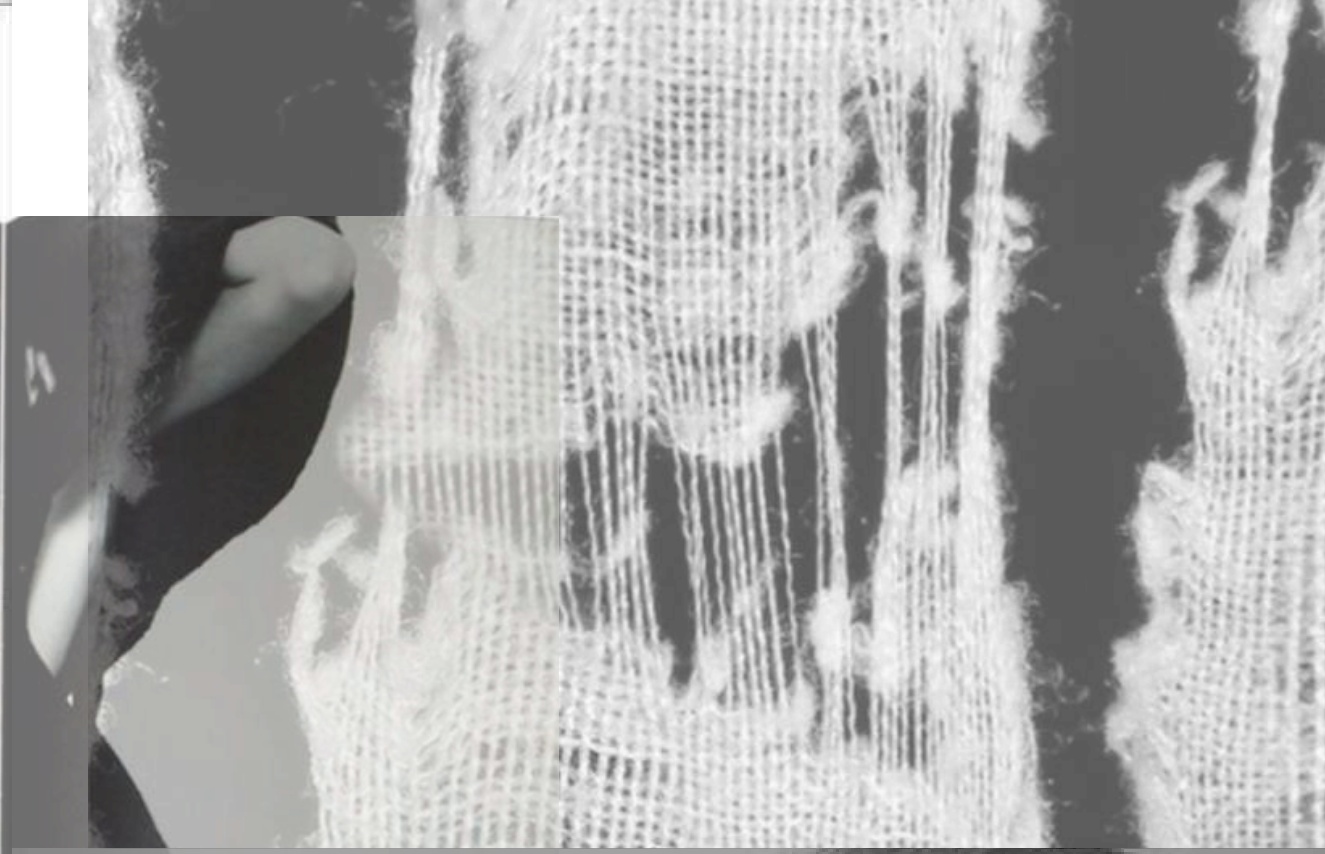
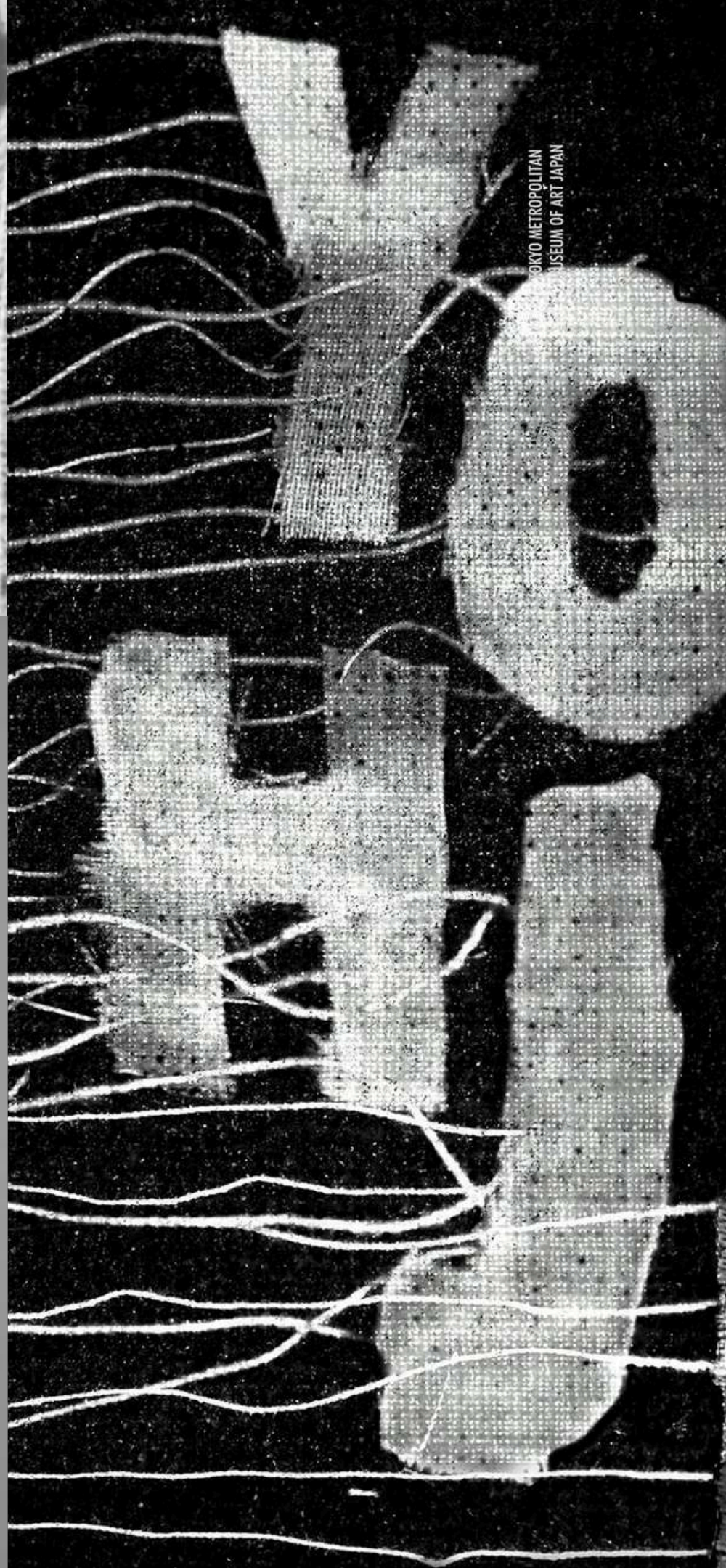


