatpants and comfy sweaters. That is why it was such a pleasure to be able to escape to these worlds full of extraordinary, unconventional and sometimes bizarre clothing. This also proves that a garment is a means of communication, with which we determine the narrative that we want to share today. With *MIRROR MIRROR — Fashion & the Psyche*, the Dr. Guislain Museum has set out to celebrate this creativity. The kind of creativity that can soar to unprecedented heights in often unusual circumstances, which aims to tell us something, sometimes in a whisper, sometimes shouted through a megaphone.

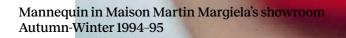


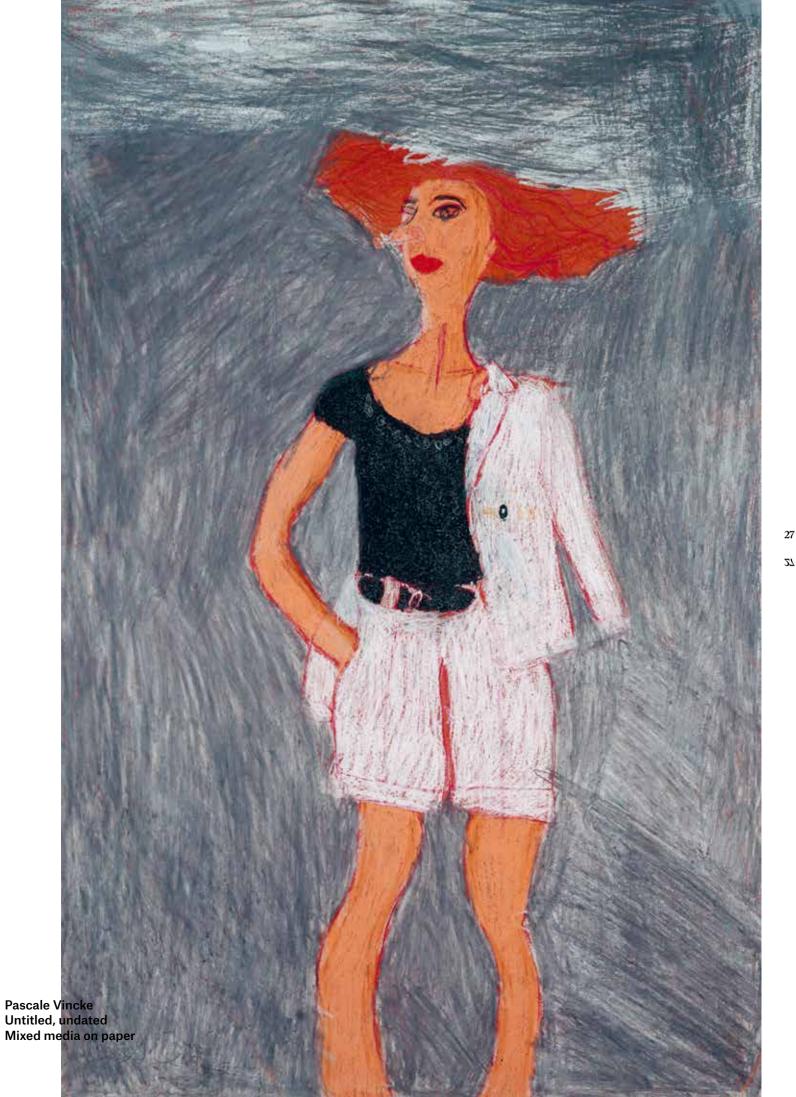




Christopher Kane Pre-Autumn 2017









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# REPLICA THE POWER OF THE DOLL

Since I started working as a curator at MoMu, I've found myself surrounded by mannequins: mute and immobile, bloodless and lifeless human replicas with (at least for me) an uncanny attraction. In my first week at the museum, I remember spending my lunch break in the midst of an army of naked mannequins waiting to be dressed. They were staring at me, both including and excluding me with their gaze, subtly mimicking different 'human' gestures. As creatures, they remained frozen in time and space. Their silent presence left me anything but indifferent. In every aspect of my job, they have stayed with me as an embodiment of artistic potential and its limits.

