V&A to Stage Major New Exhibition Dedicated to Work of Pioneering Fashion Designer Gabrielle ‘Coco’ Chanel

Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto
With the support of CHANEL
Sainsbury Gallery
16 September 2023 – 25 February 2024
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The V&A is to stage the first UK exhibition dedicated to the work of French couturière, Gabrielle ‘Coco’ Chanel, charting the evolution of her iconic design style and the establishment of the House of CHANEL, from the opening of her first millinery boutique in Paris in 1910 to the showing of her final collection in 1971.

Featuring over 180 looks, seen together for the first time, as well as jewellery, accessories, cosmetics and perfumes, the exhibition will explore Chanel’s pioneering approach to fashion design, which paved the way for a new feminine elegance and continues to influence the way women dress today.

Based upon the Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto exhibition organised by the Palais Galliera, Fashion Museum of the City of Paris, the exhibition will be re-imagined for the V&A and feature rarely seen pieces from the V&A’s collection, alongside looks from Palais Galliera and the Patrimoine de CHANEL, the heritage collections of the fashion House in Paris. Key pieces on display will include outfits created for British model Anne Gunning (later Lady Nutting) and Hollywood stars Lauren Bacall and Marlene Dietrich.

Chanel designed first and foremost for herself. By creating clothes fit for an independent and active lifestyle, she anticipated the needs and wants of the modern woman. Through eight themed sections, the exhibition will explore Chanel’s innovative approach to fabric, silhouette, and construction and will examine how she drafted a new framework for fashion in the twentieth century. Showcasing a stunning array of some of Chanel’s most notable designs from her 60 years in fashion, the exhibition analyses her professional career, the emergence and the development of her style, and her contribution to the history of fashion. The exhibition
will also highlight Chanel’s British inspirations, such as her adoption of tweed as well as other British-made textiles.

**Director of the V&A, Tristram Hunt**, said: “As one of the most successful fashion houses in existence, Chanel owes much to the templates first laid down by its founder Gabrielle Chanel, over a century ago. We are delighted to be partnering with Chanel and the Palais Galliera on this exhibition, which provides us with the opportunity to explore the origins and elements of this enduring style and to display little-known historic Chanel garments from the V&A collection.”

**Director of the Palais Galliera, Miren Arzalluz** said: “Gabrielle Chanel devoted her long life to creating, perfecting and promoting a new kind of elegance based on freedom of movement, a natural and casual pose, a subtle elegance that shuns all extravagances, a timeless style for a new kind of woman. That was her fashion manifesto, a legacy that has never gone out of style.”

“Her success was based not only on the functionality, comfort and chic elegance of her designs, but also on her ability to grasp and interpret the needs and desires of the women of her time.”

**Bruno Pavlovsky**, President of CHANEL’s Fashion and President of CHANEL SAS, said: “Gabrielle Chanel boldly redefined the modern women’s wardrobe. We are honored and delighted that the V&A, such a world leading museum and great institution, will stage the first UK retrospective of her work. By showcasing her contribution to the history of fashion as well as the incredible relevance and permanence of the Chanel style, this exhibition will highlight one of the greatest visionaries of our time.”

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For further PRESS information please contact press@vam.ac.uk

A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from pressimages.vam.ac.uk

Exhibition presented in partnership with Palais Galliera, Fashion Museum of the City of Paris, Paris Musées
With the support of

CHANEL

Notes to Editors:

- The exhibition *Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto* will run from 16 September 2023 – 25 February 2024
- Ticket details to be announced at a later date
- The V&A’s fashion collection is designated as the UK’s National Collection and is one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of dress in the world.

About the V&A
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London (V&A) is the world’s leading museum of art, design and performance with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity, spanning 5000 years of human creativity. It was established in 1852 to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, its purpose is to champion creative industry, inspire the next generation, and spark everyone’s imagination. vam.ac.uk Twitter: @V_and_A Instagram: @vamuseum Facebook: @VictoriaandAlbertMuseum

About Chanel
Chanel is a private company and a world leader in creating, developing, manufacturing and distributing luxury products. Founded by Gabrielle Chanel at the beginning of the last century, Chanel offers a broad range of high-end creations, including Ready-to-Wear, Leather Goods, Fashion Accessories, Eyewear, Fragrances, Makeup, Skincare, Jewellery and Watches. Chanel is also renowned for its Haute Couture collections, presented twice yearly in Paris, and for having acquired a large number of specialized suppliers, collectively known as the Métiers d’art. Chanel is dedicated to ultimate luxury and to the highest level of craftsmanship. It is a brand whose core values remain historically grounded on exceptional creation. As such, Chanel promotes culture, art, creativity and “savoir-faire” throughout the world, and invests significantly in people, R&D, sustainable development and innovation. At the end of 2021, Chanel employed close to 28,500 people worldwide.

About Palais Galliera
The Palais Galliera is a permanent fashion museum in Paris, established in 1977 in the nineteenth-century building commissioned by Duchesse de Galliera. The museum displays exhibitions of French fashion design and costume from the eighteenth-century to the present day and has a collection of over 200,000 items. Collection highlights include garments owned by Marie-Antoinette, Louis XVII and the Empress Joséphine, as well as important pieces by such renowned designers as Madame Grès, Cristóbal Balenciaga, Christian Dior, Hubert de Givenchy and Yves Saint Laurent.