Black is arrogant and modest at the same time. Frank is
lazy and easy - but mysterious. But above all Black
says this:



YOHJI
YAMAMOTO
SPRING
SUMMER
'96



Group Members:

Doa, Gaia, Hamza, Lorenzo, Manuela,
Sashenka

Yohji Yamamoto.

Why Yohji Yamamoto?

Yohji Yamamoto presents himself as a rebel, positioning his work against traditional values and fashion's obsession with trends. He creates garments meant to endure for years, believing that fashion should serve the wearer, not the industry



Yamamoto approaches clothing as a philosophical exploration into identity, gender, and the human body. His designs are statements about freedom and self-definition. As he famously suggested, femininity can emerge more powerfully when it's hidden rather than displayed. His work embodies ideas close to wabi-sabi.

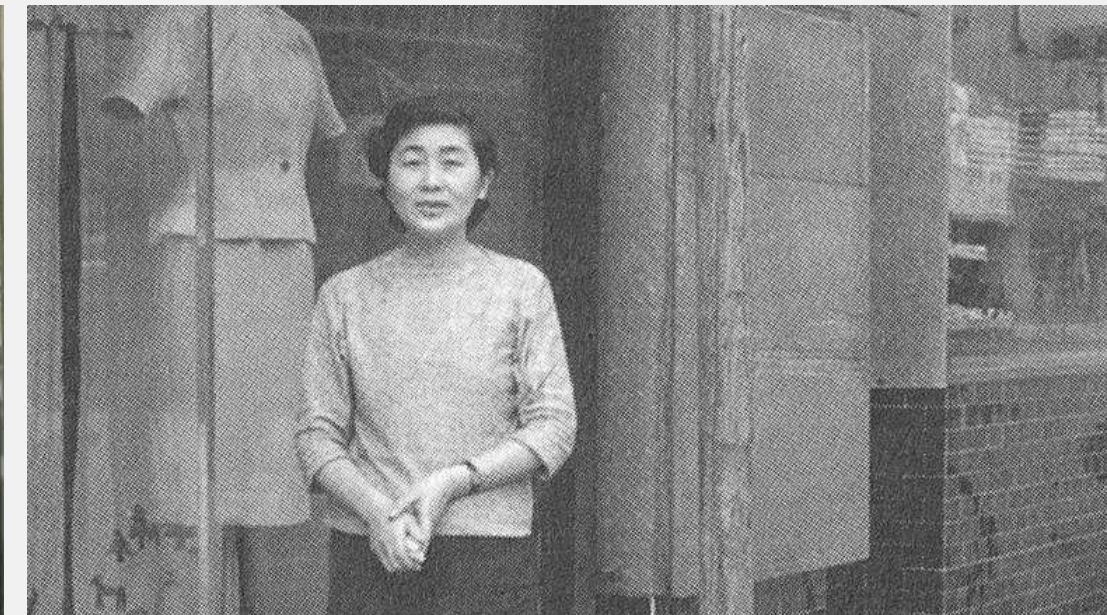
Yamamoto's legacy is not only in the clothes he creates, but in redefining fashion as a medium for philosophical reflection, proving that it can explore imperfection, identity, and the complexity of human existence.



