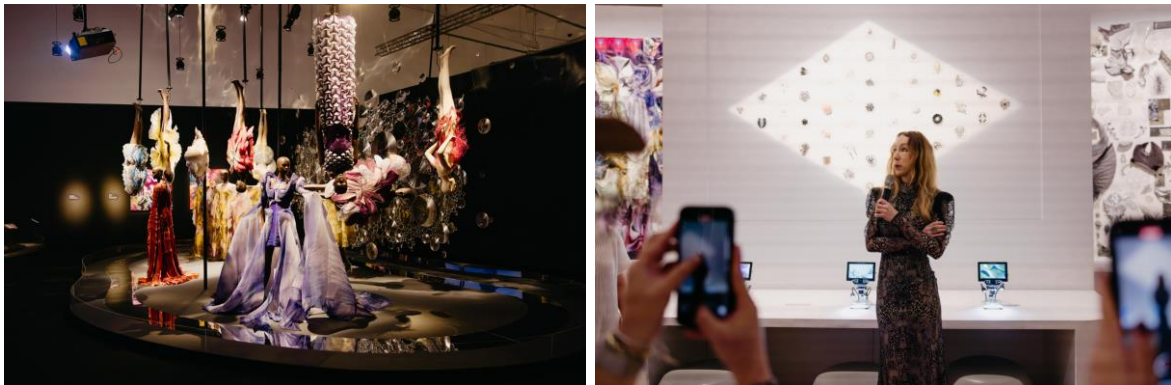


PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# VISIONARY DESIGNER IRIS VAN HERPEN TRANSFORMS THE WORLD OF FASHION AT ARTSCIENCE MUSEUM

Marking her first solo exhibition in Asia, *Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses* is a major retrospective that will explore how the forward-thinking designer redefines fashion through multidisciplinary creations that merge contemporary art, design, technology and science



*L to R: The final zone of the exhibition titled Cosmic Bloom; Iris van Herpen at the Alchemic Atelier zone during her in-person appearance at ArtScience Museum*

**Singapore** (13 March 2025) —Presented by ArtScience Museum in collaboration with Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France, *Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses* will make its Asian premiere from 15 March till 10 August, paying tribute to one of fashion's most revolutionary forces working at the intersection of art and science.

The exhibition is a major retrospective of renowned Dutch fashion designer, Iris van Herpen, showcasing over 140 of her most iconic works. Her sculptural designs have been worn by renowned figures such as Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, Björk, Scarlett Johansson, Fan Bingbing, and Naomi Campbell. By combining traditional hand craftsmanship with advanced technologies such as 3D printing, algorithmic design, and laser cutting, her garments embody the complexity and fluidity of the natural world.

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rooted in deep fascination with science and nature, van Herpen's designs transform complex scientific concepts into wearable art. Drawing inspiration from various fields such as marine biology, palaeontology, mycology, mineralogy, astronomy and more, her work seamlessly merges art, science and technology, evoking the hidden structures of nature including coral reefs, the branching systems of fungi, and the vast patterns of planetary motion.

The exhibition will take visitors on a journey from the depths of the ocean to the outer reaches of space, unfolding across 11 zones that celebrate van Herpen's future-facing and multi-disciplinary approach to her craft. A pioneer in the use of sophisticated technologies, van Herpen transgresses conventional norms of fashion. Her striking creations stem from a deep curiosity about the natural world, weaving unexpected materials and kinetic elements influenced by science and the movement of the body, into living, breathing wearable sculptures.

In *Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses*, a comprehensive selection of her looks and accessories are placed in dialogue with a curated selection of artefacts, contemporary artworks and natural history specimens such as corals, fossils and skeletons, offering intimate glimpses into her artistic process, her expansive imagination and her diverse sources of inspiration.

ArtScience Museum's presentation builds on the original exhibition developed by Musée des Arts Décoratifs Paris, France, by incorporating regional perspectives including artefacts from Singapore's Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum and contemporary works from Southeast Asian artists. The exhibition also highlights van Herpen's collaborations with architects, scientists, and artists, demonstrating how her designs operate at the intersection of fashion, science, art and technology. By tracing the connections between the microscopic and the celestial, the exhibition offers an insight into van Herpen's unique vision – a reimagining of fashion as a medium that extends beyond the body, engaging with the structures and forces that shape the universe.

