PRESS KIT
Lausanne, September 2014

NIRVANA
STRANGE FORMS OF PLEASURE

29 October 2014 – 26 April 2015
Curators : Marco Costantini and Susanne Hilpert Stuber

PRESS CONFERENCE: TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER AT 11.00
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE CURATORS AND SOME OF THE CREATORS

MEDIA CONTACT
Danaé Panchaud, public relations
+41 21 315 25 27, danae.panchaud@lausanne.ch

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Mark Woods, War Heart Fetish (Hung out to Dry), 2014, leather, white metal, wax, plastic
NIRVANA
STRANGE FORMS OF PLEASURE
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*Nirvana. Strange Forms of Pleasure* is Switzerland’s first international-level exhibition to be devoted to forms of pleasure in contemporary creation, exploring design as well as fashion and contemporary art, and the first comprehensive study of the influence of erotica on design and fashion. By turns bold, luxurious and mysterious, the exhibition presents works by around eighty artists and designers, and over 200 objects and installations.

The exhibition features a selection of contemporary designers who draw on the iconography of pleasure in their creative work, finding inspiration in erotic and fetishist literature, along with the images, objects and clothing to which they frequently refer. Visitors will discover finely-crafted, sometimes rare and inaccessible items, made from materials usually associated with the worlds of luxury goods, craftsmanship and contemporary art.

The exhibition invites us to examine our own ideas and perceptions of pleasure. It forces us to observe how its forms of expression can cross the line from the private to the public sphere when they are the subject of fashion, design or art. Designers cover the body with close-fitting garments or sensual materials, adorning them with jewellery that is aesthetically as well as erotically pleasing, creating furniture with evocative forms, works of art in which beauty and perfection are spiced with the whiff of brimstone. *Nirvana* shows that society’s desire for sensual pleasure remains vigorous in our digital age.

The exhibition focuses on design, fashion, and also contemporary art, which helps to open our eyes: its aim is to examine our relationship with the forms and objects that give physical expression to our unconscious perceptions of sexuality and our private notions of pleasure. In the exhibits, taboos are subverted by the use of unexpected shapes and materials, and by an attention to detail that has much in common with what the fashion world would consider haute couture.

Celebrated and up-and-coming designers alike bring these multiple influences into the spotlight, placing in the public sphere what has hitherto remained private. All these designers force us to question our value judgements on erotic practices by presenting unexpectedly luxurious items, worked to the highest standards of craftsmanship in leather, glass and precious metals.
CARTES BLANCHES À TROIS DESIGNERS

Three rooms of the mudac have been given over to three important designers, who have each been invited to create a unique installation for the exhibition.

BETONY VERNON, JEWELLERY DESIGNER

Betony Vernon was born in 1968 in Tazewell, Virginia, to an American pilot father and English civil rights activist mother. Her stylistic and sexual education took place on the East Coast of the USA, before at the age of 20 she moved to Italy, where she still lives, splitting her time between Milan and Paris. She began by selling her creations to some of the most prestigious labels in the world, before developing her own line of luxury erotic jewellery crafted in silver. Today her work is exhibited in Paris, Milan and New York, and she rubs shoulders with high-profile designers, couturiers and contemporary artists. She has devoted the last six years to writing her best-selling book, *The Boudoir Bible*, in which she takes a down-to-earth but light-hearted look at the secrets to achieving pleasure.

The vision of sexuality that Betony Vernon embraces in her book and through her jewellery eschews the commercial in favour of fine craftsmanship. "I don’t make sex toys. My objects are precious and they demand respect. Some can be worn outside of the boudoir, to a cocktail party or the opera. They are as much objets d’art as they are toys." Betony Vernon’s erotic jewellery, with its decidedly non-organic forms, embraces mystery but not secrecy. Designed to refine and augment pleasure, they are a far cry from the plastic made-in-China trinkets that fill the shelves of sex shops.