Central to this philosophy is the use of black, a space of possibility, a void, an in-between state where his garments exist. This ambiguity gives his work a timeless and universal quality.

Post-War Japan and His Origins

Born in Tokyo, 1943 (World War II)
Father died in the war
Raised by his mother, a dressmaker



Japan devastated after 1945
Reconstruction and Western influence

Fashion linked to survival, not luxury

Grew up surrounded by fabrics and tailoring
Observed working women and dignity of labor



EXPOSURE TO POST-WAR AUSTERITY



Western glamour rising in Japan [1950s-60s]
GROWING CULTURAL TENSION: TRADITION VS. WESTERN MODERNITY

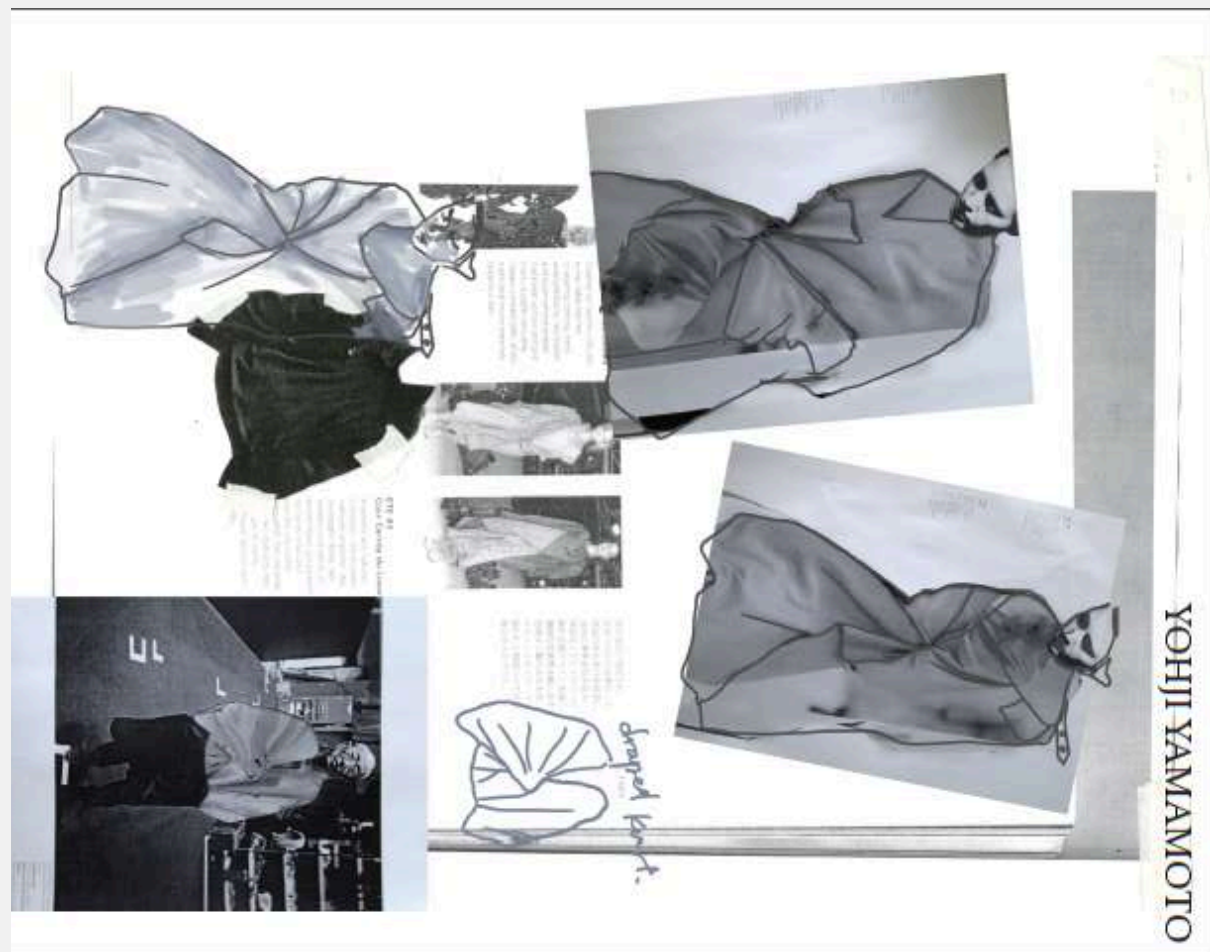


Studied Law at Keio University

CHOSE FASHION AFTER GRADUATION

Enrolled at Bunka Fashion College

*Rigorous training in Western techniques
