Press Release

November 2012

The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk

The Brooklyn Museum Is the Only East Coast Venue Presenting the Exhibition on the Innovative Work of the Celebrated French Fashion Designer

On View October 25, 2013, through February 23, 2014

The Brooklyn Museum will be the only East Coast venue for *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*, the first international exhibition dedicated to the groundbreaking French couturier, organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The critically acclaimed touring show, already seen by half a million people, spans the Paris-based designer's 37-year career and includes iconic examples never before exhibited. The Brooklyn presentation will include new material not shown in the previous venues, including ensembles from his recent runway shows.

Nathalie Bondil, Director and Chief Curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, started the project with the ambition of creating an exhibition about Jean Paul Gaultier because of his great humanity, his open-minded vision of society where everyone can be proud and distinctive because of his/her own identity, as much as for his technical virtuosity and the imagination of his creations.

This dynamic, multimedia contemporary installation devoted to Jean Paul Gaultier explores in depth his fashion themes of equality, diversity, and avant-garde daring through more than 140 cutting-edge couture and ready-to-wear garments for both men and women. It also features film, dance, and concert costumes, including the conical bra and corsets Madonna wore during her 1990 Blonde Ambition World Tour and 2006 Confessions Tour, costumes from the films of Pedro Almodóvar and *The Fifth Element*, and photographs by Richard Avedon, Andy Warhol, Cindy Sherman, Herb Ritts, and Mario Testino, among others. Video and television clips are featured as well. Other archival material includes sketches. The material on display dates from the mid 1970s to 2012.

Since his first runway shows in the 1970s, Jean Paul Gaultier remains one of the most important fashion designers of the 20th century and the millennium. Distinctly different from traditional couture, his avant-garde designs demonstrate a deep understanding of the issues and preoccupations of today's multi-cultural society.

Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238-6052
T (718) 638-5000 F (718) 501-6134
www.brooklynmuseum.org

Jean Paul Gaultier himself considers this innovative exhibition as far more than a mere fashion retrospective but rather as a creative theatrical spectacle in its own right. Throughout the galleries, thirty-two unique mannequins wearing remarkable wigs and headdresses by Odile Gilbert, founder of the Atelier 68 in Paris who designed the wigs for Sofia Coppola's film *Marie Antoinette*, come alive with interactive faces created by technologically ingenious audiovisual projections, surprising visitors with their lifelike presence. Poetic and playful, the production, design, and staging of this dynamic audiovisual element has been produced by Denis Marleau and Stéphanie Jasmin of UBU/Compagnie de création from Montreal, Canada. A dozen celebrities, including Gaultier himself, have lent their faces projected onto the mannequins and often their voices to this project. In addition, many of the mannequins revolve to display all angles of each ensemble, while some circulate on a continuously moving catwalk.

"While paying tribute to the creative genius of Jean Paul Gaultier, this exhibition raises the bar in terms of fashion presentation as art in a museum as well as celebrates today's cultural and ethnic diversity," says Arnold L. Lehman, Brooklyn Museum Director. "Jean Paul Gaultier's mastery of the complex technical demands of *haute couture* is matched only by his rich and unrivalled artistic collaborations. His unconventional designs, frequently spiked with his sense of whimsy and quixotic humor, reflect the richness of our cultures."

For inspiration for his designs, Jean Paul Gaultier turned to his keen fascination with a variety of cultures and countercultures. Punk street wear is another key reference point for him. Openly gay, the fashion designer interpreted gender and transgender issues and created uniquely distinctive androgynous, gender-blending designs.

The multimedia exhibition is organized into six thematic sections tracing the diverse influences marking Jean Paul Gaultier's artistic development from his early years as a studio assistant for fashion designer Pierre Cardin to his role as chief creative director for Hermes and later.

- **The Odyssey of Jean Paul Gaultier** introduces us to the couturier's universe by way of his trademark themes; sailors, mermaids, and religious iconography set the tone of this section where his very first design (1971), never before exhibited, is also on display.

- **The Boudoir** reveals the designer's fascination with and transformation of lingerie. It features his trailblazing conical bras and corsets made for Madonna's 1990 Blonde Ambition World Tour.

