

Iconic Björk swan dress to star in Design Museum's major new fashion exhibition celebrating trailblazing designers

REBEL: 30 Years of London Fashion

Sponsored by Alexander McQueen

16 September 2023 – 11 February 2024

the Design Museum

[PRESS IMAGES](#)

LONDON, 29 JUNE 2023 | The Design Museum today reveals some of the trailblazing fashion designs that will go on display in a major upcoming exhibition showcasing London's unique fashion culture on the world stage.

REBEL: 30 Years of London Fashion sponsored by Alexander McQueen will celebrate over 300 young designers — the NEWGEN alumni — and their sensational impact on the global fashion scene.

The swan dress controversially worn by Björk at the 2001 Oscars, Harry Styles' Steven Stokey Daley outfit from his video for 'Golden' and Sam Smith's inflatable latex suit by HARRI from this year's BRIT Awards are amongst the highlight objects in the show announced today.

Visitors will also see the revolutionary neon collection from Christopher Kane's debut catwalk collection, the upcycled Union Jack jacket by Russell Sage that was worn by Kate Moss for Vogue, and a vast Molly Goddard blue ruffle dress that [went viral on Instagram](#) when worn by pop-superstar Rihanna.

These exuberant, rebellious and radical garments will all be brought together for **REBEL: 30 Years of London Fashion sponsored by Alexander McQueen** which will feature nearly 100 innovative fashion looks from ground-breaking debut and early collections. Many of these creations have entered pop-culture history — and launched global design careers. These items will be shown alongside films, drawings, memorabilia and never-before-seen archive material from some of the most well-known contemporary UK-based designers.

Opening in September to coincide with London Fashion Week, this landmark exhibition will be one of the most wide-ranging surveys of contemporary British fashion culture ever staged in the UK. It will offer an unprecedented look at how careers in fashion are forged, and the multitude of opportunities London's fashion scene offers young creatives.

At its heart, the exhibition tells the story of hundreds of fearless young designers, who have transformed the fashion landscape through their talent and brilliance. The Design Museum has worked directly with these designers to select some of the most important and groundbreaking pieces from their personal archives. Many of the items going on show have not been seen in public since their debut.

REBEL is a collaboration between the Design Museum and the British Fashion Council (BFC) and will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the BFC's NEWGEN programme. All the designers featured in the show were supported in the early stages of their careers through NEWGEN. It will be guest-curated by BFC Ambassador for Emerging Talent Sarah Mower MBE, and co-curated by the Design Museum Senior Curator Rebecca Lewin.

NEWGEN was established by the British Fashion Council in 1993. It is an initiative that supports the best emerging fashion design talent in the UK, and aims to build creative, responsible businesses for the future. It has helped nurture the careers of hundreds of designers and businesses, launching many of them onto the international stage. Alumni featured in the exhibition include Lee Alexander McQueen, Christopher Kane, Charles Jeffrey, Christopher Raeburn, Erdem, Henry Holland, Kim Jones, J.W. Anderson, Mary Katrantzou, Molly Goddard, Roksanda, Simone Rocha, Stuart Vevers, Priya Ahluwalia, Saul Nash, Grace Wales Bonner, Bianca Saunders and many more.

A major highlight of the show will be Marjan Pejoski's 'swan' dress which was worn to the Oscars in 2001 by Icelandic singer Björk. The eye-catching item generated immediate shock, intrigue and global headlines, but it has since gone on to become one of the most well-known red-carpet looks in history. Pejoski was born in Macedonia and came to London to take a bachelor's degree at Central Saint Martins. The dress was first unveiled at Pejoski's NEWGEN runway show in London for Autumn/Winter 2001 where it was spotted by

the singer, who also wore it on the cover for her fourth studio album *Vespertine*. The now-iconic dress has only ever been on public display twice before — both times in New York — meaning that its display in **REBEL** marks the very first time it has been seen in Britain — and the city it was designed and created in — since it was first unveiled here 22 years ago.

Seven months on from the 2023 BRIT Awards, Sam Smith's eye-catching red-carpet look will go on public display for the first time. Smith's large, custom-made inflated latex suit made global headlines and was created by HARRI, the brand belonging to designer Harikrishnan Keezhathil Surendran Pillai. The look was created for Smith in just five days ahead of the award ceremony. The son of a latex farmer in Kerala, India, HARRI came to study menswear at London College of Fashion and set up his business in London in 2020 upon graduation. His latex creations are made on his father's farm in India.

Steven Stokey Daley studied menswear in London at the University of Westminster and graduated in the Class of 2020 show. Shortly after, his collection was worn by mega-star Harry Styles for the music video for "Golden." Daley's design was inspired by the uniforms of the boys at Harrow school, and offers his personal queer, working-class take on the style of the British public school system. Visitors to the exhibition will see his original floral Oxford Bags trousers — tailored from upcycled curtains — alongside other items from the same collection which were made from fabric that was donated to fashion schools across the UK by Alexander McQueen.

While BFC NEWGEN draws from talent across the UK, as well the generations of international graduates who have started their businesses here, it is London that has always been the major inspiration and catalyst for the programme's young designers. The exhibition offers an exploration on how the city's unique fashion scene has incubated fashion talent, and how they used the capital to launch their success on the global stage. London has nurtured nearly all the NEWGEN designers since its inception, whether as the place they studied, first showed a collection, or established their network.

