

Press release 4 June 2015

Anthology of Finnish Fashion

5 June – 20 September 2015

Anthology of Finnish Fashion ('anthology' comes from the Greek for a bunch or garland of flowers) is an exhibition featuring a selection of phenomena of Finnish fashions and the fashion industry from the 1950s to the present day. The exhibition asks how phenomena and conditions typical of Finnish society, such as winter, equality and the so-called engineering mind-set, are manifested in fashions. The exhibits include garments from the collections of the Design Museum and on loan from designers of different eras.

"There has been no previous major exhibition of Finnish fashion and as a result we felt that now would be the time for it, especially since there is international interest in Finnish fashion, Finnish students of fashion design have done well in international competitions, and fashion arouses discussion," note the exhibition's curators Suvi Saloniemi, Curator of Exhibitions at Design Museum, and journalist Liisa Jokinen.

This exhibition approaches its topic through nine themes: Folk, Globalization, The Engineering Mindset, The Millennium, Modernism, Change, the Economic Boom, Winter and Equality.

"Winter, for example, means conditions that a Finnish designer cannot ignore. This season of the year has led to a great deal of interesting fashion design that would not come about in a different climate," Jokinen and Saloniemi observe.

In this exhibition, fashion is understood in a broad sense. The exhibits include technological clothing design, such as a motorcycle outfit and smart sportswear. The heritage of modernism is prominent in Finnish fashion design. Typical features of Finnish fashions in the spirit of modernism are practicality, functionalism and usability. The Modernism theme features work by Samuji and Irja Leimu, among others.

On the other hand, the idiom of form is also influenced by colourful folk-inspired maximalism and decorativeness. The designers presented in the Folk theme include Sophie Sälekari and Annikki Karvinen.

The conditions under which Finnish fashion and clothing designers have worked have changed radically from the 1950s to the present day. During the heyday of the Finnish

fashion and clothing industry from the late 1960s to the beginning of the 1990s, there were over 500 manufacturers in this sector, employing a large number of designers.

When trade with the Soviet Union collapsed and the clothing industry moved out of Finland, designers had to find new ways of earning their livelihood. Around the turn of the millennium, brands established by young designers began to emerge in Finland. At present, Finnish fashion is a seamless part of international fashion.

“Although the history of fashion in Finland is relatively short, a great deal of interesting and original design has been created here. Finnish fashion is also surprisingly colourful and diverse, despite the prominent heritage of modernism,” the exhibition curators point out.

Designers and brands featured in the exhibition include Achilles Ion Gabriel, Ivana Helsinki, Jasmiine Julin-Aro, Karhu, Satu Maaranen, Makia, Marimekko, Mattisen Teollisuus, Daniel Palillo, Plastic Pony, Jukka Rintala, Anna Ruohonen and Vuokko.

The curators of the exhibition are Suvi Saloniemi, Chief Curator of Exhibitions at Design Museum and journalist Liisa Jokinen. The exhibition architecture is by Linda Bergroth.

Several special events on fashion-related themes will be held during the exhibition, where visitors can meet professional fashion designers featured in the exhibition. For more information: www.designmuseum.fi

Guided visits to the exhibition will be held as follows: in Finnish at 5 p.m. on Tuesdays and 4 p.m. on Saturdays, in Swedish at 2 p.m. on 18 July, in English at 2 p.m. on Saturdays, and in Russian at 2 p.m. on the last Sunday of the month.

Design Museum, street address Korkeavuorenkatu 23, 00130 Helsinki, summer opening hours: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. Mon. – Sun. Tickets: adults €10, pensioners €8, students €5, visitors under 16 free of charge. Design Museum is included in the Museum Card of the Finnish Museums Association.

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Press photos: <http://media-bank.designmuseum.fi>