Mastered haute couture construction*





*Understands how Western fashion shapes the body
Begins to question glamour and perfection*



Redefined femininity through concealment,
shifting focus from display to autonomy

FASHION AS RESISTANCE, NOT IMITATION

TRANSITION FROM INDIVIDUAL DESIGNER TO GLOBAL MAISON

Yamamoto's journey began in **Tokyo** in **1972** with the launch of Y's. The transition to a global scale occurred in **1978** and the opening of a store in **Paris**.

His official debut in the **Paris fashion shows** in **1981** marked his definitive entry into the Western fashion system. The brand consolidated its presence in the major fashion capitals.

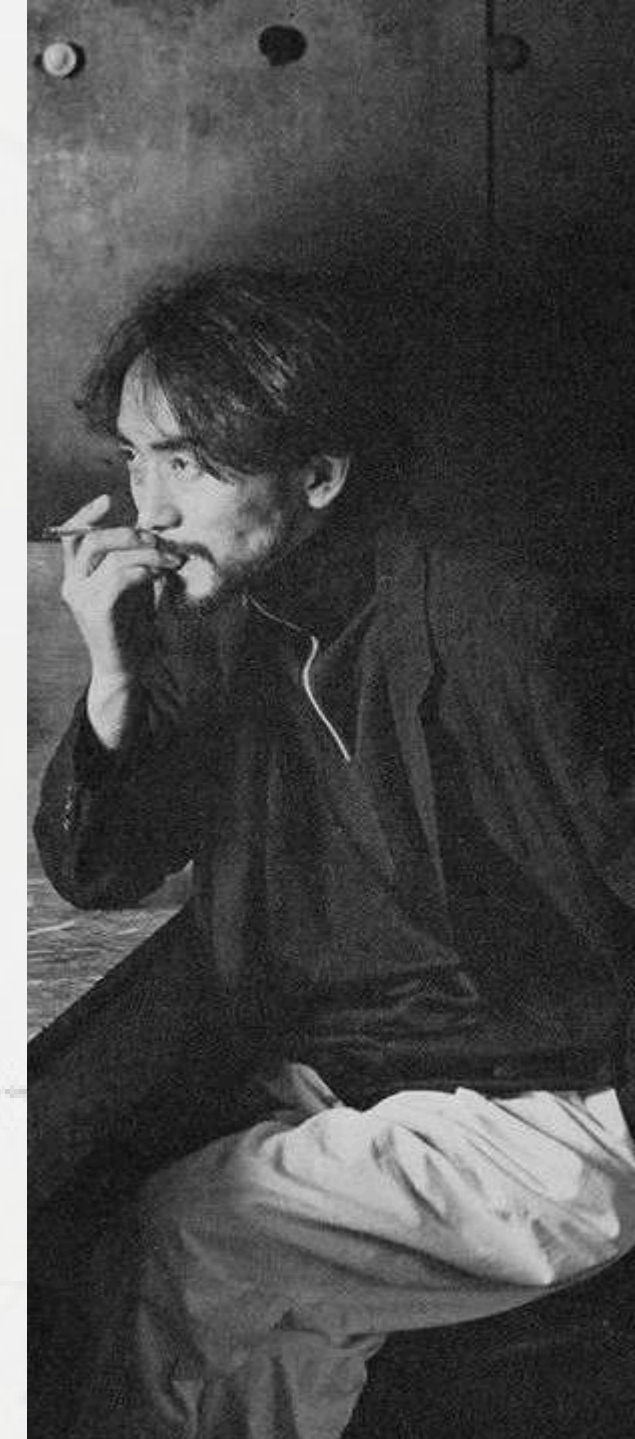
Collaborations, such as **Y-3** with Adidas contributed to expanding the brand's global presence.