"Iris van Herpen is a designer unlike any other in the fashion world. Her work is deeply informed by science, drawing from microbiology and morphogenesis to particle physics and cosmology. At ArtScience Museum, we are drawn to figures who dissolve the boundaries between disciplines, and van Herpen's designs do exactly that. She translates the hidden

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

structures of nature and the fundamental forces of the universe into extraordinary wearable forms. As part of our season titled *Mind and Body: The Art and Science of Being Human*, the exhibition showcases van Herpen's innovative approach to materials, movement, and technology, reflecting the dynamic systems of the natural world. Enriched with artworks and scientific specimens from Singapore, the exhibition beautifully embodies the interconnectedness of art and science," said Honor Harger, Vice President of ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands.

"It's an honour to present this comprehensive retrospective of my work, creative processes, and influences to this region for the first time. I'm excited to share a glimpse into my world with new audiences and connect on a deeper level," said van Herpen, who is visiting Singapore for the very first time as part of the exhibition launch.

### **A fashion pioneer at the intersection of art, science and technology**

Iris van Herpen grew up in close contact with nature, and her creativity was influenced early on by her passion for the natural world and classical dance – both of which became central elements of her design ethos. In 2007, she founded the Maison Iris van Herpen in Amsterdam, combining the subtleties of craftsmanship with the spirit of innovation, to create boundary-pushing designs that serve as a cross-pollination of many fields: art, chemistry, dance, physics, architecture, biology, design, technology and more. 2010 marked a turning point in her career, when she became the first designer to show a 3D-printed dress on the runway with her *Crystallisation* collection. Since then, her interest and ability to synthesise multiple disciplines has fuelled her collaborations with experts from various industries such as architects, artists and designers.

Please refer to **Annex A** for more information on the House of Iris van Herpen.

### **A journey through Iris van Herpen's universe**

*Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses* spans 11 zones covering nine themes frequently explored across van Herpen's body of work. This is complemented by custom sound designs created by Dutch composer and music producer Salvador Breed, which serve to engage the senses. Much more than just a fashion exhibition, van Herpen's creations are complemented by a diverse array of objects including contemporary artworks, furniture designs, ancient

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

fossils and natural history specimens that illuminate the intricate connection between her designs and the world at large.

The journey begins in *Water and Dreams*, which explores the theme of water in its liquid, frozen, and gaseous states. Here, van Herpen's aquatic pieces reveal the mystery and metaphorical power of water, manifested across a multitude of fabrics, materials, and techniques.



L to R: Some of the dresses featured in the Sensory Sea Life zone; one of the highlights is a vitrine displaying an array of specimens including corals and sea urchins alongside suspended sculptures

*Sensory Sea Life* explores ecosystems of the oceans which inspired van Herpen's 2020 collection, *Sensory Seas*. Visitors can look forward to encountering stunning creations from this collection and more, including the *Hydrozoa* dress worn by Lady Gaga, alongside a showcase that recalls the marine species that are part of van Herpen's personal collection. This includes marine specimens from the Southeast Asian region on loan from the Zoological Reference Collection of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum at the National University of Singapore. These items are placed in dialogue with suspended sculptures created by architect and artist Philip Beesley as well as a perfume bottle by jeweller and master glassmaker, René Lalique (1860-1945) depicting the Greek goddess of the sea, Amphitrite.

Additionally, visitors can look forward to exploring *Cabinet of Curiosities*, which holds an eclectic selection of artworks and books, as well as insect specimens from Black Crow Taxidermy and Art, that reflect van Herpen's love of collecting. This zone also houses a

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

selection of her footwear designs and accessories such as belts, headpieces and face jewellery created in collaboration with designers such as Irene Bussemaker.



