

RARA AVIS

Moda in volo alle Uccelliere Farnesiane

Fashion in Flight at Uccelliere Farnesiane



Edited by *Sofia Gnoli*

Set in the Orti Farnesiani on the Palatine, the world's first botanical garden, commissioned in the 16th century by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the Voliere Farnesiane are one of the most famous and symbolic places in Renaissance and Baroque Rome. The plumage and song of rare and exotic birds housed in the two pavilions, often imported from the New World, has delighted visitors over time, evoking the idea of a primeval Eden.

An ideal venue for the celebration of wonders, today the two aviaries will host Rara Avis. Fashion in flight at the Uccelliere Farnesiane, a small and precious exhibition curated by Sofia Gnoli that, like a contemporary Wunderkammer, focuses on the correspondence that has always linked fashion to the world of birds.

Feathered dresses and bird accessories are part of an allegorical lexicon with multiple meanings, symbolising contrasting allusions - fear, beauty, prison and freedom - that has enchanted artists and writers, sculptors and fashion designers over the centuries.

Disturbing or benevolent, however metaphorical, birds have been part of the lexicon of appearances since antiquity. This is the case of Maat, the Ancient Egyptian goddess of justice, often depicted with feathered wings, as well as the Harpies of Greek mythology, monstrous creatures with the face of a woman and the body of a bird.

Parrots, eagles, ostriches and peacocks have periodically enchanted knights and queens, princesses and muses of taste. Think of the last quarter of the 18th century when Queen Marie Antoinette, playfully nicknamed by her brother Joseph: 'Head of Feathers', was all the rage with her high hairstyles teeming with stuffed birds and small cages, created by Léonard - her personal hairdresser. Later, as emerges from certain descriptions by Proust who, in a passage of the Recherche, sees the Duchess of Guermantes transfigured into a bird of paradise, women began to undergo real metamorphoses.

Something similar seems to happen with the clothes and accessories in the exhibition that, through an astonishing journey, make the human world dialogue with the animal world.

TRIBUTE TO GIOVANNI GASTEL

The exhibition image is a tribute to Giovanni Gastel and his shot Zeus in the form of a swan and Leda (1990).

DESIGNER IN EXHIBITION

Roberto Capucci, Christian Dior (by Maria Grazia Chiuri), Dolce & Gabbana, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Givenchy (by Alexander McQueen), John Galliano, Tiziano Guardini, Gucci (by Alessandro Michele), Iris Van Herpen, Stephen Jones, Thierry Mugler, Prada, Elsa Schiaparelli, Mirko Tomei, Philip Treacy, Versace.

There will also be some accessories such as a John Galliano hat and various accessories by Anna Piaggi, including a bird bag and hats by Schiaparelli and Philip Treacy

The exhibition, scheduled to run from 24 April to 21 July 2024, will open on 23 April and is accompanied by a book (in Italian and English) published by Marsilio Arte

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Start Date 24 April 2024

End Date 21 July 2024

Venue

Uccelliere Farnesiane, Parco Archeologico del Colosseo

Location

Rome Italy

Curator

Sofia Gnoli