Today Yamamoto oversees a portfolio of lines and sub-brands: **Y's, Ground Y, Wildside Yohji Yamamoto.**

MAINTAINING AUTEUR CONTROL WHILE SCALING INTERNATIONALLY

Despite international expansion, Yamamoto has preserved strict control over the creative vision, acting as a true "**auteur**." He also collaborates with Japanese factories and ateliers maintaining this coherence even in large-scale production.

Yamamoto has also chosen presentation formats that control the brand experience, such as debuting ready-to-wear within the couture context.



CONSISTENCY OF VISUAL LANGUAGE

Yamamoto's strength lies in the **stability** of his aesthetic vocabulary, developed over decades of activity.

The use of **black, oversized, asymmetry**, and the "**back style**" are constants, while details and techniques evolve discreetly, introducing innovation without distorting the brand's identity.

Visual consistency is supported by the **philosophy of Ma**.

For over 16 seasons [1984-1996], the collaboration with art director **Marc Ascoli** ensured visual continuity in advertising campaigns.

Yamamoto

REFUSAL OF REBRANDING

The brand remains faithful to its identity without adapting to fashion tendencies, instead practicing a continuous deconstruction of its own authority.

When his style became too accepted, Yamamoto chose to "**deconstruct himself**," introducing themes such as the kimono or 1990s haute couture.

Yamamoto has shown in Paris for almost four decades without ever altering the fundamental mission of the brand: to give form to unique emotions through cut and material.

He states, "Nothing inside me has changed," defining aesthetic changes as small internal rebellions within his coherent system.





The 1981 Shock

In April 1981, Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo debuted in Paris. Their collections challenged European fashion, avoiding traditional Japanese references and focusing on structure and form.

The press called it the Shock of Black. Black replaced colour, loose silhouettes replaced fitted shapes, and asymmetry replaced symmetry.



The media reacted with disgust. Critics said “beggar look” or “shabby look”. One newspaper even crossed out the designs with a large X and the headline “Good bye”.

This debut marked a turning point, moving fashion away from glamour and structure towards a new, conceptual language.



Yohji Yamamoto, Paris 1981





Yamamoto's designs subvert Western fashion conventions in philosophy and technique. His silhouettes are horizontal, oversized, and layered, wrapping the wearer rather than revealing the body. He rejects sexualized femininity, creating an asexual, independent look that prioritizes strength over appeal.



He also opposes seasonal trends, treating clothing as functional armor. Strong, durable fabrics are designed to last ten years or more. Black is central to his vision, giving both power and neutrality to the wearer.



"I do not bother you, and you do not bother me"

Yohji vs Western fashion ideals



THE BRAND AS A VEHICLE FOR PHILOSOPHY, NOT TREND PRODUCTION

The brand is labeled as “**anti-fashion**” because it produces garments that challenge established codes. The brand becomes a space to reflect on identity, culture, and the human body.

His collections translate this **philosophy** into concrete garments.



He conceives **clothing as protection**, rejecting Western femininity.

Yamamoto describes the role of the artist as someone who must “**destroy**” existing rules.

Subcultures He Drew From

Working-Class and Laborer Aesthetics

Yamamoto's work is deeply rooted in his observations of the working class. He has cited the portraits of August Sander, which captured the everyday dress of laborers, as a significant influence [[Yokogao, 2024](#)]. He found beauty in the functionality and wear of clothes used for manual labor, preferring the "dirty" and "used" look over the polished nature of high fashion [[The Talks, 2011](#)].

Traditional Japanese Design

He drew heavily from the Kimono's structure, which emphasizes a "flat" silhouette rather than the body-hugging curves typical of Western tailoring [[Melissa Marra Alvarez, 2010](#)]. This includes the concept of "Ma," the purposeful space between the fabric and the body, allowing for movement and air [[fortunadey, 2014](#)] [[Chen, Tianyue & Li, Leyang & Zheng, Jiayi, 2022](#)].

Wabi-sabi

The Japanese philosophical concept of Wabi-sabi, rooted in Zen Buddhism which finds beauty the natural cycle of growth and decay. It values simplicity and authenticity over perfection, and this served as a foundational inspiration for his distressed and asymmetrical designs [[Chen, Tianyue & Li, Leyang & Zheng, Jiayi, 2022](#)] [[Paula Antal, 2021](#)].



Post-War Survival

Growing up in the ruins of post-war Shinjuku, Yamamoto was inspired by the resilience and struggle of the people around him ([Yokogao, 2024](#)). His focus on the color black was partly a reflection of the "shadows" of this era and a rebellion against the bright, "pretty" trends he felt were superficial ([The Talks, 2011](#)) ([NikkeiAsia, 2022](#)).



The Male Gaze and Protection

Observing his mother's struggles as a widow and seamstress in a patriarchal society influenced him to create clothing that protected women. He drew inspiration from men's tailoring to create "armored" silhouettes for women, shielding them from being viewed as sexual objects ([Yokogao, 2024](#)) ([Damian Webb, 2024](#)).



