

ART MEETS FASHION

The Art Girls MPLS explore how the worlds of art and fashion are inextricably intertwined and how both influence and inspire the artists they represent.

written by kelly netishen



the time Stefano Pilati, publicly acknowledged the famous British artist and sculptor Tony Cragg as his main source of inspiration. You could see the intertwining of Cragg's sculptures in the creations walking down Pilati's runway. Likewise, many painters draw from the bold designs on the haute couture runway when crafting their fine works of art. The colors, movement, and romance of fashion can spark a painter's imagination like no other.

For artist Richard Merchán the vibrancy and life of fashion has been the source of his inspiration for decades. Recently, he finished



One of the most captivating components of art is understanding the inspiration or background for each piece. Every artist draws their inspiration from various subjects, sometimes making it obvious and sometimes not. In the world of high fashion many designers (if not all) draw much of their intricate designs from other artists such as painters, sculptors, and musicians. While I was working at Yves St. Laurent in the early 2000's, the head designer at



an artwork that was interpretive of designer Zac Posen's 2014 Met Gala gown worn by model Lui Wen. In the new artwork "Black Swan" Merchán gives nod to the sophistication and elegance of the everyday black against gold accents and background. Merchán's loose and interpretive method works well to capture the energy and creative side of haute couture. His ability to mix color and pattern is much like that of an Italian designer draping and creating his ensemble for an upcoming show.

Jillian Lee is an artist that draws much of her inspiration from the detailed gowns of the 19th Century. Whether it is in her abstract flower bouquets or her signature dresses, the detail and femininity she exudes into each painting is nothing short of a haute couture seamstress using a paintbrush instead of thread. Jillian Lee has also stated that the designer Alexander McQueen has been a great influence upon her creations, which is relevant in the way she portrays feminine characteristics but also exudes great strength in all her pieces.

For artist Matthew Gaulke the fashion world has been his portal to finding subject matter for his intricate artwork. The artist draws a lot upon the story of the model, and what her facial features are expressing. The fashion becomes somewhat of the "costume" of the model and from there Gaulke is able to draw and paint his own interpretive stories. What we find striking of Matthew Gaulke's work is the way



that he can capture the mood and tone of the high fashion world. He paints as if he is right there in the middle of that runway show in New York City, taking it all in and putting it down on a canvas all in real time.

Stephanie Dillon's artwork is steeply rooted in the street fashion of today. Combining bold colors and images with a graffiti type edge, she will commonly complete a piece with a nod to haute couture. Her medium: up-cycled. Her artwork is a combination of materials meant for the landfills, and even those illustrious Louis Vuitton shopping bags are used to make a statement on many of her pieces. Her artwork has become so sought after by fashion loving clients that she has recently catapulted her art into fashion. Using up-cycled t-shirts and jackets, the articles of clothing are made over with her personalized art, revitalizing an unwanted piece of clothing into a staple piece for that fashion forward closet. For Dillon, her artwork and fashion are forever revolving around one another.



Hollie Blanchard owns Art Girls Mpls, an art concierge service, with sister-in-law Kelly Netishen. artgirlsmpls.com

