

Fashion & Art: The Crossing of Appearances

Exploring Fashion and Art at the National Museum of Modern Art

By Ugnė Giraitytė

Situated within the heart of the National Museum of Modern Art, the innovative exhibition titled "The Crossing of Appearances" unfolds, featuring iconic figures in the fashion world such as Christian Dior, Jean Paul Gaultier, Martin Margiela, and Marine Serre. This immersive journey intricately intertwines contemporary fashion silhouettes with artworks by modern and contemporary artists, creating a captivating interplay.

Building upon a similar conversation initiated by the Center Pompidou in 2022 with "Yves Saint Laurent at the Museums," which explored connections between designer silhouettes and artworks from the National Museum of Modern Art's collection, "The Crossing of Appearances" extends and amplifies this dialogue. The exhibition, curated by journalist and author Laurence Benaïm, offers a profound exploration of the dynamic convergence of fashion and art.

Benaïm delves into specific pairings within the exhibition, such as Christian Dior's Bar suit juxtaposed with Ellsworth Kelly's artwork, Martin Margiela's design in dialogue with Giorgio De Chirico's piece, Marine Serre's silhouette with Marcel Duchamp's work, and Jean Paul Gaultier's metal corset immersed in a bath of silver paired with Wilhelm Freddie's painting. These curated connections reveal elective affinities and shared obsessions between fashion designers and modern or contemporary artists.

Each silhouette, whether undergoing anatomical reinvention, employing trompe-l'oeil, or incorporating prostheses, engages in a meaningful dialogue with a specific artwork or artistic movement. The exhibition provides a comprehensive exploration of the formal imagination of fashion designers, presenting a fresh and insightful perspective on the Center Pompidou collection.

The tour, led by Laurence Benaïm, a distinguished fashion specialist and author, including notable works like "Yves Saint Laurent" and "Christian Dior, Christian Bérard, la mélancolie joie," promises an enriching experience for visitors. The exhibition serves as a dynamic platform for examining the interplay of creativity and expression across diverse mediums, showcasing the intricate connections between fashion and art.