When displaying fashion, a curator inevitably seeks a support, a filler, a body. The tall, thin, white mannequin, with Caucasian facial features, has become a standard in museums. This feels increasingly outdated, not least because of its negation of race. In the six years I've been at the museum, I've started to look, almost obsessively, for alternatives, and to learn about how mannequins have been used in shops, exhibitions, flea markets and books. In recent years, human replicas have fascinated curators, academics and contemporary artists. Exhibitions such as Silent Partners: Artist and Mannequin from Function to Fetish,<sup>1</sup> and academic publications such as Fashion, History, Museums: Inventing the Display of Dress<sup>2</sup> and Mannequins in Museums: Power and Resistance on Display,<sup>3</sup> have examined the mannequin's history in the context of art and fashion. Finally, it feels like the right time for MoMu, with its new exhibition MIRROR MIRROR — Fashion & the Psyche, to examine the different meanings attached to mannequins and dolls. They are presented not only as supports for fashion, but also as the intriguing, disturbing and often political objects they truly are. These varied human surrogates come together in an oversized doll's house.

There is certainly an element of horror in encountering human doubles. In his 1919 essay 'The Uncanny', Sigmund Freud described mannequins and dolls as potentially uncanny because they straddle the uncomfortable boundary between animate and inanimate objects.<sup>4</sup> Freud believed that children love to treat their dolls like living beings, and expect them to come to life ——— 'they might even desire it.'<sup>5</sup> My aunt, a keen restorer of dolls, made a realistic doll of my mother (her sister) as a small child, with dark eyes and neat braids. When she offered to make me one too, I politely declined. Dolls, as Freud saw it, can be terrifying, especially to adults. The theme of the haunted doll is common in horror movies, where fear is ignited when dolls or mannequins unexpectedly come to life. Such replicas seem to confuse and frighten us in their ambiguity between life and death, so it is interesting to consider the underlying psychology

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here. The 'shrinking room' study showed how very young children often make scale errors, treating miniature objects as if they are their larger counterparts. The study shows how children try to sit in a tiny chair, lie down in a doll's bed or climb into a toy car, momentarily blurring the distinction between a symbol and what it stands for.<sup>6</sup> In that sense, dolls are children's equals, which explains why the theme of toys coming to life has long been popular in children's literature and movies.

#### REPLICA







### ADULTS

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### ONLY

Historically, however, dolls were the playthings of adult women, not of children. Small dolls inhabited precious, fully furnished doll's houses, which were constructed and looked after by wealthy women who received visitors to their homes to admire the time, care and money they had invested in their hobby.

In her research on miniatures, Susan Stewart posits that the 'most famous dollhouses have been extravagant displays of upper-class ways of life that were meant to stop time and present the illusion of a perfectly complete and hermetic world.'<sup>7</sup> As such, doll's houses were a way for women to pass the time and, in the 17th century, they also started to play an important role in the education of children. They presented a model of an organised household and an ideal family, and prepared young girls for their future as housewives and mothers.<sup>8</sup> Children, however, were only allowed to look, not touch, and it wasn't until the 19th century that toy houses and kitchens came into being.<sup>9</sup> Today, doll's houses remain incredible sources for understanding domestic culture, fashion and design through the centuries and are evidence of our ongoing fascination with everything miniature.

