

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****HIGH MUSEUM OF ART TO PREMIERE NORTH AMERICAN TOUR OF IRIS VAN HERPEN'S INNOVATIVE HAUTE COUTURE DESIGNS**

*Major exhibition to feature recent works, including imaginative sculptural designs crafted using 3D-printing technology*

**ATLANTA, Nov. 20, 2014** – In fall 2015, the High Museum of Art will become the first U.S. museum to present a major exhibition of work by visionary Dutch fashion designer Iris van Herpen, a cutting-edge artist inspired by diverse influences in the arts, sciences, music and philosophy.

Marking the High's first presentation of fashion design, "Iris van Herpen" features one-of-a-kind Haute Couture—acclaimed for its combination of traditional craftsmanship and futuristic, innovative techniques—and includes some of the world's first examples of 3D-printed fashion. The exhibition is co-organized with the Groninger Museum (the Netherlands) and will debut at the High, where it will be on view from November 2015 through May 2016 before continuing on a North American tour.

"Iris van Herpen's work is an incredible fusion of artistic expression, craftsmanship and creativity," said Sarah Schleuning, curator of decorative arts and design at the High. "The marriage of traditional, handcrafted designs and 21st-century technology makes her work innovative, dynamic and a signifier of a bold, new future for fashion design. With this presentation, the High continues to champion the outstanding visionaries who design the world around us."

Iris van Herpen has garnered international acclaim for her couture designs, which interweave traditional handwork with groundbreaking 3D-printing technology, computer modeling and engraving constructed in collaboration with architects, engineers and digital design specialists. Her visually impressive, sculptural designs—often featuring unusual materials such as magnets, umbrella ribs and synthetic boat rigging—create silhouettes that appear both organic and futuristic. Her work has been worn by style icons such as Lady Gaga, Beyoncé and Bjork and has graced the runways of Amsterdam, London and Paris.

"Iris van Herpen" will feature 45 outfits carefully selected from 15 of van Herpen's collections designed from 2008 through 2015, offering a comprehensive visual survey of her design career to date. Included are 18 pieces from the designer's six most recent lines and a selection of her shoe designs, as well as 27 pieces from the Groninger Museum's 2012 large-scale solo exhibition of van Herpen's work—all displayed on custom mannequins and accompanied by music and videos from her multimedia runway shows. Through van Herpen's own words in



**Iris van Herpen, *Chemical Crows*,** January 2008. Photo by Bart Oomes, No 6 Studios. © Iris van Herpen

accompanying wall texts, the exhibition will showcase the underlying concepts for each piece and examine how intuition and imagination are central to the designer's process.

Key designs featured in the exhibition will include:

- Three dresses made from the ribs of children's umbrellas from **Chemical Crows** (January 2008), a collection inspired by the ancient tradition of alchemy and a group of crows living near van Herpen's studio in Amsterdam. Like the creations of ancient alchemists, van Herpen's designs demonstrate a passion for controlling and transmuting materials, and the pieces in this collection suggest the shapes and movement of wings and feathers.
- Fashion's first 3D-printed dress presented in a runway show from **Crystallization** (July 2010), van Herpen's collection inspired by limestone deposits and water in its various states, such as splashes or ice crystals.
- A dress made of black acrylic sheets constructed in serpentine forms that writhe and "breathe," nicknamed the "snake dress," from **Capriole** (July 2011), a collection evoking the dramatic feelings before and during a free-fall parachute jump (a collaboration with Isaie Bloch).
- Fashion's first flexible, 3D-printed outfit from the **Voltage** collection (January 2013), which visually examines the effects of lightning and electricity as they move through the body and nature (a collaboration with Neri Oxman and Julia Koerner).
- A selection of shoes designed by van Herpen (including 3D-printed examples), created in collaboration with United Nude.

"With this exhibition, the High continues its commitment to showcasing the importance of design in all its forms," said Michael E. Shapiro, the Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. director of the High Museum of Art. "We are honored to bring van Herpen's designs to North America for the first time, and we look forward to welcoming new audiences to the High to experience the vision of this exceptional artistic talent."