Subcultures He Created/Popularized

Anti-Fashion

Yamamoto was a pioneer of the Anti-Fashion movement in the early 1980s. Alongside Rei Kawakubo, he challenged the era's obsession with glamour, shoulder pads, and "power dressing" by introducing oversized, unfinished, and monochromatic garments ([Melissa Marra Alvarez, 2010](#)) ([Paula Antal, 2021](#)) ([Osman Ahmed, 2022](#)).

Karasu-zoku (The Crow Tribe)

His debut in the 1980s sparked a massive subcultural movement in Japan known as the "Crow Tribe." This group of followers exclusively wore all-black, loose-fitting, and asymmetrical clothing, mirroring Yamamoto's personal aesthetic and rejecting traditional colorful fashion ([Yokogao, 2024](#)) ([Chen, Tianyue & Li, Leyang & Zheng, Jiayi, 2022](#)).

Hiroshima Chic / Post-Atomic Aesthetic

While controversial, Western media coined the term "Hiroshima Chic" to describe the "shock of black" and the distressed, holy, and ragged appearance of his early collections. This popularized the idea that "destruction" and "decay" could be high-fashion element ([Chen, Tianyue & Li, Leyang & Zheng, Jiayi, 2022](#)).





Deconstructionism

Yamamoto popularized deconstruction in fashion. This trend involves exposing seams, leaving hems raw, and utilizing asymmetry to suggest that a garment is a "work in progress," challenging the perfectionist standards of European couture (Chen, Tianyue & Li, Leyang & Zheng, Jiayi, 2022), (Paula Antal, 2021) (Damian Webb, 2024).

Androgyny and Gender Fluidity

By consistently putting women in oversized, masculine-cut trousers and coats, he popularized gender-neutral silhouettes. His philosophy that "men's clothing looks as good on women as it does on men" helped shift the industry toward the androgynous aesthetics seen today (Yokogao, 2024) (Damian Webb, 2024).



Luxury Sportswear (The Y-3 Movement)

Through his collaboration with Adidas [Y-3], Yamamoto is credited with pioneering the "athleisure" or luxury streetwear trend. He successfully bridged the gap between avant-garde high fashion and functional sportswear, a trend that now dominates the global fashion industry (Paula Antal, 2021) (Damian Webb, 2024).



FALL WINTER 1995

The Yohji Yamamoto Fall/Winter 1995 show is an **ode to elegance** viewed from behind, inspired by the Japanese tradition of **ukiyo-e prints**.

The designer blends **masculine tailoring** in the front with spectacular volumes and bustles on the back, replacing stiff 19th-century structures with soft, modern materials like mesh and chunky knits.

Viewed today as a **celebration of female power**, the collection transforms a dark, austere aesthetic into a symphony of textures that asserts a entirely new sense of strength and sensuality.

SPRING 1999 - "Wedding Dresses in Black"

The Spring/Summer 1999 show by Yohji Yamamoto is a masterpiece of **narrative minimalism** and a career pinnacle.

By transforming the wedding dress into a **dynamic performance**, the collection uses ingenious zippers and **hidden volumes** to reveal successive **layers** and concealed accessories.

As the designer stated, "behind a wedding dress there must be many stories" a concept translated into a **metamorphic show** where design becomes an intimate ritual capable of unveiling the soul and secrets of the wearer.

FALL WINTER 2014

The Fall/Winter 2014 show is one of Yamamoto's most daring departures, famous for its unprecedented explosion of **Pop Art energy**.

Breaking away from his typical monochromatic rigor, the designer presented exaggerated volumes featuring manga graphics, neon colors, and psychedelic patterns.

Acclaimed as an **intellectual rebellion** against conformity, the collection demonstrates how Yohji uses color and street aesthetics as powerful tools of protest and vitality.



Yohji Yamamoto

RECENT COLLECTIONS - CONTINUITY AND INTERNAL REBELLION

Yohji Yamamoto's recent runway shows reaffirm his status as the "master of slowness," countering digital frenzy with pure craftsmanship.

The **Fall/Winter 2022 collection** stands out as a ghostly, Victorian-inspired sanctuary, blending deconstructed denim and monumental silhouettes to celebrate the wabi-sabi philosophy.

It is a powerful fusion of **history and avant-garde**, where dramatic volumes transform clothing into an intellectual form of protection.



Collaborations and cultural impact



Y-3 introduced a new aesthetic based on black, minimalism, asymmetry, and movement. It blurred the boundaries between high fashion and performance wear.

One of Yamamoto's most significant collaborations is Y-3, launched in 2002 with adidas.

This partnership was groundbreaking: it fused avant-garde fashion with sportswear technology, redefining luxury streetwear long before it became mainstream.



