



**MEMOS.
ON FASHION
IN THIS
MILLENNIUM**

21.02-04.05.2020

**MUSEO POLDI PEZZOLI
MILAN**

Conceived and curated by
MARIA LUISA FRISA

exhibition maker
JUDITH CLARK

visual design
STEFANO TONCHI

**MEMOS.
ON FASHION IN THIS MILLENNIUM**
is an exhibition staged by the
CAMERA NAZIONALE DELLA MODA ITALIANA,
in collaboration with the
MUSEO POLDI PEZZOLI,
and with the support of the
**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION, the ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY ICE**
and the
MUNICIPALITY OF MILAN.
With the participation of
TENDERCAPITAL
as part of the activities of its art incubator TenderToArt.

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The project, in the form of an exhibition and a catalogue, aims to spark off a series of reflections on contemporary fashion, its qualities and its attributes, taking as its starting point Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*, the series of Charles Eliot Norton Poetry Lectures that the writer was supposed to give at Harvard University in the autumn of

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1985. Calvino died suddenly in September of the same year, but his wife Esther decided to publish what he had written for them. Thus the incisive and inclusive word *Memos* has been chosen as the title of the exhibition.

Reading Calvino today raises a fundamental question: can fashion, given its nature as a cultural industry, as a system of communication, as a rich, hybrid and problematic territory, be considered a scientific and poetic practice, and therefore a naturally literary one? So the exhibition uses Calvino's words as devices to reflect on what has changed and what has stayed the same in fashion. *Memos* also evokes the legendary typewritten notes Diana Vreeland used to make when she was editor of the American edition of *Vogue*. Notes, intended for the editorial staff, that sum up the speed with which Vreeland's imagination operated. Notes that functioned as mood boards made up of words.

Thus *Memos* sets out to construct a 'discourse on method,' or rather a reflection on fashion curating and its ability to deal with the different products of that fashion: not just the objects, but also the images and the words. Reflecting on the practice of fashion curating, Maria Luisa Frisa has brought in Judith Clark in the role of 'exhibition-maker' and Stefano Tonchi with a visual project.

A discourse on method that also sees contributions from the writer Chiara Valerio and the film director Roberta Torre, who have been asked to give a voice to some of the materials on display. Authorial voices that describe the object from the perspective of their respective imaginations. The exhibition is at once open work and scientific and poetic attitude, an exercise 'of research and design, of discovery and invention'. The theatre for this exercise is the Museo Poldi Pezzoli: the house-museum on Via Manzoni, in the heart of the city of Milan, a stone's throw from La Scala and close to the iconic locations of Milanese fashion, from Via Montenapoleone to Via Spiga. The house-museum originated in the second half of the 19th century as a container for the collection of its founder, Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli. The museum has also been the venue for a series of exhibitions on fashion, such as *1922-1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* [1980] curated by Grazietta Butazzi, that treated fashion as a field of historical, critical and curatorial inquiry: thanks to the invaluable collaboration of the municipality of Milan's collections of historical costumes and fashion housed in Palazzo Morando, the exhibition will include some of the clothing that was on display in 1980 in the show curated by Butazzi. These considerations also played a part in the choice to re-establish the link between the spaces of the house-museum and fashion, through a critical reflection in the form of an exhibition.

The selection of objects: the clothes, magazines and ephemera that are part of the stories told by fashion, and that help to organize the exhibition into a sequence of three-dimensional 'memos', include among other things clothes designed by ARTHUR ARBESSER, DEMNA GVASALIA for BALENCIAGA, BOBOLITIC, RICCARDO TISCI for BURBERRY, KARL LAGERFELD for CHANEL, GABRIELE COLANGELO, MARIA GRAZIA CHIURI for DIOR, FAUSTO PUGLISI, SILVIA VENTURINI FENDI for FENDI, GIAMBATTISTA VALLI, GIORGIO ARMANI, ALESSANDRO MICHELE for GUCCI, J.Ⅲ. ANDERSON for LOEWE, MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA, MARCO DE

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VINCENZO, MARIA SOLE FERRAGAMO, FRANCESCO RISSO for MARNI, NOIR for MONCLER GENIUS, MOSCHINO, MSGM, PRADA, RANDOM IDENTITIES, PAUL ANDREW for SALVATORE FERRAGAMO, PIER PAOLO PICCIOLI for VALENTINO, VERSACE.

The catalogue has the dimension of that of the collection of the Poldi Pezzoli: it is made up of pictures of the clothes and other objects in the exhibition taken in the spaces of the museum by the Coppi Barbieri duo of photographers and texts by Maria Luisa Frisa, Judith Clark, Gabriele Monti and Stefano Tonchi that bring the references and the intentions of the *Memos* project into focus.

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The image of *Memos* is designed by Alessandro Gori.Laboratorium.

MARIA LUISA FRISA,

is a critic and curator. She is a professor at the IUAV University in Venice, where she directs the degree course in Fashion Design and Multimedia Arts. Among her recent publications: *Le forme della moda* [Il Mulino, 2015], *Desire and Discipline: Designing Fashion at IUAV* [Marsilio, 2016]. Her most recent projects include: the exhibition and book *Bellissima: Italy and High Fashion 1945-1968* [MAXXI, Rome, 2014-15; BOZAR, Brussels, 2015; Villa Reale, Monza, 2015-16; NSU Art Museum, Fort Lauderdale, 2016] and the exhibition and book *Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion 1971-2001* [Palazzo Reale, Milan, 2018].

JUDITH CLARK

is a curator and exhibition-maker. She is professor of Fashion and Museology at the University of the Arts in London. Clark opened the first experimental gallery of fashion in London [1997-2002]. Since then, she has curated major exhibitions on fashion at the V&A, London; ModeMuseum, Antwerp; Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Palazzo Pitti, Florence; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Simone Handbag Museum, Seoul; La Galerie, Louis Vuitton, Paris; and Cristobal Balenciaga Museum, Getaria, among others. Her exhibition *Dialogues: Lanvin 130* is currently under way at the Fosun Foundation, Shanghai.

PRESS CONTACTS

Beatrice Rossaro
beatrice.rossaro@cameramoda.it
+39 344 0426098

Paola Giannini
paola.giannini@karlaotto.com
+39 348 4412815

Adelaide Crippa
adelaide.crippa@karlaotto.com
+39 335 7872988

UFFICIO STAMPA MUSEO POLDI PEZZOLI

Ilaria Toniolo
toniolo@museopoldipezzoli.org
+39 02 45473805

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OPENING TIMES

Wednesday –Monday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. [last entrance at 17:30]

Closed: Easter, 25 April, 1 May

ADMISSION

Adult €14,00

Reduced €10,00

School classes €3,00

Guided tours for children, families, adults, schools, groups

For information

E-mail: servizieducativi@museopoldipezzoli.it

Ph.: +39 02 79 4889/6334

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