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Auction

“Ma plus belle histoire d’amour, c’est vous”

Catherine Deneuve et Yves Saint-Laurent.
Christie's Paris. 24 January 2019

■ Joan Miquel Llodrà

The words in the title of this review, taken from a song by Barbara, are the same ones that on 22 January 2002, at the end of a now-historical fashion show at Centre Pompidou in Paris, actress Catherine Deneuve (Paris, 1943) pronounced to celebrate the 40th professional anniversary of Yves Saint Laurent (Oran, 1936 - Paris, 2008). Now, just over 10 years since the passing of this fashion genius, the actress is auctioning off, through Christie's France, her collection of haute couture dresses and accessories by the same designer. Over their nearly half-century of friendship, she wore these pieces at various events and in some films: more than 300 designs that are the physical representation of their particular *histoire d'amour*, a personal and professional love affair that was as intense as those between Audrey Hepburn and Hubert de Givenchy or Jackie Kennedy and Oleg Cassini.

Media outlets around the world and, of course, on social media have followed this news. One example is the Instagram account of Suzy Menkes (@suzymenkesvogue), editor of Vogue International, who always has interesting videos and comments; as well as those of @christiesparis and Dominique Deroche (@deroche_d), who was the head of press for this fashion house and who followed the success of the public exhibition of the dresses (available online), coinciding with fashion week in Paris, from 19 to 24 January 2019.

The items being auctioned off include iconic creations not only reflecting the brilliant career of the *Belle de jour* actress but also the history of fashion: a long white crêpe dress with red embroidery that Deneuve wore to meet the Queen of England and was also the first piece that Saint



Robe de soir, 1969. © www.christies.com

Laurent ever made for her; a short white ruffled dress with pearl edging that she wore in 1969, accompanied by François Truffaut, to meet director Alfred Hitchcock (which sold for more than €42,000); and the black tuxedo (a classic Saint Laurent piece and huge contribution to 20th-century fashion that had “*l’occasion de donner le pouvoir aux femmes*”) she wore to celebrate the fashion house’s 20th anniversary in 1982 (which sold for €20,000); the blue silk dress she wore at the Cannes Film Festival in 1997; and the silk muslin and brown taffeta nightgown from the autumn/winter collection of 1977-78, which sold for a record-breaking €52,500.

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Surely, most mortal fashion-lovers have been left with the dream of acquiring one of these pieces (even though one pair of shoes went for a modest €438). The auction, and the media hype that surrounded it, however, was useful in highlighting once again Yves Saint Laurent and his excellent, insuperable contribution to 20th-century culture. And all with a beautifully published catalogue (*De mode et d'amitié*, which can be downloaded in PDF), with period photos, pictures of the

corresponding haute couture fashion shows, and sketches and designs from the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris. We hope that an act of generosity will lead to some of these creations ending up on display at a museum of some sort, for the general public to enjoy. Those that admire Deneuve, and especially Saint Laurent, one of the last great geniuses of haute couture, creator of the feminine image of the 20th century, bold and innovative, the master of cuts and colour, would be very thankful. ■

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Textile Printing Museum inaugurates new halls

Premià de Mar Textile Printing Museum

■ Assumpta Dangla

On 25 November 2018, the new expansion of the Textile Printing Museum was inaugurated. This project remodelled existing halls and completed the visit of the museum collection. The new exhibition takes visitors on a journey through the history of textile printing from the 18th century to today, including new highlights like the “Explica’ns la teva història a la fàbrica” (Tell us your story from the factory) and “El talent local” (Local talent) sections, focusing on the history of textile printing in Premià de Mar.

The Premià de Mar Textile Printing Museum is the only museum in Spain that specialises in this field. It is the second in Europe (in importance) devoted to this speciality, after the Musée de

l’Impression sur Étoffes in Mulhouse, France. The museum is located in the town of Premià de Mar, which has a long tradition of textile printing. In 1931, the Lyon-Barcelona factory was opened in Premià, the first in all of Spain to use flat-bed screen printing (also known as printing à la lyonnaise), a printing technique imported from the French city of Lyon.

Many satellite workshops popped up around the factory, where drawings, print moulds, etc. were made. There were so many, in fact, that Premià de Mar became the leading mould engraver in the country and one of the most important towns in textile printing. Products from the town were sold to both local and foreign



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printers. And this is how textile printing became a driving force for the town's economy throughout most of the 20th century.

The museum also stands out for its explanation of the beginning of the industrial revolution in Catalonia. In fact, the first textile printers, which made calico prints or chintz, opened the doors to industrialisation. The first textile printers also began to specialise in weaving and spinning, so in the 19th century Catalonia was already an active participant in the industrial revolution. Textiles became the main industry in Catalonia, thanks to the printing activity, which was at the core of its economic growth.

Local talent, the ingenuity of so many professionals devoted to this activity, made textile printing an extremely important episode in the history of Catalonia, and of our town, in particular. From the first manufacturers in the 18th century, this activity flourished to include printers, colour chemists, designers, engravers, engineers and other professionals who helped make products of such high quality they spread beyond our borders. The museum highlights all of these trades, showing us our history as the origin of the talent we have today.

Now, with the expanded permanent exhibition, the museum takes visitors on a journey through the history of textile printing from the 18th century to today. With this expansion, the museum strives to complete the exhibition with a broad view of the subject: a journey through history, science, technical aspects, art and design.

The collection includes drawings that are one or two centuries old, printed textiles with a wide variety of designs, samples, old formulas that were kept secret and very odd machines. The journey is filled with stories and experiences to share. And, finally, there is a window to the future, where textile printing is shown as an industry that could lead to a resurgence of local talent.

The new pieces in the exhibition include a computer from 1975 that takes up one whole room, a crane used to weigh bales of cotton up to 400 kilos, a drawing by Salvador Moragas and a commemorative handkerchief from the 1888 Barcelona Universal Exposition, plus a whole host of audio-visual pieces, including Custo Barcelona fashion shows for the 2019 spring and winter collections. ■

<http://museuestampacio.org>