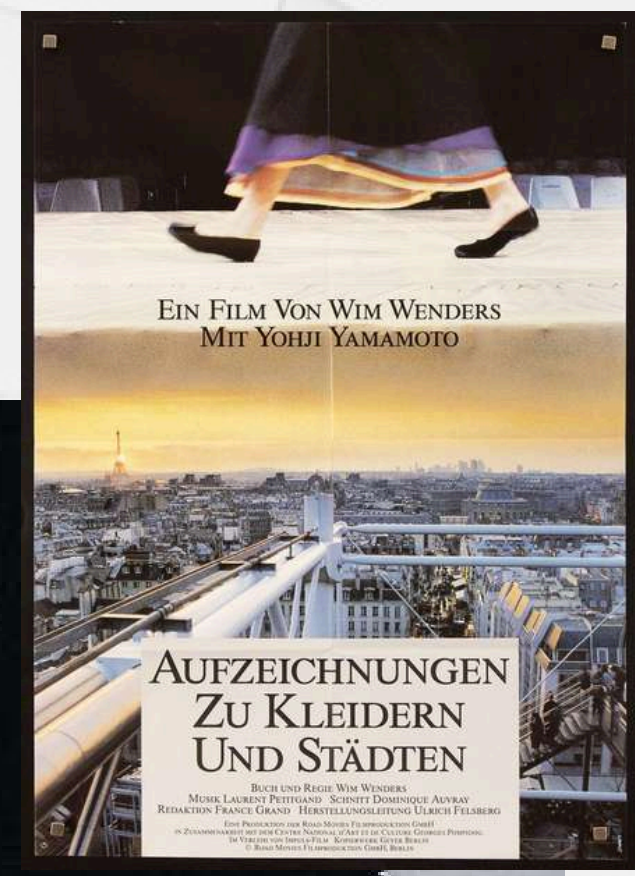
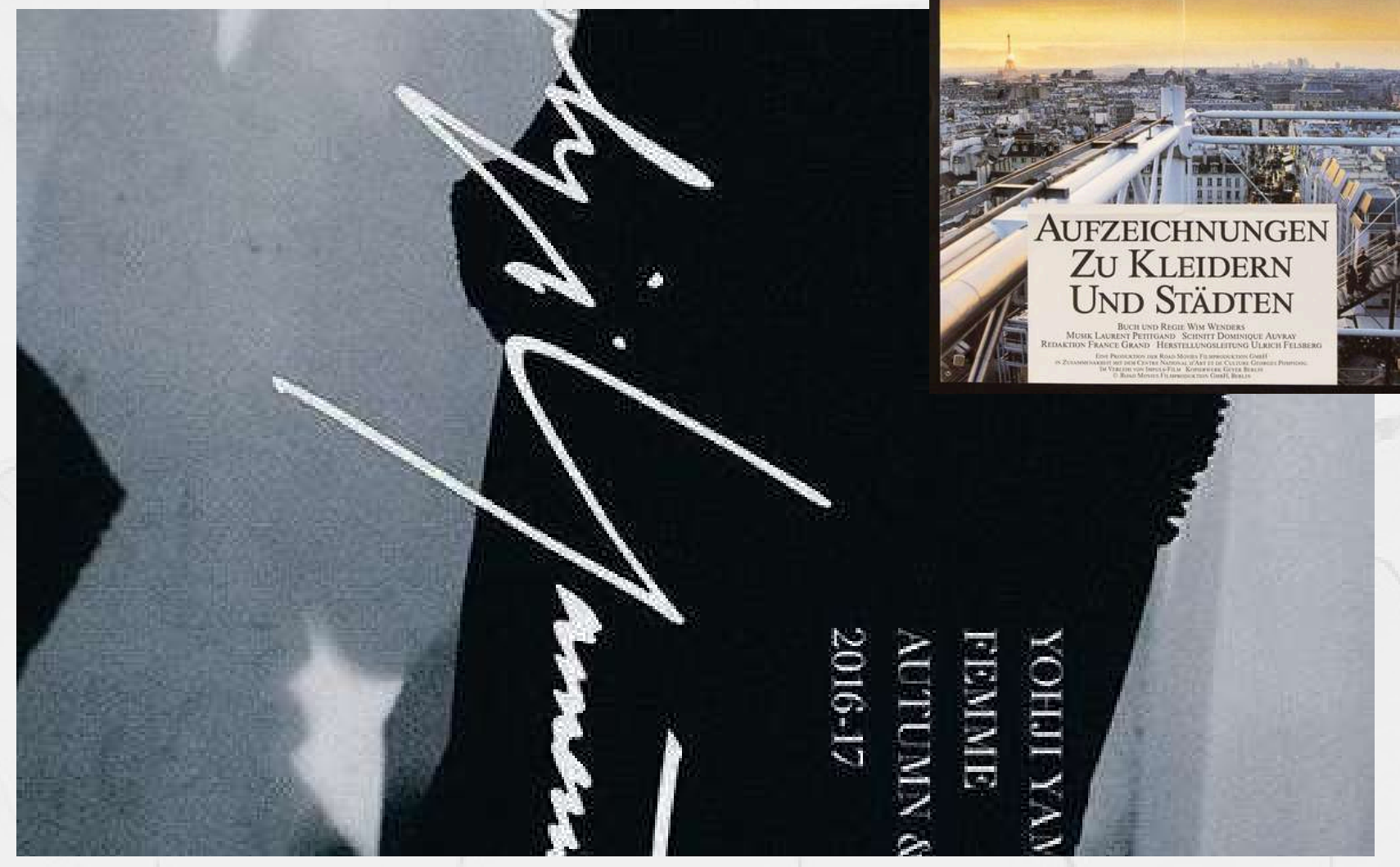
Y-3 remains an ongoing and active collaboration between adidas and Yohji Yamamoto in 2026,



