



World Premiere
Thierry Mugler: Couturissime

Description

First exhibition dedicated to creator Thierry Mugler, at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

From March 2 to September 8, 2019, the exhibition ***Thierry Mugler: Couturissime*** explores the multiple universes of **Thierry Mugler**, couturier, director, photographer and visionary perfumer. Initiated, produced and circulated by the **Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA)**, in collaboration with the **Clarins Group** and **Maison Mugler**, this major exhibition traces the work of an original creative force who revolutionized fashion and haute couture.

From March 2 to September 8, 2019, the exhibition *Thierry Mugler: Couturissime* explores the multiple universes of Thierry Mugler, couturier, director, photographer and visionary perfumer.



features some 150 outfits – most restored and exhibited for the first time – produced between 1977 and 2014, in addition to accessories, theatre costumes, videos, film clips, videos, archives and unpublished sketches. It also presents a hundred rare prints by the greatest fashion photographers and artists, including **Max Abadian, Lillian Bassman, Guy Bourdin, Jean-Paul Goude, Karl Lagerfeld, Paolo Roversi, Dominique Issermann, David LaChapelle, Luigi & Iango, Alix Malka, Steven Meisel, Mert & Marcus, Sarah Moon, Pierre et Gilles, Paolo Roversi, Herb Ritts** and **Ellen von Unwerth**. An entire gallery is dedicated to the collaboration between the couturier and photographer **Helmut Newton**. The exhibition also features a rotation of 16 of the costumes designed by Mugler for La Tragédie de Macbeth, shown here for the first time since the 1985 Comédie-Française production at the Festival d'Avignon.

About Thierry Mugler

Manfred Thierry Mugler revived French haute couture, at a time when it was competing with New York cool and Milanese expertise. He created an architectural style and bold silhouettes imbued with fantasy. His severe suits with superheroine shoulders and corseted waists clothe a woman who is sublimated, powerful and sensual. Mugler experiments with avant-garde techniques and materials – glass, plexiglass, PVC, faux fur, vinyl, latex, chrome – in his high-tech, “industrial couture” atelier-labs. His creations evoke by turns Hollywood glamour, dreams, fauna, eroticism and science fiction.



The

couturier has been involved in numerous collaborations, working in particular with interior designer **Andrée Putman** for his boutiques. His creations have been photographed by the greats: Helmut Newton, Guy Bourdin, Ellen von Unwerth, Lillian Bassman, Herb Ritts, David LaChapelle, Pierre et Gilles, Sarah Moon, etc. Mugler directed the iconic *Too Funky* music video with singer George Michael, as well as short films with actresses

Isabelle Huppert and Juliette Binoche. He was the first to stage fashion shows – the most spectacular of the period – with the generation of supermodels. He created the costumes for Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* for the *Comédie Française* and those of *Zumanity* for the *Cirque du Soleil*. He also has directed several musical revues. He has dressed a myriad of celebrities, including Diana Ross, David Bowie, Lady Gaga, Liza Minnelli, Diane Dufresne, Celine Dion, and Beyoncé.

“People have offered to exhibit my work a number of times, but the idea of simply looking back has never interested me. The MMFA with **Nathalie Bondil** and **Thierry-Maxime Loriot** were the right people, with the right approach, to reinvent the past with innovative staging, eclectic melanges and a new vision of my work. There is no future without a past, so I hope that this exhibition will inspire in its visitors a new creative future,” said Manfred Thierry Mugler.

The MBAM creates another exhibition celebrating haute couture

With *Thierry Mugler: Couturissime*, Nathalie Bondil continues her series of major firsts in the fashion world, that led it to present *Yves Saint Laurent* (2008) and *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* (2011-2016), a phenomenal exhibition which has been seen by more than 2 million people in 12 cities around the world, and whose tour ended with *Love is Love: Wedding Bliss for all à la Jean-Paul Gaultier*, presented at the MMFA in 2017 and at Centro Cultural Kirchner (CCK) in Buenos Aires in 2018.



Nathalie Bondil, MMFA Director General and Chief Curator, explains: “Paying homage to couturiers, those contemporary artists, both with them and for them, is a source of pride for the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts... and for me personally, because there are very few in this exclusive world of haute couture who have created their own fashion house. I am proud to be able to share the masterful creations of Thierry Mugler. Metamorphoses, superheroines and cyborgs inhabit the work of this designer who perceived early on, and with

considerable humour, the coming transhumanist revolutions. His sleek, elegant creatures, his dangerous seductresses, populate a world of glamour at the edges of reality. Subjects, rather than objects, of their sexuality, these women possess devastating humour and irresistible power. It is a privilege to unveil as a world premiere in Montreal – before they embark on an international tour – these fragile, preserved outfits, totally inaccessible to the general public.



This exhibition was created with the designer. I want to thank Thierry Mugler for his confidence and his talent that has inspired us so much over the years. I want to acknowledge the excellent research carried out by Thierry-Maxime Lorient. Thank you to Groupe Clarins and Maison Mugler for having restored this fashion heritage. Thank you to all those who have revealed the secrets of these demanding creative and artistic métiers. Thank you to the many teams who have done a phenomenal job. Mounting a fashion exhibition is a complex endeavour. It includes not only thousands of works, pieces and accessories to be assembled, but also – because we opted for a spectacular dimension of installation and setting – immersive special effects and exceptional sets. Welcome to the theatre of fashion. The curtain is rising!”

