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NEWS

For release May 23, 2008

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**On View at The Museum at FIT in New York
September 5, 2008-February 21, 2009**

The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) presents **Gothic: Dark Glamour**, the first exhibition devoted to the gothic style in fashion. Set in a dramatic mise-en-scene suggesting iconic gothic settings, such as the labyrinth, the ruined castle, and the laboratory, more than 75 ensembles will be on display. Fashion designers featured include **Alexander McQueen**, Ann Demeulemeester, Boudicca, **Comme des Garçons**, Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel Haute Couture, **John Galliano for Christian Dior**, Jean Paul Gaultier, Hussein Chalayan, Francisco Costa for Calvin Klein, Christian Lacroix, Derek Lam, **Gareth Pugh**, Kei Kagami, **Ricardo Tisci for Givenchy**, Thierry Mugler, **Rick Owens**, **Rodarte**, Anna Sui, Olivier Theyskens, Jun Takahashi of Undercover, and **Yohji Yamamoto**.

Also on display will be a range of **subcultural styles**, such as “old-school goth” (associated with the heyday of the goth subculture, 1979-83), Victorian-style goth, industrial, steam punk, and cyber-goth, by designers such as Kambriel, Morphius and Plastik Wrap, as well as Japanese **Elegant Gothic Lolitas** by Tokyo-based brands Moi-Même-Moitié and h.Naoto Blood.

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Although popularly identified with black-clad teenagers and rock musicians, the gothic has also been an important theme in contemporary fashion,” said **Dr. Valerie Steele**, director of The Museum at FIT and curator of this exhibition. “The imagery of death and decay, the power of horror, and **the erotic macabre** are perversely attractive to many designers. For example, John Galliano told me that he saw the ‘Gothic girl’ as ‘edgy and cool, vampy and mysterious,’ while the most recent Rodarte collection was inspired by Japanese horror films.”



Jon Klein of the gothic rock band Specimen is loaning one of his infamous ensembles for the show. Photograph courtesy Jon Klein



Contemporary goth styles run the gamut from Victorian/romantic (like this dress by Kambriel) to the futuristic cyber-goth. Photograph by Nadya Lev, courtesy Kambriel



This Alexander McQueen, from his Fall/Winter 2007 collection, was inspired by witchcraft and religious persecution. Photograph courtesy Alexander McQueen

An introductory gallery will trace the development of gothic style from its origins in the eighteenth-century gothic literature of terror to its contemporary manifestations in art, fashion, and film. The **Victorian cult of mourning**, for example, will be illustrated by actual mourning dresses, crepe veils, and momento mori jewelry. A **Cabinet of Curiosities** will feature objects such as a wax head and the death mask of a poet. The vampire vignette will include one of **Eiko Ishioka**'s costumes for the film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. A selection of photographs will also be on display.



Victorian mourning dress is an important source of gothic imagery. Contemporary goths appreciate its morbid allure and claustrophobic corsetry. Dress circa 1880 from the collection of Evan Michelson, photography by MFIT.



Ricardo Tischi of Givenchy has become known for his gothic glamour, as with this evening dress from the Haute Couture Fall/Winter 2006 show. Photograph courtesy Givenchy



This Fall/Winter 2008/09 Rodarte collection was inspired by Japanese horror films, and the red dye was intended to evoke the look of blood in water. Photograph by Dan Lecca, courtesy Rodarte

Simon Costin, the British artist, jeweler, and set designer who has worked on many fashion shows, served as art director for **Gothic: Dark Glamour**. Costin worked closely with exhibition designer Charles B. Eames to create an appropriately gothic

Simon Costin, the British artist, jeweler, and set designer who has worked on many fashion shows, served as art director for **Gothic: Dark Glamour**. Costin worked closely with exhibition designer Charles B. Froom to create an appropriately gothic mise-en-scene. The main gallery space is designed as a **labyrinth**, divided into iconic spaces such as **Night**, with seductive black evening dresses; the **Ruined Castle**, which conveys a sense of the Dark Ages; and the **Laboratory**, where futuristic fashion “monsters” are created. Towering in the background is the **Haunted Palace**, which evokes Edgar Allan Poe’s architectural metaphor for a disturbed mind.



John Galliano understands the gothic sensibility. His Christian Dior Haute Couture Spring/Summer 2006 collection is suitably edgy and mysterious. Photograph courtesy Christian Dior



This famous Alexander McQueen dress, made in part from microscope slides dyed red, is from the Voss collection of Spring/Summer 2001, which was inspired by inmates in an insane asylum. Photograph courtesy Alexander McQueen