- **Skin Deep** illustrates that in Jean Paul Gaultier's hands, clothing becomes a second skin, sometimes through trompe-l'oeil effects that give the illusion of nudity, a flayed human body, or tattoos. This section of the exhibition is also devoted to the Gaultier take on the male sex, with examples of couture designs, including his famous skirts for men.

- **Punk Cancan** illustrates the contrasting styles and themes Gaultier has blended throughout his career: the Parisian classicism and elegance in which he was born and lives, and the origin and development of the punk movement in London, which he discovered and embraced from its inception.

- **Urban Jungle** serves up Jean Paul Gaultier multicultural style, based on the dress of Mongolians, Hussars, Hasidic Jews, Peruvians, and the Chinese, along with that of such iconic artists as Frida Kahlo. His unique *haute couture* craftsmanship, with its rich detailing and intricate techniques, takes center stage.

- **Metropolis** ends the exhibition and showcases Jean Paul Gaultier's collaborations with filmmakers and performers. His relationships with singular pop icons like Tina Turner, Nirvana, and Kylie Minogue are spotlighted.

Stage costumes, videos of runway presentations, concerts, music videos, films, dance performances, and even iconic British television shows *Eurotrash*, which he hosted, as well as a cameo in *Absolutely Fabulous,* document the degree to which Jean Paul Gaultier designs address the prevailing society and aesthetic norms of their day. Among his artistic collaborations examined in depth are his longtime collaboration with Madonna.

Film and dance are other areas of focus. Jean Paul Gaultier's set costumes with film directors Pedro Almodovar, Peter Greenaway, and Luc Besson are examined. Clips of Almodovar's feature *Kika* and Besson's science fiction film *The Fifth Element* will be shown. Also included will be filmed excerpts from performances by contemporary dance icons with whom he has collaborated, such as Maurice Béjart, Angelin Preljocaj, and Régine Chopinot.

The exhibition is accompanied by the first major monograph on the French designer, *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Catwalk to the Sidewalk*, published by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts under the direction of Thierry-Maxime Loriot. This 424-page catalogue contains over 550 illustrations and photographs. It includes an interview with Valerie Steele, Director of New York's Museum of FIT, the Fashion Institute of Technology, as well as an essay by Suzy Menkes, Fashion Editor of *The New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*, that examines the enduring style of Jean Paul Gaultier. Also featured are 50 interviews, including two with Jean Paul Gaultier and others with artists and designers he has collaborated with, from Madonna to Pierre Cardin, and key film directors. The designer's mentors and colleagues are interviewed, along with his muses and those for whom he has created costumes, including Nicole Kidman, Catherine Deneuve, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, Helen Mirren, Tom Ford, Dita Von Teese, Martin Margiela, and Boy George. Unpublished sketches, along with never-before-seen images by famed art and fashion photographers, can also be found in the catalogue.

The exhibition *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: from the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* is organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with Maison Jean Paul Gaultier. Jolicoeur International from Quebec, Canada realized all the custom-made mannequins with different skin tones and positions representing the diversity of Gaultier's runway shows. The originating curator of the exhibition is MMFA's Thierry-Maxime Loriot. The Brooklyn Museum presentation is coordinated by Lisa Small, Curator of Exhibitions, Brooklyn Museum.

Tour:
The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, June 17–October 2, 2011
Dallas Museum of Art, November 13, 2011–February 12, 2012
De Young Museum, San Francisco, March 24–August 19, 2012
The Fundación Mapfre – Instituto de Cultura, Madrid, October 6, 2012– January 6, 2013
Kunsthal Rotterdam, the Netherlands, February 9, 2013–May 12, 2013
Arkitekturmuseet, Stockholm, Sweden, June 17–Sept. 22, 2013
Brooklyn Museum, October 25, 2013–February 23, 2014

Press Contact:
Sally Williams, Public Information Officer, (718) 501-6330, *sally.williams@brooklynmuseum.org*
Adam Husted, Media Relations Manager, (718) 501-6331, *adam.husted@brooklynmuseum.org*
Kimberly Hooks, Associate Media Relations Manager, (718) 501-6354, *kimberly.hooks@brooklynmuseum.org*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:
Contribution $12; students with valid I.D. and older adults $8. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:
Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B41, B69, B48.
On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:
Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; first Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.