Betony Vernon, *Minerva*, silver


Betony Vernon, *The Origin Chair*, 2012, marble

Betony Vernon, *Lovelock, Collier Worn With Sado Chic Leash And Cock Ring Attachment*, 2003, silver
MARK WOODS, DESIGNER

Mark Woods’ objects are a fascinating exploration of the concept of transgression. Unambiguously referencing the world of erotica, their softness, delicacy and beauty distance them from their potential function. They play on concepts borrowed from feminism, masculinity, sexuality and even religion, the attractiveness of their execution and the nobility of their materials – ebony, silver, lace, velvet – capturing the senses of the onlooker. The bespoke boxes and containers specially designed to house these marvellous objects become veritable “Cabinets of curiosities” that demand only to be opened.

Mark Woods, *Flesh Gordon*, 1999, silver, gold and synthetic rubies

Mark Woods, *Brownie Box Fetish*, 2014, leather, white metal, human hair


Mark Woods, *The Word made Flesh*, 2013, silver-plated rhodium, phenolic resin, lace, suede
Nika Zupanc, a young Slovenian designer, offers a unique vision of desire in the world of design. The furniture she creates pushes aesthetic limits and suggests a new visual code that reinterprets pre-existing or predefined meanings, challenging us to look at them in a new way. She playfully revisits feminine archetypes, combining glamour with a caustic wit, as in the Mrs Dalloway hotplate in the shape of a powder compact, or the suite entitled Self-discipline comprising a lamp, desk, chair and wardrobe that elegantly subvert the codes of S&M.

As well as running her own label, La Femme et la Maison, which she created on graduating from the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Nika Zupanc also works with contemporary design houses such as Moooi and Moroso. Her works have appeared in prestigious publications including Wallpaper, the New York Times, AD, Elle, Design Week and Desire.
ÉVÉNEMENTS AUTOUR DE L’EXPOSITION

L’exposition s’accompagne d’un riche programme d’activités, touchant aussi bien aux mots du plaisir qu’aux parfums sensuels…

VISITES COMMENTÉES
Mardi 11 novembre 2014 à 12h15 par l’un des commissaires
Samedi 6 décembre 2014 à 16h par une médiatrice du mudac
Mardi 27 janvier 2015 à 12h15 par l’un des commissaires
Samedi 7 mars 2015 à 16h par une médiatrice du mudac
Samedi 25 avril 2015 à 16h par une médiatrice du mudac

Prix: billet d’entrée du musée (gratuit le premier samedi du mois). Sans inscription

EXCURSION DESIGN : À LA DÉCOUVERTE DU DESIGN DE COULEURS ET D’ODEURS…

Une douzaine de parfums aux senteurs animales, fétichistes, sensuelles ou réputées aphrodisiaques sont présentées dans l’exposition.


Jeudi 13 novembre 2014 de 8h à 18h45
CHF 65.- incluant le trajet Lausanne-Genève et le repas de midi.
CHF 50.- pour les Amis du mudac
Date limite d’inscription : 15 octobre

SEXPERTISE
Maïa Mazaurette, sexperte journaliste et blogueuse, ex-chroniqueuse de France Inter, vous propose une visite commentée décalée de l’exposition, à travers le prisme de son regard affûté et son humour décapant.

Samedi 22 novembre 2014 à 14h
CHF 15.-. Gratuit pour les Amis du mudac

ATELIER D’ÉCRITURE : LE PLAISIR DES MOTS
Animé par Emmanuelle Ryser.

Dimanches 23 novembre 2014 et 15 mars 2015 de 14h à 16h30
CHF 10.-
JEUDI DESIGN : RENCONTRE AVEC BETONY VERNON

Créatrice de bijoux érotiques, anthropologue sexuelle et auteur de *La Bible du boudoir, guide du plaisir sans tabou*, ouvrage offrant les clés pour une sexualité orgasmique et désinhibée. Le mudac offre une carte blanche à Betony Vernon au sein de l’exposition et l’invite à vous la présenter.

Jeudi 22 janvier 2015 à 18h
CHF 15.-. Gratuit pour les Amis du mudac

JEUDI DESIGN : QUAND SEXUALITÉ RIME AVEC CENSURÉ

Dans une société prônant à la fois liberté d’expression et épanouissement sexuel, nous nous autocensurons parfois afin de ne pas froisser le voisin ou le politique. Jusqu’où peut-on aller lorsque l’on traite du plaisir sexuel ? Quelles sont les limites du discours et de l’image ? Comment les justifier autrement que par notre subjectivité ? Autant de questions traitées à l’occasion d’une table ronde au mudac, par des intervenants issus du monde de l’art, de la politique et de la communication.