Another archetype, the fashion doll, was also not meant for children. Outside the virtuous context of domestic doll life, fashion dolls were, in a way, the first fashion models or influencers. They were transported across European countries to present the local fashions. Mostly dressed in court attire, they exported ideas about new fashion styles from at least the 14th century onwards.<sup>10</sup> Stewart explains that after the death of Catherine de' Medici's husband (1559), eight fashion dolls were found in the inventory of her belongings ——— all were

dressed in elaborate mourning garb and their cost appeared as an entry in her accounting book.<sup>11</sup> Jane Munro notes, strikingly, that these *'mannequins précieux'* were deemed so valuable in sustaining France's accounting supremeasure the

were deemed so valuable in sustaining France's economic supremacy in the fashion trade that they were famously granted an 'inviolable passport' by the ministers of the courts of France and England during the War of the Spanish Succession, when all other trading was disrupted.<sup>12</sup> Fashion dolls and their elaborate wardrobes were also displayed at various world exhibitions in the second half of the 19th century, a time when these two luxury industries, fashion and doll making, developed hand-in-hand.<sup>13</sup> The dolls' detailed costumes were executed with a keen eye for realism, precious materials and craftsmanship, as illustrated by the two French fashion dolls in the collection of the Fashion Museum in Bath, UK.





Worth Fashion doll Spring-Summer 1946



Jeanne L<mark>anvin</mark> Fashion doll Spring-Summer 1946



Ana de Pombo Fashion doll Spring-Summer 1946



### DOLLS

### IN CRISIS

In times of crisis, fashion dolls not only showcased local fashions, but acted to boost national economies and a sense of patriotic pride. A significant moment for fashion dolls, as ambassadors of their country, came during the last months of the Second World War, when Paris was liberated after four years of German occupation. At a time when the national economy was in ruins, the Syndicat de la Couture Francaise initiated the creation of the Théâtre de la Mode. This exhibition of 237 miniature dolls, dressed in day and evening wear by Parisian couturiers, opened on 27 March 1945 at the Pavillon de Marsan in Paris and attracted nearly 100,000 visitors.<sup>14</sup> The dolls were designed by Eliane Bonadel and took the shape of a small, 70cm-high figure: 'We immediately thought these dolls should not be too solid as this would be reminiscent of a toy. I thought of something transparent... my point of departure was the table of measurements found in fashion magazines at the time.'15 The use of precious materials and incredible eye for detail in their miniature outfits were, according to interviews at the time, a testament to the healthy competition between couturiers to promote their fashion houses.<sup>16</sup> With hand-stitched buttonholes, meticulous linings and inner constructions, handbags and pockets that opened, miniature belts, jewellery, gloves, feather ornaments and embroidery, they highlighted the craftsmanship of the artisans involved in French couture.<sup>17</sup> When the war ended, the exhibition travelled the world, promoting Parisian fashion for Spring-Summer 1946 to international clients. The first stop was New York. Three of these dolls ——— by Worth, Ana de Pombo and Jeanne Lanvin, now part of the collection of the Maryhill Museum of Art in Washington, US once again cross the ocean to be on display at MoMu. The Théâtre de la Mode dolls became a symbol of hope and renewal, a way to show how elegance and creativity had not faded during the war.

The close connection between dolls and patriotism was not solely reserved for the French. Miss Virginia Lachasse, a British mid-20th-century fashion doll produced by the London couture House of Lachasse, was realistically modelled on the house's mannequin, Virginia Woodford. The doll and her 115-item wardrobe were exhibited in different cities to raise money for the Fund for the Blind; she's another example of how a country was trying to promote its fashion and textile industry after the war, largely for export.<sup>18</sup>

Dolls have continued to play a key role in times of crisis. The Covid-19 pandemic forced fashion designers to look for socially distanced alternatives to the live runway show. In this context, the fashion doll re-emerged as a symbol of hope and opportunity. Designers such as Walter Van Beirendonck were inspired by the Théâtre de la Mode. Van Beirendonck collaborated with Tokyo-based Eli Effenberger to create dolls for his Spring-Summer 2021 collection; their tiny garments had the exact same patterns and detailing as the full-size looks (except for the zippers, which were replaced by silver threads).<sup>19</sup> The garments were made in Antwerp and the shoes 3D-printed in Japan. In the video of the show, the careful hands of Van Beirendonck positioned the miniature dolls on a revolving platform, like a giant at work. The captivating play with scale, between the (extremely) slender limbs of Effenberger's dolls and the designer's seemingly enormous hands, turned the presentation into something moving and deeply personal.

