

Yohji Yamamoto

12 March – 10 July 2011

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Next spring the V&A will open the first UK solo exhibition celebrating the life and work of Yohji Yamamoto, one of the world's most influential and enigmatic fashion designers. This installation-based retrospective, taking place 30 years after his Paris debut, will feature over 80 garments spanning Yamamoto's career. The exhibition will explore the work of a designer who has challenged, provoked and inspired the fashion world.

Yamamoto's visionary designs will be exhibited on mannequins amongst the treasures of the V&A. Placed in hidden corners of the Museum, the silhouettes will create a direct dialogue between Yamamoto's work and the different spaces in which they are displayed. Items will be found on the Leighton corridor, in the Norfolk House Music Room and looking out onto the John Madejski Garden from an alcove in the Hintze Sculpture Galleries. Other pieces will be sited on marble staircases, adjacent to Renaissance sculptures in the Renaissance City Gallery and within the Tapestry Gallery.

The exhibition will be designed by Yamamoto's long-time collaborator, scenographer and lighting designer Masao Nihei. The main exhibition space will see over 60 garments from Yamamoto's womenswear and menswear collections accompanied by a mixed-media timeline showing excerpts from his fashion shows, films and performances, graphic material and select photographs which will contextualise his career. Following Yamamoto's previous solo exhibitions in Florence *Correspondences* (2005), Paris *Juste des Vêtements* (2005) and Antwerp *Dream Shop* (2006), this UK retrospective will exhibit items from his menswear collections for the first time.

Yohji Yamamoto was born in Tokyo in 1943 and studied at Keio University then Bunka Fashion College, by 1972 he set up his own company *Y's Incorporated*. From the start of his career Yamamoto's work was recognised for challenging the conventions of fashion. The asymmetric cuts and seemingly unflattering curves of his early work contradicted the

close-fitted styles of the catwalks and he has refused traditional norms of fashion ever since.

Yamamoto's designs have rewritten notions of beauty in fashion, and the playful androgyny of his work creates new modalities of gender identity. His collections are recognised for subverting gender stereotypes and have featured women wearing garments traditionally associated with menswear. Included in the exhibition will be menswear items from the Autumn/Winter 1998 season which was famously modelled on women.

Yamamoto's fabrics are central to his design practise and are a trademark of his work. Supporting craftspeople in and around Kyoto, his textiles are created to specification often employing traditional Japanese dyeing and embroidery techniques such as Shibori and Yu-zen. The selection of works on show will give visitors the opportunity to study examples of Yamamoto's application of traditional Japanese techniques.

The exhibition will also record the breadth of some of Yamamoto's key collaborations achieved through his career. Partnerships with fashion photographer Nick Knight, graphic designer Peter Saville, art director Marc Ascoli and M/M (Paris), choreographer Pina Bausch and filmmakers Takeshi Kitano and Win Wenders amongst many others, will be represented by a mixed-media timeline in the main exhibition space, and will demonstrate an important, creative dialogue which flows through his work. As homage to the catalogues and iconic images they produced for Yohji Yamamoto in the late 1980s, Peter Saville will be Graphic Art Director for the book and exhibition, and Nick Knight will produce the V&A poster image.

As part of the retrospective, Yamamoto's work stretches further across London with exhibitions at the Wapping Project sites, at both Bankside (11 March to 14 May 2011) and Wapping (11 March to 10 July 2011).

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Notes to Editors

Yohji Yamamoto will be on display in the V&A's main exhibition court. A number of mannequins will also be found around the museum in the Dorothy & Michael Hintze Sculpture Galleries, Architecture Staircase, Leighton corridor, Tapestry Gallery, Norfolk House Music Room and the Medieval & Renaissance Galleries. The exhibition will run from 12 March until 10 July 2011.

Ticket Information

Admission: £7 (concessions available). V&A Members go free.

For advance bookings visit www.vam.ac.uk or call 0844 209 1770 (booking fee applies).

Exhibition Curator and Designers

The exhibition has been curated for the V&A by Ligaya Salazar, V&A Contemporary Curator.

The exhibition has been designed by Masao Nihei; Graphic Art Direction is by Peter Saville;

Graphic Design by Yes Studio and poster image by Nick Knight.

Offsite Displays

The V&A exhibition is complemented by two displays at the Wapping Project sites at Bankside (11 March to 14 May 2011) and Wapping (11 March to 10 July 2011). For further PRESS information please contact jules@thewappingproject.com

Exhibition Publication

To accompany the exhibition V&A Publishing has produced a hardback catalogue edited by Exhibition Curator Ligaya Salazar. For further PRESS information about the book contact Julie Chan on 020 7942 2701 or email j.chan@vam.ac.uk

Exhibition Merchandise

There will be a V&A Shop range with exclusive fashion and accessory designs by Yohji Yamamoto launching in March 2011. For PRESS information on merchandise accompanying the exhibition contact Samantha Safer on 020 7942 2878 or email s.safer@vam.ac.uk

For public enquiries please call 020 7942 2000 or visit www.vam.ac.uk

For further PRESS information please contact Alice Evans at the V&A Press Office on 020 7942 2508 or email a.evans@vam.ac.uk or press.office@vam.ac.uk

A selection of high resolution press images are available to download from pressimages.vam.ac.uk (Not for publication).