

## Love Fashion: In Search of Myself



left: Loewe Dress (detail) A/W 2022 ©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Koroda Takeru  
right: Yokoyama Nami LOVE 2018 Toyota Municipal Museum of Art ©YOKOYAMA Nami, 2024

Dressing is a universal human activity. The clothes that we wear embody or conceal our internal desires, and they can reveal those desires along with our longings, our passions, and the conflicts and contradictions that we face. Fashion has a role as a receptacle for 'Love': the passions and aspirations of the wearer. Driven by those emotions, we may be motivated to wear something that we like, be inspired by someone's look, want to be ourselves, or just want to lose ourselves. Fashion opens up a colourful world, like a kaleidoscope.

This exhibition is based on clothes and other fashion items from The Kyoto Costume Institute (KCI) 's collection of costume from the eighteenth century to the present day. In conjunction with art that throws light on fundamental human drives and instincts, the exhibits encourage us to ponder the various forms of 'Love' that can be seen in relation to fashion. Through this exhibition, we gain an opportunity to think about and reevaluate what it means for humans to wear clothes.

### Love Fashion: In Search of Myself

Period: Wednesday, 16 April – Sunday, 22 June, 2025

Venue: Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery

Open hours: 11:00 - 19:00 (Last admission at 18:30)

Closing day: Mondays (except 28 April and 5 May), Wednesday, 7 May

Admission: adults 1,600 [1,400] yen / university and high school students 1,000 [800] yen  
free for junior high and under

\* Rates include admission to *Various Aspects of Love / From the Terada Collection 083 and project N 98 Yang Bo*.

\* Rates in brackets indicate discount.

\* Free for person with disability certificate along with an attendant.

\* Only one concession or discount can be applied at a time.

\* Nonrefundable.

Organisers: Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation, The Kyoto Costume Institute (KCI)

Sponsor: NTT UD REIT Investment Corporation

Special Cooperation: Wacoal Corp.

Cooperation: Lecien Corporation, Nanasai Co., Ltd., Yamato Transport Co., Ltd., Yoshichu Mannequin Co., Ltd.

Grants: The Obayashi Foundation, The Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia

Support: Embassy of Switzerland in Japan

### Exhibitors and artists (designers of works exhibited at Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery listed in parentheses)

Fashion: **Alexander McQueen** (Alexander McQueen), **Balenciaga** (Cristóbal Balenciaga, Demna Gvasalia), **Bottega Veneta** (Daniel Lee), **Céline** (Phoebe Philo), **Chanel** (Karl Lagerfeld), **Christian Dior** (Christian Dior, John Galliano), **Comme des Garçons** (Kawakubo Rei), **Comme des Garçons Homme Plus** (Kawakubo Rei), **Gaultier Paris by sacai** (Jean-Paul Gaultier, Abe Chitose), **Givenchy** (Alexander McQueen), **Helmut Lang** (Helmut Lang), **House of Worth** (Jean-Philippe Worth), **J. C. de Castelbajac** (Jean-Charles de Castelbajac), **Jil Sander** (Raf Simons), **Junya Watanabe** (Watanabe Junya), **Kimhëkim** (Kiminte Kimhekim), **Loewe** (Jonathan Anderson), **Maison Margiela** (John Galliano), **Mame Kurogouchi** (Kurogouchi Maiko), **Nensi Dojaka** (Nensi Dojaka), **Noir Kei Ninomiya** (Ninomiya Kei), **Noritaka Tatehana** (Tatehana Noritaka), **Pierre Balmain** (Pierre Balmain), **Prada** (Miuccia Prada), **Ryunosukeokazaki** (Okazaki Ryunosuke), **Somarta** (Hirokawa Tamae), **Stella McCartney** (Stella McCartney), **Thierry Mugler** (Thierry Mugler), **Tomo Koizumi** (Koizumi Tomotaka), **Viktor & Rolf** (Viktor Horsting, Rolf Snoeren), **Yohji Yamamoto** (Yamamoto Yohji), **Yoshiokubo** (Kubo Yoshio) and more.

Art: **Sylvie Fleury**, **Harada Yuki**, **AKI INOMATA**, **Kasahara Emiko**, **Matsukawa Tomona**, **Odani Motohiko**, **Sawada Tomoko**, **Wolfgang Tillmans**, **Yokoyama Nami**

## Highlights

### An opportunity to think about and reevaluate what it means to wear clothes.

Throughout the history of humankind, a passion for wearing clothing has been expressed in many different ways. For instance, furs have been valued since ancient times as a symbol of wealth or authority, but today, they induce conflicting emotions. We champion the protection of animals, yet still crave the touch and warmth that fur brings. This exhibition is based on clothes and other fashion items from the KCI's collection of costume from the eighteenth century to the present day. The exhibits encourage us to ponder the various forms of 'Love' that can be seen in relation to fashion.