The exhibition is co-curated by Schleuning, Mark Wilson, chief curator for the Groninger Museum, and Sue-an van der Zijpp, curator of contemporary art for the Groninger. Following its presentation at the High, the exhibition will travel to multiple venues throughout North America, including the Dallas Museum of Art (Spring 2017).

### **About Iris van Herpen**

Iris van Herpen (b. 1984 in Warmel, the Netherlands) had an intuitive appreciation of fashion and art as a youth and became interested in designing clothes while attending the Preparatory Course Art & Design at the Artez Institute of the Arts Arnhem. Iris van Herpen went on to study Fashion Design at Artez and held internships with Alexander McQueen in London and Claudy Jongstra in Amsterdam. Iris van Herpen's 2006 graduation collection "Machine Jewellery" demonstrated her interest in the visualization of elusive concepts and intangible elements and her inventiveness in material use and treatment. A year after graduating, van Herpen began designing womenswear collections under her own name. Through her extensive interdisciplinary research and collaborations with other artists, van Herpen has developed a unique and avant-garde style aesthetic that has been lauded by *TIME Magazine*, *InStyle* and *Women's Wear Daily*, among other notable publications. In 2011, at age 27, she became the youngest member ever to

join the exclusive official calendar of the Paris Haute Couture Fashion Week, and in 2014 she was awarded the highly prestigious ANDAM Award. Her designs are currently featured in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

### **Exhibition Catalogue**

For the North American tour, the Groninger Museum's 2012 exhibition catalogue will be updated to include van Herpen's most recent clothing and shoe collections. The more than 300-page volume will contain an overview of all of the designer's collections, as well as introductory texts for each collection, accompanied by photography of van Herpen's runway shows and beautiful close-ups by photographer Bart Oomes. The catalogue will also feature an interview with van Herpen by Schleuning.

### **Exhibition Organization and Support**

The North American tour is co-organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, and the Groninger Museum. Support for this exhibition is provided by wish Foundation and Ms. Louise Sams and Mr. Jerome Grilhot.

### **About the High Museum of Art**

The High is the leading art museum in the southeastern U.S. With more than 14,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography, folk art and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists. For more information about the High, visit [high.org](http://high.org).

### **About The Woodruff Arts Center**

The Woodruff Arts Center is one of the largest arts centers in the world, home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Arts for Learning. Each year, these arts organizations play host to over 1.2 million patrons at the Woodruff Arts Center's Midtown Atlanta location, one of the only arts centers in the U.S. to host both visual and performing arts on a single campus. Through its work with educators and schools, the Woodruff Arts Center serves over 300,000 students annually and is the largest arts educator in Georgia.

### **About the Groninger Museum**

With a constant influx of around 200,000 visitors a year, the Groninger Museum is one of the most important museums in the Netherlands. It is renowned for its exceptional post-modern building, which was designed by Alessandro Mendini in conjunction with guests architects Philippe Starck, Michele de Lucchi, and Coop Himmelbl(l)au. The museum owns a centuries-old historical collection including archaeological finds, North-Netherlands traditional costumes, and Asian ceramics. In the field of modern and contemporary art, the museum is the proud owner of a large collection of Dutch expressionist work and post-modern Italian and contemporary design, staged photography and avant-garde fashion. The Groninger Museum applies a varied exhibition policy that devotes attention to regional, national and international developments in history and contemporary art. The Groninger Museum also distinguishes itself by often presenting the first international solo survey exhibition of an artist or designer. Exhibitions of the work of Azzedine

Alaia, Marc Newson, Viktor and Rolf, Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin, Hussein Chalayan, Song Dong, Jaime Hayon and Joris Laarman amply illustrate this fact.

###

**DIGITAL IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

**Media contacts:**

Marci Tate  
Manager of Public Relations  
High Museum of Art  
Tel: 404-733-4585  
E-mail: [marci.tate@woodruffcenter.org](mailto:marci.tate@woodruffcenter.org)

Chelsea Beroza  
Account Executive  
Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
Tel: 212-671-5160  
E-mail: [cberoza@resnicowschroeder.com](mailto:cberoza@resnicowschroeder.com)