

NGV Collection Focus

Dior and Yamamoto: The New Look

NGV International | 16 March – 28 July 2013 | FREE



*“With my eyes turned to the past,
I walk backwards into the future.”*

Yohji Yamamoto, ‘Feeling the Flow of
Yamamoto’, *The New York Times*, 2011

The National Gallery of Victoria will explore two pivotal moments in the history of fashion when *Dior and Yamamoto: The New Look* opens in March.

These two landmark moments, saw the female fashion silhouette transformed overnight when designers Christian Dior and Yohji Yamamoto burst onto the fashion scene with their respective debut collections.

Tony Ellwood, NGV Director, said, “*The New Look* will draw out some of the connections between Christian Dior and Yohji Yamamoto

through garments, photographs and prints from the NGV Collection. It’s an opportunity for visitors to explore their work and also see the subtle references to Dior that Yamamoto incorporated in his designs throughout his career.”

In 1947, Dior’s first collection completely altered female dress from the angular, war-time silhouette of the 1940s into a softer, feminine hourglass shape with wasp-waist and billowing skirt. Carmel Snow at *Harper’s Bazaar* dubbed it the ‘New Look’.

In 1981, Yohji Yamamoto’s debut Paris collection also changed the course of fashion history—shaking up the concept of Western-style clothing with a collection that seemed unfinished and oversized, throwing the fashion world into controversy. His collection created a new vocabulary in fashion with its avant-garde style.

Paola Di Trocchio, Assistant Curator, International Fashion and Textiles, NGV, said, “Both designers are internationally-renowned for their daring designs that challenged the established status quo of fashion at the time. Dior presented an extravagant ‘New Look’ that saw war-time austerity replaced by a celebration of overt femininity. Yamamoto is an influential and enigmatic figure whose quest for anti-fashion saw all-black statements and androgynous abstraction become high-fashion.”

“Dior and Yamamoto strive for the sensualisation of the female form through different means. Yamamoto achieves this through inventive tailoring techniques and an embrace of *wabi sabi*—the transient state of beauty, marked by imperfection and incompleteness. For Dior, it was the use of age-old couture techniques to create the unmistakable silhouette shaped by corsetry, tailored into an armature of voluptuous curves, that helped produce his so-called ‘flower-like women’.”

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NGV NEWS

This NGV Collection display will showcase six garments alongside photographs and contextual fashion sketches by Parisian fashion designer Jacques Heim.

NGV Collection Focus *Dior and Yamamoto: The New Look* will be on display from 16 March to 28 July 2013 at NGV International, 180 St Kilda Road. Open Wed–Mon, 10am–5pm. Entry is free.

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Image captions:

(L)

Christian Dior, Paris

French est. 1946

Christian Dior (designer)

French born 1905

Zelie, cocktail dress 1954 spring-summer

silk

122.0 cm (centre back); 32.0 cm (waist, flat)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased NGV Foundation, 2006

© Christian Dior

(R)

Yohji Yamamoto, Tokyo

Japanese est. 1972

Yohji Yamamoto (designer)

Japanese born 1943

Dress 1983 spring-summer

cotton, synthetic coating, shell

126.5 cm (centre back); 91.0 cm (waist, flat)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Rebecca Dallwitz in memory of Delia Muriti, 2007

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