The World of Anna Sui
26 May – 1 October 2017
ftmlondon.org/exhibitions #annasui

The World of Anna Sui - the first-ever retrospective of an American fashion designer to be held in the UK.

With over 125 full looks ‘The World of Anna Sui’ explores the glamorous and eclectic world of one of New York’s most beloved and accomplished designers. Since her first catwalk show in 1991, Sui has become known for creating fabulously original clothing inspired by spectacular amounts of research into vintage fashion and popular culture.

The exhibition ranges from early looks – such as the exuberant Carnaby Street, schoolgirl outfits worn by supermodels Linda Evangelista and Naomi Campbell in the first runway show in 1991, to the cowboys and cheerleaders modelled by Gigi and Bella Hadid during the recent Spring/Summer 2017 Americana-themed collection.

Sui joined New York’s cultural underground at an intensely creative time, forming important relationships in the worlds of fashion, photography, art, music and design. The exhibition looks at Sui’s artistic journey through her creative process, collections, interiors, and collaborations.

Thematically arranged, the exhibition explores Anna Sui’s lifelong engagement with a dizzying array of ‘archetypes’ including the rock star, the schoolgirl, the punk, nomads, and surfers — motifs that are featured in all her work. From fairy tales and fables to Victoriana, Sui researches her current cultural obsessions in minute detail to create a different story with each collection.

The influence of music is seen throughout ‘The World of Anna Sui’ from her continuing love of Bohemian chic to her seminal 1994 grunge collections including the infamous organza baby-doll dresses. Anna Sui says of this time, ‘It was my moment. If grunge music was an alternative to stadium rock, the kind of clothes I designed were my alternative to power dressing.’ (2016)

Sui is especially known for the richness of her printed textiles, combining a complex layering and mixing of patterns, texture and colours. The show highlights both Anna Sui’s own distinctively graphic textiles as well as those created with high-profile partners such as Ascher Studio, Zandra Rhodes, Jeffrey Fulvimari and Barbara Hulanicki.
In addition, the exhibition explores Anna’s design processes through moodboards, photographs, sketches, runway shots, and cultural ephemera. A section on collaborations documents her long term creative partnerships with models such as Linda Evangelista, Christy Turlington and Naomi Campbell, as well as with make-up artist Pat McGrath, jeweller Erickson Beamon and knitwear designer and milliner James Coviello.

A recreation of Anna’s sensational New York shop will further give a sense of Sui’s distinctive interiors and design style. The shop with its red stained floors, tiffany lamps, purple walls, ornate black mirrors, black lacquered furniture and Aubrey Beardsley prints perfectly represents Sui’s punky thrift-store design aesthetic.

The remarkable range of different styles on display emphasise Anna Sui’s consistent design approach as she incorporates her current passions into every garment. The exhibition provides not only a fascinating guide to the history of American pop culture, but also a powerful inside look into the creative process and unique world view of this iconic New York designer. ‘The World of Anna Sui’ celebrates both American fashion and the distinctive vision of Sui, whose daring and experimental approach to design has become a mainstay of the international fashion scene.

Celia Joicey, Head of the Fashion and Textile Museum, says:
‘Anna Sui is one of the most important and influential American designers of the past twenty-five years. We are delighted to be the first museum in the UK to offer a US fashion designer a retrospective exhibition. Sui is an inspirational woman whose designs embrace the history of American pop culture and popular art movements, and thereby offer a fascinating way to explore national identity through fashion and textiles.’

Dennis Nothdruft, Curator of The World of Anna Sui says:
‘Anna Sui helped define the look of Generation X. As young creatives rediscover and reference the 1990s, it is time to explore the original designs in a critical context. Through ‘The World of Anna Sui’, we hope to highlight a fresh cultural perspective on the so-called ‘slacker’ generation. The exhibition will showcase a fashion designer who, contrary to the stereotype, is not only highly creative and entrepreneurial but also playful and positive.’

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXHIBITION PLEASE CONTACT:
Penny Sychrava on 0796 791 5339
or penny@pennysychrava.com
Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF
T: 020 7407 8664  |  E: info@ftmlondon.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT ANNA SUI PLEASE CONTACT
Federica Parruccini, Publicity Director KCD, 450 West 15th Street, Suite 604
parruccini@kcdworldwide.com
Notes to editors

1. ‘The World of Anna Sui’ is at The Fashion and Textile Museum from 26 May – 1 October 2017.

2. The Fashion and Textile Museum is at 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. For further information about FTM and its activities visit www.ftmlondon.org

3. The Fashion and Textile Museum is at 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. www.ftmlondon.org #annasui

Fashion and Textile Museum

FashionTextile

FashionTextileMuseum

FashionTextile

4. Museum opening times: Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–6pm; Sunday, 11am–5pm; Late night Thursday until 8pm; Last admission 45 minutes before closure. Ticket prices: £9.90 adults*, £7.70* concessions, £6 students and free entry for under 12s (*including Gift Aid).

5. The book The World of Anna Sui by Tim Blanks and with a foreword by Naomi Campbell accompanies the exhibition. Published by Abrams ISBN: 9781419724183 • Price: £30.00 • Publication date: 30 May 2017.

6. The exhibition is accompanied by a learning programme which includes talks, events and workshops. For more details please see the Museum website.