REBEL: 30 Years of London Fashion is organised into sections that reflect many of the spaces which have been the creative catalyst for London's young designers over the past three decades. These include

'Art School', which will show objects highlighting how London's art education establishments have uniquely incubated individuality, and 'Backstage Pass', where visitors will get 'VIP access' to the spaces and moments that take place just before a catwalk show. They will see clothing, shoes, jewellery, headwear and makeup which together evoke the pre-catwalk buzz of a show.

In 'Runway', visitors will be able to join the front row of an exclusive show to see six ground-breaking presentations that had a major impact on the fashion world. Collections by Christopher Kane, Craig Green, JW Anderson, Meadham Kirchhoff, Wales Bonner and Sinéad O'Dwyer fill the catwalk.

All of the more-than-300 designers who have graduated from the NEWGEN programme will be referenced in the exhibition. It is hoped the show will inspire the next generation of fashion designers by showing how they can develop a career in the fashion industry.

Tim Marlow, the Design Museum Director and CEO, said: "We are delighted to be collaborating with the British Fashion Council to showcase and explore the youthful energy, creative vision and rebellious spirit that is so central to their NEWGEN programme. Visitors are going to be stunned by many of the instantly recognisable fashion items on show, but we hope they'll also be captivated by the breadth, depth, diversity and world class talent that has emerged from the London fashion scene in the past three decades."

Sarah Mower, BFC Ambassador for Emerging Talent and guest-curator of REBEL said: "It is impossible to underestimate the influence London has on Britain's fashion talent a city that produces wave-after-wave of young designers that value originality, wearing what you believe in, and tackling social issues to make a better world. This landmark exhibition will take visitors on a remarkable journey through London's creative landscape, and to all the locations where all this fashion magic happens. The city's art schools, clubs and catwalks will be brought to life like never before. We can't wait to unveil it to visitors this September."

Caroline Rush, British Fashion Council Chief Executive, said: "We are thrilled to be collaborating with the Design Museum to celebrate our wonderful NEWGEN initiative and its influence and legacy over the past 30 years. NEWGEN is our most established designer showcasing initiative and core to our mission at the British Fashion Council, as it aims to build creative and responsible businesses for the future, and

spotlight London's unique position as a global leader in nurturing creative talent. Since its launch in 1993, NEWGEN has supported over 300 designers and we look forward to acknowledging their incredible work at the Design Museum this September. We are beyond proud to host this exhibition in London, the home of fashion creativity, to amplify homegrown British brands and solidify our position as a global fashion capital."

The exhibition's opening event will be supported by Nyetimber, the Design Museum's sparkling wine partner.

REBEL: 30 Years of London Fashion sponsored by Alexander McQueen opens at the Design Museum in London on 16 September 2023. Tickets are [on sale](#) from today.

-Ends-

Notes to Editors

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#RebelFashion

About the Design Museum:

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray, Dieter Rams, Margaret Calvert and Yinka Ilori.

On 24 November 2016, the Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. John Pawson converted the interior of a 1960s

modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme. Since opening in Kensington in 2016, the Design Museum has hosted major exhibitions including *Stanley Kubrick: The Exhibition*, *Moving to Mars*, *Amy: Beyond the Stage*, *Sneakers Unboxed: Studio to Street*, *Electronic: From Kraftwerk to The Chemical Brothers*, *Charlotte Perriand: The Modern Life*, *Football: Designing the Beautiful Game* and *Waste Age: What can design do?*

In 2021, the Design Museum launched Future Observatory, a national programme for design research supporting the UK's response to the climate crisis. The three-year programme is coordinated by the Design Museum in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), which is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

In April 2023, the museum opened a landmark exhibition with globally renowned artist Ai Weiwei. *Ai Weiwei: Making Sense* is the artist's very first design-focused exhibition and is his largest UK exhibition in eight years.



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About the British Fashion Council

The British Fashion Council (BFC) is a not-for-profit organisation set up in 1983 with the role to strengthen British fashion in the global economy as a leader in responsible, creative businesses. It does this through championing diversity and building and inviting the industry to actively participate in a network to accelerate a successful circular fashion economy. The BFC promotes British fashion internationally and does so through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing

events. The BFC helps British designer businesses develop their profile and business globally and supports fashion talent beginning at college level, extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes. The BFC Foundation (Registered Charity Number: 11852152) was created in 2019 for charitable purposes and grant giving; attracting, developing, and retaining talent through education and business mentoring. The BFC Foundation offers support to designers through four talent prizes: BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund, BFC/GQ Designer Fashion Fund, BFC NEWGEN and the BFC Fashion Trust. With the support of the BFC Colleges Council, the BFC Foundation offers BA and MA scholarships to students, as well as links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. In 2020, the BFC launched the Institute of Positive Fashion (IPF), with the aim to help the British fashion industry lead in the goal to be more resilient and circular through global collaboration and local action.

The BFC showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week taking place every February, June and September; LONDON show ROOMS and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry, The Fashion Awards.

For more information visit: www.britishfashioncouncil.co.uk/
www.londonfashionweek.co.uk/
www.instituteofpositivefashion.com