“Thierry Mugler not only left his mark on his era, he revolutionized fashion with his creations in sculptural forms that are both futuristic and elegant. He staged the most spectacular fashion shows and breathed new life into haute couture, notably through the use of new materials such as metal, latex and faux fur. His distinctive style transcended trends, and continues to influence a new generation of couturiers,” notes exhibition curator Thierry-Maxime Lorient.



Exhibition Credits

An exhibition initiated, produced and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, in collaboration with the Groupe Clarins and the Maison Mugler.

Curatorial Credits

The exhibition was curated by **Thierry-Maxime Loriot** under the direction of **Nathalie Bondil**, Director General and Chief Curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Exhibition Layout

The exhibition layout was overseen by **Sandra Gagné**, head of Exhibition Production at the MMFA. Conceived as an opera in six acts, the exhibition revisits Mugler's iconic creations and collaborations in spectacular settings to which several people contributed:

Philipp Fürhofer, German artist and designer of costumes and sets for major operas, is responsible for the layout of the *Futuristic & Fembot Couture* gallery. Recipient of the 2013 Laurence Olivier Award from the *Society of London Theatre*, he has collaborated with the *Dutch National Opera* in Amsterdam, the *Royal Opera* in Copenhagen, the *Royal Opera House*, Covent Garden, London, and the *Kunsthalle* in Munich.



, designer, director for film and stage, and set designer for numerous digital productions and installations, notably for Cirque du Soleil, the Cité Mémoire urban circuit, and the MMFA, contributed a digital work of virtual projections entitled *The Incandescence of Lady Macbeth*, with music by **Johann Johannsson**.

Rodeo FX created the visual imagery and special effects for the *Metamorphosis* gallery. Winner of prestigious awards, this Montreal studio has produced numerous special effects for international television and film productions, such as *Game Of Thrones* and the movies *Arrival*, *Birdman* and *Blade Runner 2049*, winner of the 2018 Oscar for Best Visual Effects.

Tord Boontje created five monumental chandeliers, entitled *Cherry Blossom*, for the exhibition. Composed of Swarovski crystals, they dominate the ceiling of the *Belle de jour & Belle de nuit* gallery like glittering ivy. Objects and furniture created by this Dutch designer, whose studio is based in London, are in the collections of major museums such as the MMFA, the Victoria and Albert Museum and MoMA.



Montreal Couture

The museum visit continues with **Montreal Couture**. This exhibition, presented in parallel to *Thierry Mugler: Couturissime*, highlights creations by 10 established and emerging designers who are defining current Quebec fashion: **Atelier New Regime**, **Philippe Dubuc**, **Fecal Matter**, **Denis Gagnon**, **Ying Gao**, **Helmer Joseph**, **Nathon Kong**, **Marie-Ève Lecavalier**, **MARKANTOINE** and **Marie Saint Pierre**.



Nuit blanche de Montréal

March 2, on the occasion of the 20th *Nuit Blanche* of the **Montréal en lumière** festival, the MMFA will be open until midnight. Entry to the exhibition will be half price from 5 pm on.

Family: The Boîte à Couture

In a space adjacent to the exhibition, the Boîte à Couture offers young and old alike the opportunity to explore fashion professions and the origins of haute couture, in addition to participating in free creative workshops. Art workshops are also offered to families on weekends.

Culture Wednesdays

Complementing the exhibition, a rich program of films and lectures by international experts addresses, from various angles, Mugler's career and topics related to the fashion professions.

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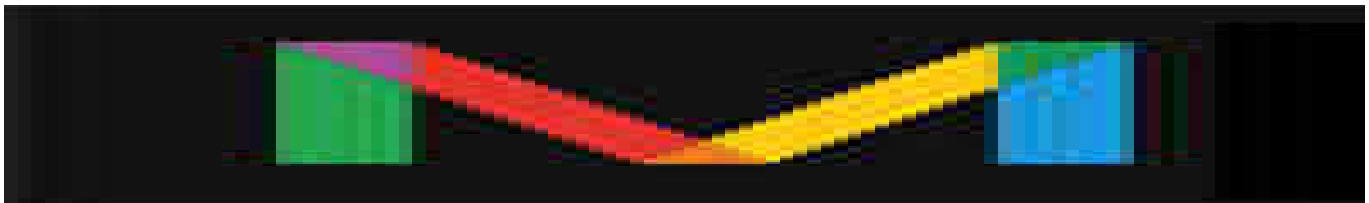
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Images: courtesy of the MMFA

Eugène Onéguine – Lyric Opera of Kansas City (crédit : Cory Weaver)

La flûte enchantée – Komische Oper Berlin / LA Opera (crédit : Craig Matthew)

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Boasting more than 1.3 million visitors annually, the **MMFA** is one of Canada's most visited museums and the eighth-most visited museum in North America. The Museum's original temporary exhibitions combine various artistic disciplines – fine arts, music, film, fashion and design – and are exported around the world. Its rich encyclopedic collection, distributed among five pavilions, includes international art, world cultures, decorative arts and design, and Quebec and Canadian art. For more information, consult the Website mbam.qc.ca



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