Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Phoenix Art Museum Showcases Latest Advancements in Fashion of the Digital Age

Digital Print Fashion *on view March 1 – July 14, 2013 in Ellman Fashion Design Gallery*

PHOENIX (February 25, 2013) – Phoenix Art Museum will showcase the latest advancements in contemporary print design in its upcoming exhibition, *Digital Print Fashion*, beginning March 1. The exhibition illustrates cutting-edge advances in digital textile printing through designs by iconic talents Alexander McQueen, Mary Katrantzou, Miuccia Prada, and Ralph Rucci, as well as new and emerging designers. Developing over the last two decades, digital technology has enabled designers to create a new range of prints in bold, eye-catching colors and patterns, the likes of which were not possible even a few seasons ago.

Digital printing allows designers to rapidly reproduce and manipulate images and apply them to any textile. This revolutionary technology has significantly impacted designers' ability to create customized designs. "Today's emerging generation of fashion designers have grown up using digital technology in their daily lives, so it's only natural they would apply these technologies to their artistic creations," explains Dennita Sewell, the Museum's Curator of Fashion. From collaborations with artists to everyday observations snapped on a smart phone, the sources of inspiration are as broad as the artists' imaginations. One example in the exhibition is by London designer Mary Katrantzou that reproduces a hyper-vivid print of a koi pond extracted from illustrations of a famous connoisseur's collection.

New innovations in ink-jet printers, inks and software have fostered the creation of multi-colored, intricate designs economically. Photographic scenes and abstracted images have given contemporary prints a hyper-realistic look. "The technological developments we've seen in the last decade have enhanced the artistic potential of fabric as canvas, allowing the designer to explore numerous possibilities in order to realize their ultimate creative vision," notes Maura Jurgrau, Assistant Professor of Fashion Design, at Parsons The New School for Design in New York City.

"This collection presents a rare opportunity to view some of the most innovative and vibrant works reflective of the artistry of today's digital movement, by some of the most iconic fashion designers as well as new and emerging," says Sewell.

On a local level, new and emerging designers will take part in a student salon on March 2, for fashion design students from across Greater Phoenix. The student salons, which Sewell hosts throughout the year, allow students to take a closer, detailed look at the works in the Museum's fashion exhibitions, and gain greater understanding of the history and current trends in their field.

Digital Print Fashion will open on Friday, March 1, with a lecture by Sewell in the Museum's Whiteman Hall at 7 pm. Visitors will also hear from Danielle Locastro, of First2Print, a textile printing company that works with some of the biggest names in fashion. On view through July 14, *Digital Print Fashion* is supported by the Virginia M. Ullman Foundation and the Arizona Costume Institute, a support organization of the Museum.

About the Fashion Design Collection

Founded in 1966, Phoenix Art Museum's fashion design collection is notable for its quality and comprehensiveness and is comprised of more than 5,000 objects of American and European men's, women's and children's dress and accessories dating from the late 17th century to the present. The Museum organizes three exhibitions a year in the Kelly Ellman Fashion Design Gallery. Phoenix Art Museum is one of only a handful of art museums in the country with a long and continuously active fashion program.

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