*L to R: Gallery view of the Skeletal Embodiment zone; the fossil of a Dimetrodon is placed in dialogue with van Herpen's works within the space*

One of the key zones in the exhibition is ***Skeletal Embodiment***, which dissects how van Herpen analyses the skeleton, muscles, connective tissues and systems of the body to create forms that can be worn like a second skin. This includes the *Skeleton* dress that echoes the work of Japanese artist Heishiro Ishino, alongside the renowned *Crystallisation* top and skirt created in collaboration with designer Daniel Widrig and 3D printing company Materialise. The dresses are juxtaposed with works such as Courtney Mattison's *Malum Geminos* (2019). Made from stoneware and porcelain, the sculptural installation references a bleached coral reef with skeletal forms that seem to have been eaten away by toxic substances. Also on display exclusively at ArtScience Museum, is a 270-million-year-old fossil of a *Dimetrodon*, a prehistoric reptile-like mammal that pre-dates the earliest dinosaurs by around 50 million years.



*Gallery view of some of the dresses and artworks located in Forces Behind the Forms and Growth Systems*

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Next, the zone ***Forces Behind the Forms*** explores van Herpen's fascination for shapes found in nature, morphogenesis and the creative forces at the origin of life. Van Herpen's new sculpture, *Unfolding Time* (2024), makes its Asian premiere in this gallery.

Next, ***Growth Systems*** presents van Herpen's interest in all structures, whether natural or artificial, organic or architectural. Here, her radical *Cathedral* dress shows how she reinvents the codes of fashion, while other looks explore her deep study into mycology – the science of fungi. With neurological research being another area of interest for van Herpen, the ***Synaesthesia*** zone spotlights her research into modified states of consciousness, lucid dreaming and hypnosis, through dresses that create optical illusions. On display within this zone is the iconic *Bene Gesserit* gown worn by Grimes.



*Installation view of one of the material samples panel in the Alchemic Atelier zone*

Meanwhile, ***Alchemic Atelier*** transports visitors into van Herpen's workshop in Amsterdam, highlighting the origins of many distinctive designs and silhouettes featured throughout the exhibition. It offers a closer look at her manufacturing approach to each collection, in which she has described her process as “craftolution” – which combines craftsmanship, new technologies and a concern for environmental sustainability, to define a new haute couture of the future. On show are samples of material experiments such as embroideries, waterjet cutting, delicate ancient *plissé* foldings, silicone mouldings, kinetic textures and more.

Through her body of work, van Herpen defies expectations, forging new ideas based on visions of the past, present and future. The ***Mythology of Fear*** zone explores alchemy, mysticism, allegory, and van Herpen's interest in mutation, hybridization and chimera creatures. It includes the striking Bird dress worn by Scarlett Johansson. Meanwhile, ***New***



PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Nature* presents her perception of an imaginary future with works from her *Syntopia* and *Voltage* collections, including the iconic *Heliosphere* dress worn by Beyonce during her 2023 Renaissance tour.



*L to R: Iris van Herpen's Mythosphere gown (2021) and Symbiotic asymmetric dress (2019) are among the creations on display within the Cosmic Bloom zone*

The journey through van Herpen's cerebral universe ends in *Cosmic Bloom* – a spectacular room where her dresses defy the laws of gravity, floating through space and time. Over the years, the cosmos and its mysteries have inspired van Herpen's imagination and sparked her creativity. Here, she combines the latest scientific discoveries with the history of art and science, presenting her work in dialogue with astronomical photography, and documentation of her *Magnetic Motion* collection, photographed at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN.

The artists, architects, photographers and designers featured in the exhibition are David Spriggs, Philip Beesley, 目 [Mé], Juliette Clovis, Jacques Rougerie, Tan Shao Qi, Rogan Brown, Ren Ri, Courtney Mattison, Heishiro Ishino, Tim Walker, Enrico Ferrarini, Ferruccio Laviani, Yayoi Kusama, Chun Kwang Young, Joseph Walsh, Janaina Mello Landini, Lanny Bergner, Kate MccGwire, Ruben Pang, Damien Jalet, Kohei Nawa, Casey Curran, Ivana Bašić and Kim Keever.

*Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses* is an exhibition co-organised by Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France and ArtScience Museum, Singapore based on an original exhibition designed by Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information on *Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses*, please visit <https://www.marinabaysands.com/museum/exhibitions/iris-van-herpen.html> or the exhibition guide [here](#).

