

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Met's Costume Institute to honor "anti-fashion" in 2017 gala theme

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Comme des Garons as seen in Numero Magazine

By STAFF REPORTS

New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art has announced the theme for its annual Costume Institute exhibition and Met Gala scheduled for May 2017.

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The 2017 edition will celebrate the fashions of Japanese designer Rei Kawakubo, founder of Comme des Garons. Ms. Kawakubo will be the first living designer as the subject of the exhibition since Yves Saint Laurent in 1983.

Rethinking fashion

Ms. Kawakubo is not formerly trained as a fashion designer, but studied arts and literature at Keio University. After working for a freelance stylist for a number of years, Ms. Kawakubo launched Comme des Garons in 1973.

The brand opened its first Tokyo boutique in 1975, selling women's clothes at first before venturing into menswear in 1978. In the early 1980s, Ms. Kawakubo began presenting her collections in Paris each season, opening a boutique in the French capital in 1982.

Her approach is described as being "anti-fashion," often featuring deconstructed garments. For example, in the 1980s, Ms. Kawakubo's designs were primarily in black, grey and white scale, often featuring unfinished elements and asymmetrical shapes.



Comme des Garçons as seen in AnOther Magazine

In a comment to Vogue, Andrew Bolton, curator of the MET's Costume Institute, said, "Rei Kawakubo is one of the most important and influential designers of the past 40 years. By inviting us to rethink fashion as a site of constant creation, recreation and hybridity, she has defined the aesthetics of our time."

The 2017 Met Gala will be held May 1. Ms. Kawakubo will serve as honorary chair alongside singer Katy Perry, Comme des Garçons fragrance collaborator and music producer Pharrell Williams and Anna Wintour, editor in chief of American Vogue.

The exhibition will open its doors on May 4.

This year's theme, titled "Manus x Machina: Fashion in an Age of Technology," delve into the industry's fascination with technological innovations, whether that be wearables or 3D printing. Consumer electronics giant Apple acted as sponsor ([see story](#)).

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