### WORLD'S Smallest Mannequin

#### BY SIDNEY GORDON

SHE's beautiful but heartless, screnely poised but dumby the proverbial blonde

Her clotters are the talk of the failman workd and crowde gather whenever the tepperary, yet the has a never bore haven to omit in greeting. Always there is that also dates, that chilling stars from under these thick carding cyclothese which other models envy. Ind all the money she same is denated to sthartby.

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House of Lachasse Fashion doll Virginia Lachasse, 1954

#### **DR. GUISLAIN MUSEUM**

Yoon Hee Lamot

#### CURATOR

#### LENDERS

A.F.Vandevorst, Antwerp

#### **BELGIUM**

**COLLABORATORS EXHIBITION** Wim Claeys Alexander Couckhuyt Arnout De Cleene Tuur Demaeadt Nico Deuniinck Henk De Waele Yoon Hee Lamot Lieven Leurs Bart Marius Annemie Sneijers Kristine Timperman Sarah Van Bouchaute Eline Van de Voorde Valerie Van den Plas Saïdya Vanhooren

#### COLLABORATORS DR. GUISLAIN MUSEUM Femke Abraham

Ola Aldaas Mohamed Amnad Linda Arts Fatiha Asghir Kristof Baetens Alvaro Baudoncq Pierre Brewee Rudi De Graaf Marieke De Witte Kurt Dewulf Erwina D'Hoore Yana Giller Soheila Hashem Arzu Karaca Ilse Milants **Detlef Packo Kristine Praet** Anne-Marie Spanoghe **Caroline Speeckaert Geoffrey Staelens** Sybille Van den Berghe Dieter Vanden Bossche Sara Van Den Bossche Sam Vandeweghe Patrick Van Keer Vincent Vankemseke Phaedra Vanneste Geert Van Pol Kimberly Van Thuyne Jeffrey Verheezen Guido Verschaeren Luckas Vervaecke Judith Verween Hendrik Wordragen



#### Art et Marges Museum, Brussels Dr. Guislain Museum, Ghent, donation Créahmbxl MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp, Antwerp Trinkhall museum, Liège GERMANY Helga-Goetze-Stiftung in the Stadtmuseum Berlin, Berlin Prinzhorn Collection, University Hospital Heidelberg, Heidelberg FRANCE Galerie Christian Berst, Paris Jean-Noël Cristiani, Paris

Jean-Noël Cristiani, Paris La Fabuloserie, Dicy LaM, Lille Métropole Musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut, Villeneuve-d'Ascq Philippe Lespinasse, Lokomotiv Films, Le Tourne S.E.R.H.E.P. (Société d'études et de recherches historiques en psychiatrie), Neuilly-sur-Marne

#### ITALY

Museum of Criminal Anthropology 'Cesare Lombroso', University of Turin, Turin

JAPAN		
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#### THE NETHERLANDS

Bas Kosters Studio, Amsterdam Caroline de Haan, Haarlem De Stadshof Collection Foundation, Dr. Guislain Museum, Ghent Museum of the Mind | Dolhuys, Haarlem Private collection, Courtesy Galerie Hamer, Amsterdam

#### UNITED KINGDOM

Bethlem Museum of the Mind, Kent Christopher Kane, London Henry Boxer Gallery, Richmond

#### COLOPHON

#### AUTHORS

Monika Ankele Elisa De Wyngaert Lucy Moyse Ferreira Mara-Johanna Kölmel Yoon Hee Lamot Renate Stauss

#### COPY EDITING

Cath Philips

#### TRANSLATION Sandy Logan

GRAPHIC DESIGN Paul Boudens

#### IMAGE RESEARCH

Birgit Ansoms Elisa De Wyngaert Yoon Hee Lamot

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Sofie Meert

#### PRINTING & BINDING Graphius, Ghent

#### **COVER IMAGE**

Veronika Georgieva in collaboration with Stephen j Shanabrook *Paper Surgery*, 2010 as featured in the Comme des Garçons Shirt ad campaign Spring-Summer 2010