7. The exhibition is supported by Albion Cosmetics and Inter Parfums, inc.

8. The Fashion and Textile Museum shop will feature scarves, chokers, fragrances, cosmetics, t-shirts and bags

About Fashion and Textile Museum:
The Fashion and Textile Museum is the only museum in the UK solely dedicated to showcasing developments in contemporary fashion, as well as providing inspiration, support and training for those working in the industry. Founded by iconic British designer Zandra Rhodes in 2003, the museum is part of Newham College London – one of Europe’s largest further education colleges. Recent exhibitions at the Museum have included ‘Liberty in Fashion’, ‘Art Textiles’, ‘1920s Jazz Age Fashion & Photographs’ and ‘Missoni Art Colour’.

About Anna Sui
Anna Sui’s collections take you on a creative journey that is unparalleled in the world of fashion. Mixing vintage inspiration with her current cultural obsessions, she effortlessly makes hip and exuberant original clothes. Anna Sui’s first fashion show in 1991 earned her international acclaim. She won the CFDA Perry Ellis Award for New Fashion Talent in 1993, and in 2009 she received their prestigious Geoffrey Beene Lifetime Achievement Award. Anna Sui has 50 boutiques in eight countries and her collection is sold in over 300 stores in over 30 countries. The Anna Sui line also includes her very popular fragrance and cosmetic collections as well as successful shoe and accessory licenses. Anna Sui designs and manufactures from her New York City headquarters. Her runway shows continue to inspire and set trends with her signature rock-n-roll romanticism. The Anna Sui brand has been independently owned since its inception in 1981.
About Albion Cosmetics
ALBION was founded in 1956 as a specialized premium cosmetics manufacturer at a time when the concept of “premium” did not yet exist. Since then we have tackled new challenges in every generation and continued our proud history of creating new ideas.

Casting an eye at the global market through steady brand development, a core strategy for ALBION is to partner with premium overseas brands. ALBION delivers dozens of products developed through collaboration with partner brands for distribution in and outside of Japan. Collaboratively developed products with their own fashion themes have evolved step by step into full-fledged cosmetic brands. While all brands share the same ALBION philosophy, each one has a distinct and captivating story of its own.

Anna Sui Cosmetics was started in 1998, an eccentric brand of cosmetics that became an instant hit and gained a cult-status following globally. With innovative formulas and packaging that is truly one of a kind, these hip and edgy makeup items has even become collector's items for some. Anna Sui Cosmetics represents no rules or boundaries in makeup. Enchanting and creative, the cosmetics are a sheer pleasure to own and continue to be loved by fans around the world.

About Inter Parfums
In the more than 30 years since its founding, Inter Parfums, Inc. has been selected as the fragrance and beauty partner for a growing list of brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Agent Provocateur, Anna Sui, Balmain, Boucheron, Coach, Dunhill, Hollister, Jimmy Choo, Karl Lagerfeld, Lanvin, Montblanc, Oscar de la Renta, Paul Smith, Repetto, Rochas, Shanghai Tang, S.T. Dupont and Van Cleef & Arpels. Inter Parfums is known for innovation, quality and its ability to capture the genetic code of each brand in the products it develops, manufactures and distributes in over 100 countries worldwide.

In June 2011, Inter Parfums entered into a 10-year exclusive worldwide fragrance license agreement to produce and distribute fragrances under the Anna Sui brand. Inter Parfums is working in partnership with Anna Sui to develop new fragrances that capture the brand’s very sweet feminine aspect, combined with touch of nostalgia, bohemian chic and rock-and-roll. The portfolio consists of many successful and iconic fragrances, including : Secret Wish, Dolly Girl, Sui Dreams, Flight of Fancy, Fairy Dance, La Vie de Bohème and Romantica.

More information about Inter Parfums is available at www.interparfumsinc.com

Images l to r: Gracie Van Gastel backstage at the Spring Summer 2014 Collection which was inspired in part by the Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant Garde exhibition at the Tate in 2012 combined with the work of The Fool, the 1960s psychedelic design collective. Image © Raoul Gatchalian. Spring Summer 2012 Isetan Mitsukoshi promotion featuring Frida Gustavsson. Image © Sofia Sanchez and Mauro Mongiello. S/S 2014 collection featuring menswear inspired by the Sixties London boutique Granny Takes a Trip.

Images l to r: Nordic Viking Ensemble, A/W 2015, inspired by the History Channel’s Vikings show. Textile print by Zandra Rhodes featuring feathers, shells and hibiscus © Zandra Rhodes, 2015. Gigi Hadid and Caroline Trentini modelling the Polynesian Collection, Spring Summer 2016. The print on the dress modelled by Gigi Hadid was commissioned from Zandra Rhodes and the models also wear wedge-heeled Hush Puppies shoes, which highlight Sui’s ability to make strategic partnerships with kindred designers and manufacturers. Image © Jennifer Graylock. Surfer-inspired look from the S/S 2016 Tahiti collection. The World of Anna Sui, book cover 2017 featuring Irina Lazareanu.
Anna’s Archetypes
The exhibition is arranged thematically with 12 inspirational archetypes which recur throughout Anna Sui’s collections. Please refer to the exhibition booklet for additional interpretation.

- Americana (S/S 2017)
- Fairytale (S/S 2007)
- Hippie Rock Star (S/S 2014)
- Schoolgirl (S/S 2017)
- Punk (S/S 2013)
- Surfer (S/S 2016)
- Victoriana (A/W 1993; Photo: Raoul Gatchalian)
- Androgyny (A/W 2008)
- Nomad (A/W 2008)
- Mod (A/W 1991)
- Retro (S/S 2012)
- Grunge (S/S 1993)