

Media information

For immediate use



Catwalk to Cover – a front row seat

18th November 2011– 26th February 2012

Through a series of candid photographs from top catwalk photographers – Kirstin Sinclair, Chris Moore, Matt Lever and Philip Meech – and clothes by internationally acclaimed designers, Catwalk to Cover provides a fascinating behind-the-scenes insight into the creative world of the fashion show.

For many people the catwalk show is something exclusive, seemingly created for a few fashionistas who get to sit in the front row with the result a few outfits in magazines that they will never be able to afford. But there is much more to it than that and this new exhibition at the FTM puts the whole process, from catwalk to cover, under the microscope.

Over 100 images, alongside clothes from leading designers Prada, Lanvin, Anna Sui, Christian Lacroix, Donna Karan, Osman and Vivienne Westwood, provide exclusive access to the different catwalk elements – front row, catwalk, backstage, the models, the editors and street style. Together these photographs provide revealing insights into the creativity, and the chaos, at the heart of the apparently glamorous fashion shows we see online, on television, in the newspapers and in magazines.

Highlights include key moments from the beguiling and artistic shows of Chanel, Vivienne Westwood, Alexander McQueen, Louis Vuitton and Marc Jacobs, amongst others; celebrity front row appearances from Scarlet Johansson, Sarah Jessica Parker and Florence Welch; candid photographs of some of the world's top models plus examples of what the models wear when not on the runway.

Today any fashion designer is dependent on a wide spectrum of people to make the catwalk show a success. Fashion editors, creative directors, models, celebrities, journalists, camera crews, bloggers, hair stylists and make-up artists, alongside other industry professionals, all play a crucial role. Yet it is the catwalk photographers themselves whose work, ultimately, determines what is available to the media to reproduce. Their ability to document the energy and expression of a designer's work also influences how new trends are captured and interpreted.

The catwalk show is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its origins can be traced to the fashion parades that took place in the couture houses of 19th-century Paris, but it wasn't until the 1990s that designers began to re-think small, individual shows, realizing that they could have more power collectively. In 1993, New York's 'fashion week' was centralised and staged in Bryant Park for the first time. Decades later, an opportunity to show a collection in Paris, New York, London or Milan, or at one of the many other new fashion weeks across the globe, can be all it takes to launch a

career. This exhibition also enables us to reflect on how the shows have evolved, and the power of technology to capture the moment and allow everyone to take their own seat in the front row.

The photographs for each of the sections of the exhibition are drawn from the portfolios of four photographers, Kristin Sinclair (British *Elle*, *Elle Collections*), Matthew Lever (*Elle*, Redken and L'Oreal amongst others), Philip Meech (Prada and Miu Miu) and Chris Moore (over 40 years shooting catwalk shows and founder of the picture library www.catwalking.com). They all have a wealth of experience working on catwalk shows and fashion photography more generally. Together they demonstrate how, in today's fast-paced world the presentation of fashion on the catwalk is continually changing and reinventing itself.

Notes to Editors:

The exhibition is staged by the Fashion and Textile Museum and runs from 18th November 2011 – 26th February 2012

Exhibition opening times: Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–6pm. Last admission 5.15pm.

Ticket prices: £7 adults, £5 students and concessions, free entry for under 12s

Book: *A Front Row Seat* by Kirstin Sinclair is published by ACC Editions to coincide with the exhibition. ISBN 9781851496617, hardback, 300 pages, £29.95.

The Fashion and Textile Museum is a cutting edge centre for contemporary fashion, textiles and jewellery in London. Founded by iconic British designer Zandra Rhodes in an iconic building designed by Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta, the museum has been owned by Newham College London since 2007 and showcases a programme of changing exhibitions, courses and events.

The Fashion and Textile Museum

83 Bermondsey Street

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www.ftmlondon.org

For further information about FTM and its activities visit www.ftmlondon.org

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To request a review copy of the book please email clara.heard@antique-acc.com or telephone 01394 389950.

Curator and Photographer Biographies:

Kirstin Sinclair – exhibition curator and fashion photographer

Kirstin is an accomplished photographer who has been shooting fashion documentary and celebrity pictures at the major international catwalk shows held in New York, London, Milan and Paris for the past seven years. Her work has appeared in publications including *British Vogue*, *British Elle*, *Elle Collections* and *British Grazia* as well as online.

On completing her BA Hons in Fine Art, Kirstin moved to London in 2001 and, after working as an assistant to established photographers based in London and New York, she had her first opportunity to see her work in print after gaining a job with catwalk photographer Anthea Simms. Seven years later, Kirstin continues to shoot documentary at the shows as well as private events for clients such as Louis Vuitton, Arcadia and Miss Selfridge. When she isn't working on these, Kirstin can be found in the studio or on location shooting fashion, look books, portraits and interiors for clients such as Retrosun, Olivia Rubin, Topshop and Miss Selfridge.

Chris Moore – catwalk photographer

Probably the best-known catwalk photographer in the UK, Chris Moore entered the world of fashion at the age of 18 as a photographers' assistant at *Vogue's* in-house studio, working with Norman Parkinson and Cecil Beaton. Moore's early career was spent documenting the exclusive Paris couture shows in the late 1960s and continued with the advent of the Ready to Wear collections in Milan, London and later New York in the 1980s. By the mid 1990s with the expansion of the circuit to include menswear in Paris and Milan, photographing the catwalks became a full-time occupation. In 2000, Moore launched www.catwalking.com the hugely successful online photographic library which has become the first port of call for all major fashion and broadsheet titles, and those who work with the international fashion circuits.

During his phenomenal career he has captured images of every conceivable catwalk event from the ateliers of Paris couture Yves Saint Laurent, Pierre Cardin and Courrèges to the theatrical spectacles staged by Hussein Chalayan and Alexander McQueen. Chris Moore's photographs appear regularly in every major newspaper and magazine including *The International Herald Tribune*, *The Guardian*, *Observer*, *Times* and *Independent* as well as *Vogue* and *Harpers Bazaar*.

Matt Lever – backstage photographer

Matt has been shooting at the catwalk shows for many years. Whether it's on a Vespa rally in San Francisco or backstage shooting at one of the many fashion weeks around the world, Matt likes to have a laugh. Coming from a long line of famous image-makers trained at Bournemouth and Poole, he now spends his time between the US and the UK, working with the likes of *Elle*, *Harpers Bazaar*, *L'Oreal* and *Redken* amongst others.

Philip Meech – backstage and fashion photographer

Philip Meech is an experienced London-based freelance photographer, currently working from his studio in Bermondsey. With a background in press and photojournalism, he has recently turned his attention to the world of fashion, shooting for Prada, Miu Miu and Gas Jeans.

In the early 1990s, Philip studied photography at the University of Westminster in London, quickly gaining recognition in the *Observer/Hodge Young Photojournalist of the Year Award*, and *The Guardian Student Media* awards. Upon graduation, Philip won the prestigious traineeship with the *Independent* newspaper, and continued to freelance on the paper for a further seven years. During this time, he built up a substantial client-base and undertook commissions for other publications, as well as design and advertising agencies. A long term project to document the Prada and Miu Miu fashion shows, for Rotterdam based architectural and creative studio OMA/AMO, led to his recent collaboration with graphic artists Lok Jansen and Jeroen Koolhaas to create the highly regarded Prada look books. In addition, Philip is regularly invited back to the University of Westminster to lecture on photography.