Gaultier Paris by sacai Dress, Shirt, T-shirt, and Leggings (detail) A/W 2021 Haute Couture ©The Kyoto Costume Institute  
photo: Moriya Yuki

### Exhibits replete with the 'Love' of those who wear them and create them.



Dress (robe à la française)(detail) 1775 (fabric: 1760s)  
©The Kyoto Costume Institute  
photo: Hatakeyama Takashi

Exhibits include eighteenth century court garments featuring exquisite floral patterns, headwear embellished with birds so lifelike that you expect them to move, and dresses with incredibly thin waists or voluminous sleeves. What we see as excesses and eccentricities in historical costume are actually concentrated doses of the tastes of people who once wore those fashions. Today, contemporary designers still bring new shapes and significance to their looks, enabling us to change our everyday moods, and at times giving us the sense of transforming into something else altogether. Examples include Helmut Lang's extremely pared down designs, reduced to minimal codes, and clothing by Comme des Garçons that disrupts conventional ideas to transcend time and gender, inspired by Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. Each exhibit is replete with the passionate 'Love' of both those who wear the costumes, and those who create them.

### Contemporary art introduces the diverse nature of "I" in today's world.



Wearing clothing acts on the physical outline that reflects the internal I/Me. This exhibition presents contemporary art by contemporary artists, introducing the diverse nature of "I" in today's world, a society in which we face a complex variety of desires and struggles. Exhibits include the photographs of Wolfgang Tillmans affirming the everyday lives of his friends, paintings by Matsukawa Tomona that depict the emotional reality of women living in these times, based on interviews of women of her own generation, and works by AKI INOMATA that associate human identities with the figures of hermit crabs by giving them new shells to wear. All explore questions arising from the nature of "I" today.

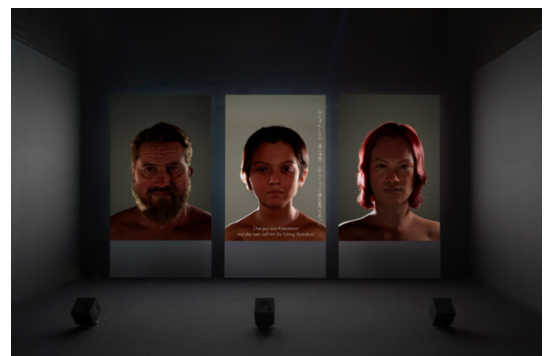
AKI INOMATA Why Not Hand Over a "Shelter" to Hermit Crabs? -Border- 2010/2019  
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto ©AKI INOMATA

### About 130 exhibits: clothing, other fashion items, and artworks.

This exhibition is based on 74 items of clothing and 15 other fashion items from the KCI's collection of costume from the eighteenth century to the present day, accompanied by some 40 artworks, comprising about 130 exhibits in total.

### New works for this exhibition.

Exhibits at Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery include *Shadowing*, a recent video work featuring digital humans modelled on Japanese-American residents of Hawaii, created by Harada Yuki, an artist whose popularity is growing through solo exhibitions and group appearances. New works by other artists for this exhibition are also featured in each chapter of the exhibition.



Harada Yuki *Shadowing* 2023 ©Yuki Harada  
photo: Muramatsu Katsura



## Chapters

### Chapter 1: Born to Be Nature

The first materials used in clothing were bestowed on humankind by nature. Perhaps the legacy of those memories has left us infatuated with the touch and warmth of fur, and led us to adorn our clothing with bird feathers and beautiful floral patterns. Despite today's civilisation and advances in technology, our affection and love for nature is even deeper and our desire to make nature a part of our looks has produced an even greater variety of clothing. This first chapter of this exhibition focuses on fashion employing animal products and floral patterns throughout history. Exhibits include a splendidly embroidered floral-pattern waistcoat worn by men in the eighteenth century, hats from the early twentieth century embellished with feathers and taxidermized creatures, a faux fur coat advocating an ecological approach that does without animal furs, and works by Odani Motohiko, who uses human hair as his material.



left: Le Monnier Beret with staffed bird c.1946  
©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Hayashi Masayuki  
right: J. C. de Castelbajac Coat A/W 1988  
©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Koroda Takeru

### Chapter 2: Dress Me Up

We find ourselves tossed to and for every day between an admiration of beauty and a feeling of failure in being able to see beauty.

