

IN CONVERSATION WITH DANIEL SOLOMONS

What Inspired you about Mae Maze's designs to make your piece?

The architecture of its designs and how it reaches them. I was very interested in knowing how she is composing them from their origin. The way to approach the design, visualizing volumes and shapes, proportions and sheets.

I find many similarities with the work of a sculptor, or an architect.

Mae Maze is a marvel in pattern making and design. Its line of pieces maintains the perfect balance between firm and agile characteristics. The fall of the fabrics is calculated with the same mathematical precision as the plans of an architect, the range of colors he uses and the width of the lines, which delimit the body in geometric fields. Some of these lines are infinite, while others have no destination and without further ado, they stop.

I love that! The surprise game she sometimes uses.

But what fascinated me the most and focused my work is creating a new architecture of the body through how she makes patterns. Mae Maze uses her own mathematical formula and cuts the silhouette without following the body shape. I immediately visualized layers of skin. Layers of skin taken from their own imaginary models ready to be dressed. I used natural and untreated materials to continue with the coherence of the brand in the use of organic and natural fabrics and its commitment to the environment. Two images came to mind. The cover image of Smithsonian's book "Urban Structuring" with the plan of The Golden Lane Housing System, continuously modelled as if it were a seam, and "Les Femmes d'Alger" by Picasso. The latter for the vertical, long and angular geometric focus of the naked bodies, not for the subject.

What relationship do you think there is between art and fashion?

There is a certain parallelism and sometimes they are separated by a fuzzy line, since we are talking about plural phenomena that reflect the transformations of culture, thought and behavior of society throughout history. This close relationship was already represented in societies such as the Egyptian, the Greek or the Roman where the clothing and fabrics of the time were important in sculpture and painting. There are countless examples and more clearly in haute couture. From YSL and Modrián to the early 20th century robes of Gustav Klimt and his wife the Fashion Designer Emily Flöge or the collaboration between Schiaparelli and Dalí.

Anyway, in fashion, everything is more fulminant whose longevity is subject to a consumer trend. Sometimes the same thing happens in art, and often there are moments of artificial euphoria, where everything has a bit of staging and a lot of fiction.



And between fashion and architecture?

The same. Hence the famous Coco Chanel phrase "Fashion is architecture, it is a question of proportions."

I think that both fashion designers and architects work precisely to achieve the same goal: to make us feel our best. With our own body or inside a space. Achieving the perfect balance between creativity and functionality is a common goal for both of them. Both are based on structures, proportions, shapes, textures, colors, volumes and creativity.

Gehry and Vuitton, Kawakubo and Eisenman. There are also many examples of collaborations.

Who or what influences your work? Do you have a constant inspiration that you return to or does it change from project to project?

It is impossible to name everything and everyone. But, paraphrasing a friend of mine who always says "to tell you a long story short" I would say architecture and literature. I'm interested in exploring the urban environment and how it is shaped by architecture, both from the standpoint of form and function, the social dimension of architecture and the way it conditions human interaction and its organization. In literature, I am mainly interested in mentalist and symbolic poetry, from Stevens or Blake to Wilburg, Frost or Merrill.

I consider it essential to dive into the relationships between images and words, and I think we must prop up the bridges already created between theoretical, literary creation and the work of Art. I believe that, only artistic practice can bring us closer to the complex relationship between the object and its representation. That is why we need a superior, objective, neutral understanding, a story with different expressions, that resites the image by itself.

We are going through some of the most difficult moments due the Covid-19, how do you think the contemporary artist experiences the difficult times we are living and how it will be in the "New Normality"?

I'm optimistic by nature, but we are facing an unprecedented situation globally. The planet is entering a new historical period whose balance no longer depends on the previous forces at play. We must, as a society, learn and adapt. It is necessary to adopt the "Union" as a flag and row towards the same direction, with transversal and integrating actions and try to move away from paltry politics that will make it more difficult for us to get out of this situation, which in itself, is very serious.

The contemporary art sector and culture in general is a complex ecosystem, made up of very different connected and interdependent elements, generators of economic, cultural, social activity, jobs, revitalizers of tourism and many associated activities.

The sector of which I am a part, the fragile world of the plastic arts, already vulnerable by the weakness of its structures and by the very little collecting activity, will be sunk in a bankruptcy that is difficult to manage. For artists who have no other income than that derived from the sale of their productions, the future in the short and medium term will be dramatic. But we will continue doing what we always do, trying to live as worthily as possible by doing a job in which we deeply believe. Art is a poetic act that builds an indispensable part of what we call culture, that defines and sustains us. An event that celebrates, contains and protects something as fundamental as that feeling of union and survival that we live these days, the Human. A precious asset that Art puts at our service whenever we need it.