



## MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NGV

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### The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture

NGV International | 27 August – 7 November 2017 | Admission fees apply



In celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the House of Dior, one of the most prestigious couture houses in the world, the National Gallery of Victoria will present the never-before-seen exhibition *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture* at NGV International from 27 August to 7 November, 2017.

Exclusive to Melbourne, the exhibition is a collaboration between the NGV and the House of Dior and will feature a sumptuous display of over 140 garments from Christian Dior Couture designed 1947 to 2017.

Highlights include examples from Christian Dior's iconic Spring 1947 'New Look' collection, magnificent displays of Dior's signature ballgowns and evening dresses, as well as current contemporary designs from the House's first female head designer, Maria Grazia Chiuri.

Drawing primarily on material from the House of Dior archive in Paris and the NGV Collection, the exhibition will also feature accessories, sketches, photographs, haute couture *toiles*, multimedia and archival material.

The exhibition will narrate the rich history of the fashion house, including Christian Dior's early influences, the design codes synonymous with Dior, as well as the milestones of its six successive designers following Christian Dior's sudden death in 1957, including the esteemed designers Yves Saint Laurent, Marc Bohan, Gianfranco Ferré, John Galliano, Raf Simons and Maria-Grazia Chiuri.

The exhibition will also explore Dior's unique affinity with Australia, including the historic Spring 1948 fashion parade at David Jones, Sydney, where House models wore fifty original creations by Christian Dior. This is considered the first complete Dior collection to be shown outside of Paris.

'The exhibition will invite Australian and international audiences to discover some of the most significant couture designs of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The exhibition will be a celebration of Dior's most landmark moments and designs, including their iconic 'New Look' silhouette, which revolutionised women's fashion in the 1950s, through to the present-day contemporary aesthetic. We are also delighted that 68 years after the historic Dior fashion parade at its Sydney Store, David Jones is once again helping Australia celebrate the House of Dior, as the exhibition's Principal Partner,' said Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV.

'It is a great pleasure and honour for the House of Dior to be celebrating its anniversary in 2017 in Melbourne. This exhibition will be the biggest Dior retrospective ever held in Australia. It will cover seventy years of creation, presenting the emblematic work of Christian Dior and his successors, including Maria Grazia Chiuri, who arrived last July and is the first woman at the head of the couture house,' said Sidney Toledano, Chief Executive, Christian Dior Couture.

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'2017 is shaping up to be a blockbuster year for the NGV and for art, design and fashion lovers. *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture* will be a stylish addition to our unparalleled creative calendar. This exciting collaboration with one of the world's great fashion houses is a testament to the NGV's global standing, the strength of its fashion collection and expertise and its role in our creative state,' said Martin Foley, Minister for Creative Industries.

The exhibition opening will be celebrated with the inaugural NGV Gala, a ticketed, black-tie ball on Saturday 26 August 2017. The proceeds from this event will go toward supporting the NGV Fashion and Textiles Collection.

*The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture* will be at NGV International, 180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, Australia from 27 August to 7 November 2017. Tickets on sale now from [NGV.MELBOURNE](http://NGV.MELBOURNE). Adult \$26 | Concession \$23.50 | Child (5–15 years) \$10 | Family (2 adults + 3 children) \$65.

## ABOUT CHRISTIAN DIOR

Christian Dior began his fashion career late in life. Following political science studies and a career running two successive art galleries between 1928 and 1934, where he displayed the works of major artists of the era, Dior commenced working as a fashion illustrator, producing sketches for local couturiers, milliners and newspapers, such as *Le Figaro*. In 1938 Dior was hired as design assistant for Robert Piguet and, after his war service, in 1941 went to work for the fashion house Lucien Lelong as a junior designer, where he remained for the next five years.

Dior opened his couture house, Christian Dior, on 16 December 1946 with a staff of sixty at 30 Avenue Montaigne, Paris. Launching his first spring–summer collection the following year, on the 12 February 1947, Dior introduced a new post-war silhouette comprised of rounded shoulders, boned bodices, padded hips and full skirts made with an abundance of fabric that reaffirmed ideals of femininity and luxury in fashion. Over the next decade Dior continued to recalibrate French couture with his twice-yearly collections of new lines and his designs were frequently worn by film stars, aristocrats and Royalty.

In 1948 Dior opened the first American Company Christian Dior – New York, Inc, followed by C.D. Models in London in 1952 and Christian Dior Venezuela, Inc in 1953, and in the early 1950s initiated manufacturing under license contracts with department stores in Canada, Australia, Mexico, Cuba and Chile. The house also expanded to include accessory lines such as perfume, millinery, stockings, gloves, shoes and jewellery. Up until his death of a heart attack in October 1957 at the age of 52, Dior drove what is considered the international renaissance of French couture.

## ABOUT THE NGV FASHION AND TEXTILES COLLECTION

With close to 8500 works from around the globe, the NGV's Fashion and Textiles Collection is the most pre-eminent in the southern hemisphere. The NGV has a long history as custodians of fashion and textiles in Australia since the first group of textiles entered the collection in 1895 and has staged over 50 major exhibitions, including the global blockbuster *The Fashion World of Jean-Paul Gaultier, 200 Years of Australian Fashion* and *Viktor&Rolf: Fashion Artists*.

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Presenting Partner

Principal Partner



DAVID JONES

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### Image Caption:

Christian Dior models in the salon of House of Dior's headquarters, 30 Avenue Montaigne, Paris 1957. Photograph by Loomis Dean, featured in *LIFE* Magazine, 1957  
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