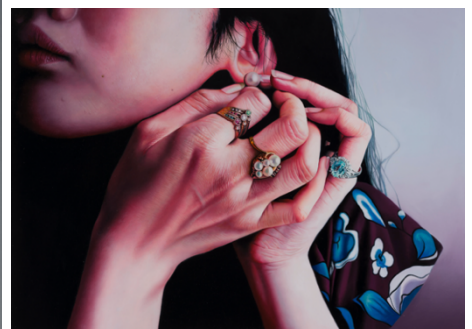
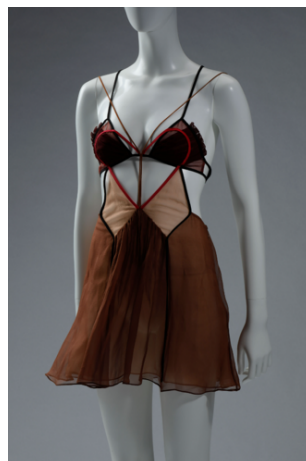
The shape of clothing through the ages reveals the imaginative depiction of diverse forms of beauty which were pursued during different periods in history. Shapes include sleeves so exaggerated that they were larger than the wearer's face, S-bend figures created with tightly laced waists, and skirts spread out so widely that the wearer could barely walk. This chapter presents dresses structured with such undergarments as corsets, crinolines, and bustles that supported the body image of the nineteenth century, works of mid-twentieth century haute couture designers such as Cristóbal Balenciaga who created designs that transcended beauty of form as fabrics and works of art, sculptural contemporary fashions from labels like Yohji Yamamoto and Jil Sander, along with exhibits introducing creativity behind the diversity of beauty revealed in the shape and form of clothing.



left: Balenciaga Evening Dress Winter 1951  
©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Hatakeyama Takashi  
right: Christian Dior Evening dress S/S 1951  
©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Koroda Takeru

### Chapter 3: Just the Way We Are

We also feel the desire to just be ourselves as we play various roles in society. Will we ever be able to realise the dream of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who, back in the eighteenth century, advocated naturalism and pursued the ideal of depicting the natural self. This chapter presents the minimal designs of garments based on our actual physical shape, and ultimate minimal fashions that revealed underwear, driven in the 1990s by brands such as Prada and Helmut Lang. These fashions resonate with photographs by Wolfgang Tillmans that reveal the everyday lives of his friends and paintings by Matsukawa Tomona that depict the reality of women living in contemporary society.



left: Nensi Dojaka Dress A/W 2021 ©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Koroda Takeru  
right: Matsukawa Tomona *Nevertheless, I am a mother* 2018 private collection ©Tomona Matsukawa, courtesy of Yuka Tsuruno Art Office photo: Kato Ken.

## Chapter 4 Break Free

Clothing can at times bind us to its narrative. We each share a desire to escape from such a “me” narrative, and seek refuge in clothes. Virginia Woolf, in her novel *Orlando* (1928), relates the tale of someone who, over a three hundred year period, underwent changes that transcended gender and status, portrayed as associated with a change in the protagonist’s clothes. This chapter presents a trilogy of designs inspired by the changes in identity portrayed in *Orlando: the Comme des Garçons Spring/Summer 2020* women’s collection and Homme Plus collection, both conceived (created) by Kawakubo Rei, who also designed costumes of the opera *Orlando* by the Vienna State Opera (2019). Although produced in times that differ greatly from those when Woolf was writing, they share a universal concern with her narrative of identity.

Comme des Garçons Top and Pants S/S 2020 ©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Koroda Takeru



## Chapter 5 Take Me Higher

We all sense the desire to wear particular clothing, the excitement of imagining how it would feel to wear a certain garment, and the elation of actually putting on the clothing of our desires. Looks like Tomo Koizumi’s delightful frills and ribbons on a jumpsuit as voluminous as an anime mobile suit and a Loewe garment in which the body has been taken over by lips convey the instant thrill and joy of wearing them. Clothes have the power to cast a spell on us. Nevertheless, at some point, even the garments that you yearned for will suddenly feel jaded, and you will go on to seek another new garment. Perhaps we are projecting our interminable human desire onto the hermit crabs that change their dwelling, like the crabs that appear in AKI INOMATA’s works. Or perhaps this is an example of us being linked with other creatures through an even deeper instinct.

Tomo Koizumi Jumpsuit S/S 2020 ©The Kyoto Costume Institute photo: Koroda Takeru



## Publication

*Love Fashion: In Search of Myself*

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¥3,300 (tax included)

## Products



1. T-shirt (S, M, L, XL) ¥4,400 2. Tote Bag ¥1,650 each 3. Post card ¥165 each 4. Sticker ¥330 each 5. Post card ¥330 each 6. Plastic folder ¥495 each (all tax included)

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