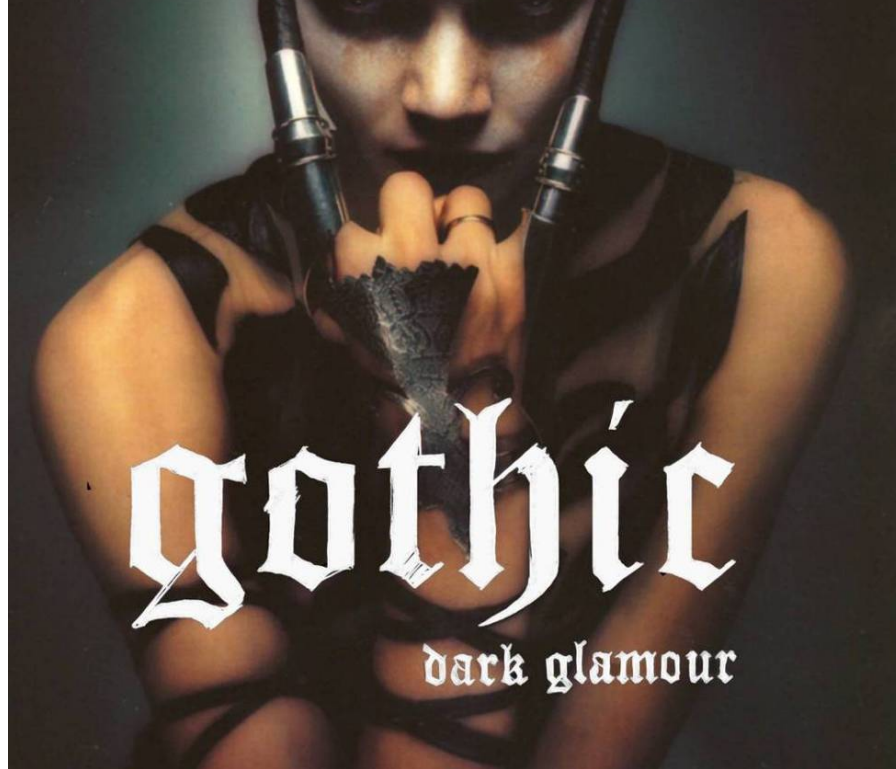


Milliner J. Smith Esquire worked with a jeweler and a tattoo artist to create this top hat in 2007. Photograph courtesy Justin Smith



Victorian mourning prescribed black jewelry, such as this Revivalist Gutta Percha suite, circa 1880, from the collection of Mark Walsh and Leslie Chin. Photograph by MFIT.





BOOK

A lavishly illustrated book, also called **Gothic: Dark Glamour**, expands on the themes addressed in the exhibition. “There have been many studies of the gothic in art, architecture, literature, and cinema, but surprisingly little attention has been paid to the gothic influence on fashion,” says Valerie Steele, curator of the exhibition and co-author of the book with Jennifer Park, coordinator of special programs at The Museum at FIT. Steele, a renowned fashion historian, explores the significance of gothic fashion from its eighteenth-century origins in the work of the “original goth” Horace Walpole to its current manifestations in both street style and high fashion. Steele draws on a wide range of sources, including fascinating interviews with fashion designers, such as Rick Owens; photographers, such as Sean Ellis; and gothic rockers, such as Patricia Morrison of Sisters of Mercy. Jennifer Park contributes an essay, “Melancholy and the Macabre: Gothic Rock and Fashion.” Proceeds from the book, published by Yale University Press, go to the Fashion Institute of Technology.

EVENTS

The exhibition will be accompanied by a wide range of public programs, including a **Tim Burton** film series (featuring *Sweeney Todd* and *Corpse Bride*, among others), a **Goth Talk** panel discussion on October 30 (with speakers including Fred H. Berger, editor of *Propaganda*, Mistress McCutchan, and Evan Michelson of Obscura), gallery readings of Bram Stoker and Edgar Allan Poe gothic classics, exhibition tours, and more. The program series will culminate in the museum’s annual **Fashion Symposium** on February 13-14, 2009, which takes as its theme *Subculture and Style*. Internationally recognized scholars, curators, and designers will gather at the symposium to discuss the gothic influence on fashion and visual culture, as well as goth, punk, hip-hop, and other music-oriented youth styles. For a program of events, call 212-217-4585 or e-mail museuminfo@fitnyc.edu.

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A FASHION MUSEUM

The Museum at FIT is the only museum in New York City dedicated solely to the art of fashion. Best known for its innovative and award-winning exhibitions, which have been described by Roberta Smith in *The New York Times* as “ravishing,” the museum has a collection of more than 50,000 garments and accessories dating from the 18th century to the present. Like other fashion museums, such as the Musée de la Mode, the Mode Museum and the Museo de la Moda, the Museum at FIT collects, conserves, documents, exhibits, and interprets fashion. The museum’s mission is to advance knowledge of fashion through exhibitions, publications, and public programs. Visit www.fitnyc.edu/museum.

The Museum is part of the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), a college of art and design, business and technology, that educates more than 10,000 students annually.

FIT is part of the State University of New York (SUNY) and offers more than 45 majors leading to the AAS, BFA, BS, MA, and MPS degrees. Visit www.fitnyc.edu.

The Couture Council is a membership group of fashion enthusiasts that helps support the exhibitions and programs of The Museum at FIT. The Couture Council Award for Artistry of Fashion is given to a selected designer at a benefit luncheon held in the Rainbow Room every September. For information on the Couture Council, call 212-217-4532 or e-mail Couturecouncil@fitnyc.edu.

MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday - Friday – noon-8:00 pm

Saturday – 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Closed Sunday, Monday, and legal holidays

Admission is free and open to the public.

www.fitnyc.edu/museum

gothic

dark glamour

has been supported in part by The Coby Foundation, Ltd.
Additional support has been provided by the Couture Council.

A State University of New York College of Art and Design, Business and Technology