

MEDIA RELEASE

## ICONIC BRITISH DESIGNERS EXCLUSIVE TO POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

Showcasing looks from Alexander McQueen, Philip Treacy OBE, Julien Macdonald, Hussein Chalayan and more, the wardrobe of the celebrated English fashion editor and stylist Isabella Blow (1958–2007), will travel to Australia in May for an exhibition exclusive to the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.

***Isabella Blow: A Fashionable Life*** will provide a rare chance to see garments, hats and shoes by iconic British designers such as McQueen and Treacy in addition to the designs of Manolo Blahnik, John Galliano, Jeremy Scott and Viktor & Rolf. The bespoke exhibition will feature approximately 100 objects from Isabella Blow's collection. It will open at the Powerhouse Museum during Wool Week on 14 May and be on display to 17 July 2016.

Isabella Blow nurtured the careers of many designers, photographers and models from the 1980s until her tragic death in 2007. The muse of hat designer Philip Treacy, she is credited with discovering the models Stella Tennant and Sophie Dahl as well as the fashion designer Alexander McQueen. Her editorial work, the images she created and her personal collection of clothes, photographs and illustrations leave behind a legacy of one of fashion's most talented mavericks.

In 2010, fashion muse, patron and artist, The Honourable Daphne Guinness purchased Isabella's wardrobe and established the Isabella Blow Foundation. Guinness will visit Australia to open the exhibition and appear at a number of public events at the Powerhouse Museum and Westfield Sydney.

Deputy Premier and Minister for the Arts, **Troy Grant** said the Powerhouse continues to attract world-class exhibitions that will draw visitors from across the state and internationally.

*"Isabella Blow: A Fashionable Life* will take you on a journey through Isabella's extraordinary career that influenced worldwide fashion trends for decades," Mr Grant said.

*"With Collette Dinnigan: Unlaced* also on show until the end of August, there is the chance for visitors to get a double dose of fashion at the Powerhouse this winter."

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events, **Stuart Ayres** said this exhibition continued to build Sydney's reputation as the Australian home of fashion.

“Visitors to Sydney will discover an incredible fashion collection featuring some of Britain’s most acclaimed designers that can’t be seen anywhere else in Australia or our region,” Mr Ayres said.

“Against the backdrop of Wool Week, Vivid Sydney and Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Australia, this exhibition provides yet another reason to head to Sydney this May.”

Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) Acting Director, **Dolla Merrillees**, said the exhibition continued the work of the MAAS Centre for Fashion.

“Through the MAAS Centre for Fashion we offer unique ways to explore the world of fashion, whether through the collections of fashion icons as with the Centre’s inaugural exhibition *Collette Dinnigan: Unlaced*, or by hearing first hand from esteemed fashion critics like Suzy Menkes.”

The Isabella Blow Foundation Director, **Isobel Gorst**, said they were looking forward to sharing Blow’s collection with Australians.

“The Isabella Blow Foundation, in partnership with Sydney’s MAAS Centre for Fashion, is delighted to embark upon a new, innovative exhibition. One of the charity’s objectives was to allow the world to view Isabella’s iconic wardrobe and we are thrilled to give Australia this opportunity.”

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of public programs, including a week-long pop up at Westfield Sydney, which will feature intimate talks from Australia’s leading designers and an in-conversation event with Daphne Guinness on 14 May.

**Exhibition details:**

**What:** *Isabella Blow: A Fashionable Life*

**When:** 14 May – 17 July 2016

**Where:** Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo NSW 2007

**Details:** [maas.museum/isabella-blow](http://maas.museum/isabella-blow)

**Admission (includes general entry to Powerhouse Museum)**

- Adult \$20
- Concession \$13
- Children \$5
- Groups of 10 or more \$20

Book online at [maas.museum/event/isabella-blow](http://maas.museum/event/isabella-blow)

**About the Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences**

Powerhouse Museum, alongside Sydney Observatory and Discovery Centre, is part of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), Australia’s contemporary museum for excellence and innovation in applied arts and sciences. The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences has a vast and diverse collection of over 500,000 objects.

**About The Centre for Fashion**

The MAAS Centre for Fashion is Australia’s first public centre for fashion excellence, giving unrivalled access to arguably the largest public fashion collection in Australia.

Working closely with local, national and international designers, and industry and tertiary partners the initiative will foster creative excellence, scholarly inquiry and public curiosity through

exhibitions, interactive events, fellowships, designer residences, publications, acquisitions, programs and research.

Collette Dinnigan joins the Centre for Fashion as an ambassador, alongside Linda Jackson, Alistair Trung, Akira Isogawa, Kym Ellery, and Luke Sales and Anna Plunkett of Romance Was Born. The Centre also welcomes inaugural patron, Dr Gene Sherman.

**Exhibition highlights include:**

Alexander McQueen lace dress and Philip Treacy antler horn, Autumn/ Winter 1996, United Kingdom

Alexander McQueen lace dress, Spring/ Summer 1999, United Kingdom

Alexander McQueen frock coat, Philip Treacy hat, Autumn/ Winter 1996, United Kingdom

Philip Treacy, Disc hat, 2001, United Kingdom

Philip Treacy, Castle hat, 1999, United Kingdom

Philip Treacy, Lace Wing hat, Autumn/ Winter 2001, United Kingdom

Mario Testino photo of Isabella Blow at the Jeremy Scott show wearing the Roswell hat designed by Philip Treacy, 1998, United Kingdom

Vanity Fair, Steven Meisel photo of Isabella Blow wearing the Paradise Headdress designed by Philip Treacy, 1993, United States

Vanity Fair, 'Burning Down the House' photo by David LaChapelle, Alexander McQueen and Isabella Blow at Hedingham Castle, Essex, 1996

American Vogue, Richard Burbidge photo of Isabella Blow wearing Queen Mary Toque designed by Philip Treacy, 1996, United States

Lord Snowdon photo of Isabella Blow, 1995, United Kingdom

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