**Complementary programmes for *Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses***

With the exhibition launching as part of ArtScience Museum's *Mind and Body* season, visitors can further navigate the intricate relationship between their physical bodies and cognitive minds as shaped by biotechnology, experience, and emotion, through a season of artworks, films and programmes.

Please visit <https://www.marinabaysands.com/museum/events/mind-and-body-season.html> for more details on the diverse slate of programmes that celebrate the human experience and challenge notions of identity, agency and what it truly means to be alive.

+++

**About Marina Bay Sands Pte Ltd**

Since its opening in 2010, Marina Bay Sands has stood as an architectural marvel and the crown jewel in Singapore's skyline. Home to the world's most spectacular rooftop infinity pool and approximately 1,850 rooms and suites, the integrated resort offers exceptional dining, shopping, meeting and entertainment choices, complete with a year-round calendar of signature events.

Marina Bay Sands is dedicated to being a good corporate citizen to serve its people, communities and environment. It drives social impact through its community engagement programme, Sands Cares, and leads environmental stewardship through its global sustainability programme, Sands ECO360.

For more information, please visit [www.marinabaysands.com](http://www.marinabaysands.com)

**About ArtScience Museum**

ArtScience Museum is a major cultural institution in Singapore that explores the intersection between art, science, technology and culture. It is the cultural component of Marina Bay Sands. Since its opening in February 2011, ArtScience Museum has staged large-scale exhibitions by some of the world's major artists, including Leonardo da Vinci, M.C. Escher, Salvador Dalí, Andy Warhol and Vincent Van Gogh, as well as exhibitions that explore aspects of science and technology – including particle physics, big data, robotics, palaeontology, marine biology and space science. For more information, please visit [www.marinabaysands.com/museum.html](http://www.marinabaysands.com/museum.html)





PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Media Enquiries**

Julia Tan: +65 8380 4031 / [julia.tan@marinabaysands.com](mailto:julia.tan@marinabaysands.com)

Tan Jou Teng: +65 8380 4247 / [jouteng.tan@marinabaysands.com](mailto:jouteng.tan@marinabaysands.com)

Sarina Pushkarna: +65 9298 5728 / [sarina.pushkarna@marinabaysands.com](mailto:sarina.pushkarna@marinabaysands.com)

For hi-res images, please click [\[here\]](#) (Credit as indicated in the captions)

## **ANNEX A – About the House of Iris van Herpen**

### **Iris van Herpen**

Since its establishment in 2007 and its prestigious membership of the Fédération de la Haute Couture, the Maison of Iris van Herpen has consistently combined innovative techniques with traditional Couture craftsmanship, resulting in sensorial designs that beautifully capture the intricacy and diversity of the natural world.

### **The House of Iris van Herpen**

At the Maison of Iris van Herpen, Haute Couture is a transformative force that transcends boundaries and unites multidisciplinary technologies with intricate artisanal craftsmanship. The brand's visionary creations merge pioneering techniques and luxurious materials, often evoking a sense of avant-garde wonder. Whether shaping a dress through electromagnetic weaving or sculpting one from 3D hand-cast transparent leather, the Maison challenges traditional notions of the handmade to create ethereal garments that are radically future-facing and exquisitely feminine.

The Maison's ambition to reinvent the *métier* as the engine of innovation, pushing forward materiality and sustainability as second nature, is mirrored in its interdisciplinary approach to art and fashion. Each collection is a quest to venture beyond today's definition of a garment, exploring new forms of expression for a more meaningful, diverse and conscious fashion for the future. Celebrating female empowerment, the Maison values a collaborative design process with inspirational women such as the brand's cherished global clientele and extraordinary muses like Cate Blanchett, Beyoncé, Scarlett Johansson, Lady Gaga, Fan Bingbing and Naomi Campbell. Through symbiotic collaborations with artists from all mediums such as the choreographer Damien Jalet, the performative artist Björk, the kinetic artist Anthony Howe, the trans-disciplinary architect Philip Beesley or the computational artist Neri Oxman the brand challenges the future of fashion by rethinking previously unimaginable ways of Haute Couture.