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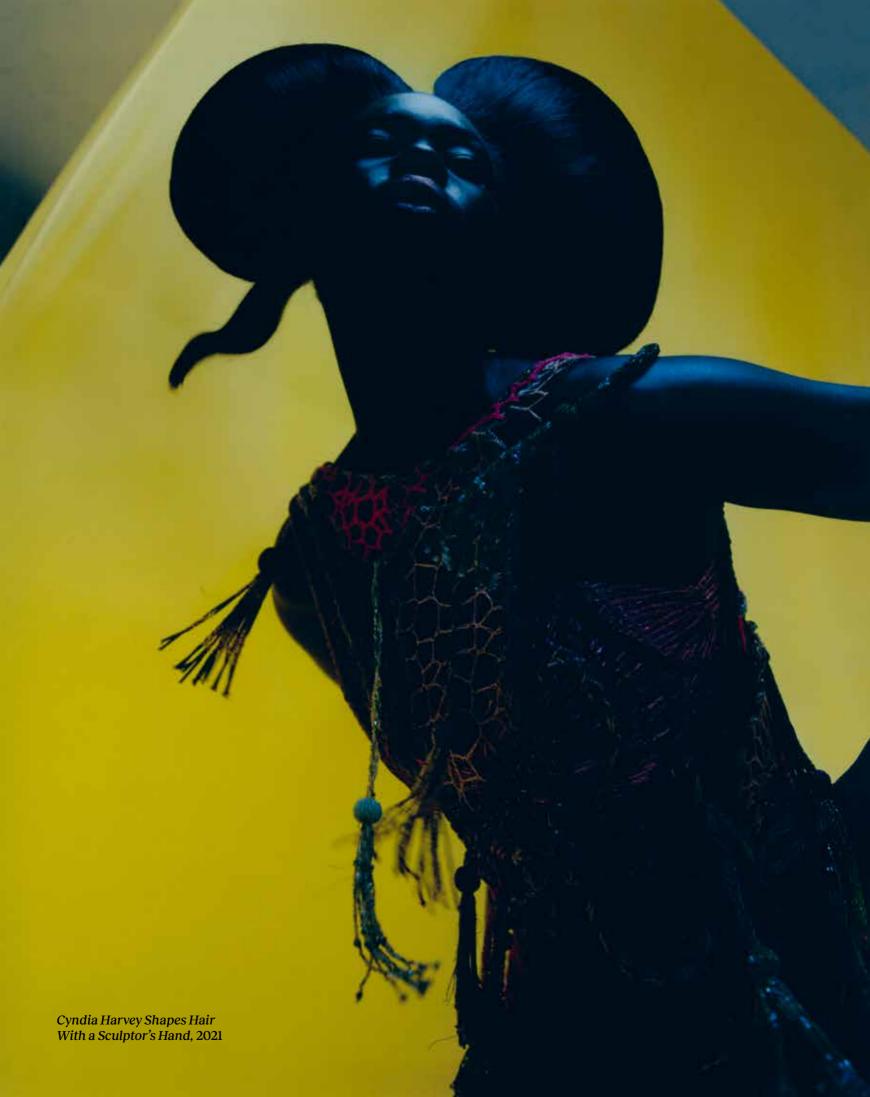
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# MIBROB

In *MIRROR MIRROR - Fashion & the Psyche*, MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp and Dr. Guislain Museum examine how fashion, psychology, self-image and identity are connected. The personal experience of the body is the main theme of this unexpected dialogue between visual art and avant-garde fashion.

Featuring work by Ed Atkins, Walter Van Beirendonck, Noir Kei Ninomiya, Genieve Figgis, Genesis Belanger, Hussein Chalayan, Comme des Garçons, Joseph Schneller, Ezekiel Messou, Giovanni Battista Podestà, Helga Sophia Goetze and Yumiko Kawai, among others.

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