Yamamoto has had a strong connection with music, particularly avant-garde, rock, and experimental scenes.

Cultural Impact

Yohji Yamamoto's broader impact lies in his ability to challenge Western fashion norms: He redefined silhouette, gender neutrality, and imperfection as forms of beauty.



The dark, poetic aesthetic of his designs has influenced visual styles in alternative music, especially in Japan and Europe.

Yohji Yamamoto approaches costume design as an extension of his philosophy rather than a separate discipline. His garments are often used in theatre, dance, and film because they emphasize movement, emotion, and character rather than decoration.



Film and Visual Culture

Yamamoto's relationship with cinema has played a key role in his cultural legacy. He collaborated with filmmakers such as Wim Wenders, notably in **Notebook on Cities and Clothes (1989)**, a documentary that explores identity, creation, and the philosophy behind clothing.

Rei Kawakubo



Rei Kawakubo is a Japanese fashion designer and the founder of Comme des Garçons (CDG), launched in 1969. She is known for her avant-garde, conceptual approach to clothes, often challenging Western notions of beauty, proportion, fit, and fashion itself.



anti-fashion or radical experimentation.



Yohji Yamamoto



- black palette, masterful tailoring, imperfection and asymmetry.

wabi-sabi (beauty in imperfection) and blending Japanese sensibilities with contemporary fashion.

Their **Parallel & Shared Impact**: Anti-fashion movement of the **1980s** and **90s**.

Their work rejected "beauty" as defined by Western conventions and instead embraced asymmetry, raw finishes, and conceptual shapes.

They were romantically involved: **"renegade Japanese designers"**.

Ann Demeulemeester, part of the Antwerp Six, emerged in the 1980s with a dark, minimalist aesthetic that worked in parallel with the Japanese avant-garde movement led by Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo, all challenging Western fashion norms in similar ways.



Ann Demeulemeester

Both designers share a rejection of conventional glamour and trends, embracing anti-fashion, asymmetry, draping, and elongated silhouettes.



Rick Owens



Yamamoto: of romanticism, melancholy, and protection of the body,

Owens: brutality, spirituality, and post-apocalyptic aesthetics.

Deconstructivist movement in fashion, a direction that was initially shaped by designers like Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo



Martin Margiela

Tabi boot: Japanese tabi footwear, showing a clear cultural link between his work and Japanese aesthetics.



Yohji Today: Relevance in 2020s

Yohji Yamamoto presents sustainability as a philosophy rooted in longevity. He preserves traditional Japanese craftsmanship by collaborating with small, often family-run factories and emphasizing “Made in Japan.” His use of natural fabrics like cotton and wool reflects his environmental awareness. For him, sustainability means respecting materials, makers, and time.



Yohji Yamamoto deeply values emotional durability. His aim to “design time itself” reflects the idea that clothing should grow with the wearer, gaining meaning rather than losing relevance. Through his deconstructionist aesthetic, he resists trend-driven fashion, creating pieces that avoid obsolescence and remain personally and aesthetically significant. His work seeks to build lasting emotional connections beyond fashion’s fleeting cycles.

His approach stands firmly against the logic of fast fashion. Instead of producing disposable garments designed for rapid turnover, Yamamoto focuses on superior-quality textiles and durable workmanship, asking fabric makers to create strong, abrasion-resistant finishes. This resistance to trend-driven consumerism challenges a system that encourages constant replacement and waste, criticizing a capitalist cycle built on overconsumption.



YOHJI YAMAMOTO

‘I think **perfection is ugly**, and in things made by the man I want to see **deficiencies, failures, chaos, distortions**’

Yohji Yamamoto



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