Jeudi 12 février 2015 à 18h. Entrée gratuite

LITTÉRATURE ÉROTIQUE EN SUISSE ROMANDE

Pour prolonger l’exposition, la Faculté des Lettres de l’Université de Lausanne se propose d’aborder les enjeux de la littérature érotique en Suisse romande, dans le cadre d’une journée d’étude à la Grange de Dorigny. Conférences, table ronde et lectures illustreront les spécificités du circuit de production et de diffusion de ce domaine singulier.

Jeudi 16 avril 2015. Entrée gratuite
Programme détaillé à partir du 2 mars 2015 sur les sites internet du mudac et de l’Unil
CATALOGUE

The ambition of Nirvana is to examine the aesthetics of eroticism and to map its influence on design, fashion and contemporary art, avoiding the clichéd responses that it frequently attracts. Bringing together this corpus of work has enabled us to identify eloquent pieces that bear witness to the astonishing creativity of their designers. Whether disturbing or seductive, the clothing, jewellery, accessories and furniture displayed and studied in the various sections of the book reveal the richness of the forms referenced and the erudition of those who have conceived them.

It was therefore important to us that the catalogue produced to accompany this major exhibition at the mudac should be not just a glossy coffee-table book, but also a serious work of research. The works of more than 100 international artists and designers are reproduced and studied through the prism of analyses by design specialists, art historians, sociologists and fashion historians, who highlight the way they transcend categorisation.

Authors of the catalogue:
Texts by Marco Costantini (curator, art historian, Lausanne), Susanna Kumschick (ethnologue, vice-directrice/conservatrice, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthour), Denyse Beaulieu (journalist, Paris), Joel Vacheron (sociologist, London), and Luca Marchetti (semiologist, Geneva/Paris)
Interviews with Betony Vernon, Mark Woods and Nika Zupanc.
CREATORS LIST

Abdi Abdelkader, DZ
Milena Altini, IT
Nobuyoshi Araki, JP
Bina Baitel, FR
David Baskin, USA
Yves Behar, CH
François Berthoud, CH
Barbara Bloom, USA
Antoine Boudin, FR
Pierre Charpin, FR
Petros Chrisostomou, UK
Matteo Cibic, IT
Matali Crasset, FR
Charlie Davidson, SE
Marc Dibeh, LB
Patrycja Domanska, PL
Éditions de Parfums Frédéric Malle, FR
Anika Engelbrecht, DE
Matthew Epler, USA
État Libre d’Orange, FR
Naomi Filmer, UK
Sylvie Fleury, CH
Björn Franke, DE
Rachel Freire, UK
Marie Garnier, FR
Christian Ghion, FR
Givenchy, FR
Heeley, FR
Roberto Greco, IT
Julian Hakes, UK
Zaha Hadid, UK-IRQ
Sophie Hanagarth, CH
Jaime Hayon, SP
Dejana Kabiljo, HR
Cary Kwok, HK
Masaya Kushino, JP
Ugo La Pietra, IT
Jacques Le Corre, FR
Lubin, FR
Charlie le Mindu, FR
Gianmarco Lorenzi, IT
Sarah Lucas, UK
Maison Martin Margiela, FR
Maitre Parfumeur et Gantier, FR
Luc Mattenberger, CH
Gabriel Moginot, FR
Eelko Moorer, NL
Nasomatto, NL
Mark Newson, AU
Magdalene Odundo, KEN
Erwin Olaf, NL
Oriza L. Legrand, FR
Parfum d’Empire, FR
Parfumerie Générale, FR
Kate Peters, UK
Karim Rashid, EG
Mustafa Sabbagh, IT
Olivier Schawalder, CH
Markus Schinwald, AT
Ettore Sottsass, IT
Studio Job, BE & NL
Jean-Baptiste Sibertin Blanc, FR
Caro Suerkemper, DE
Gianluca Tamburini, IT
Noritaka Tatehana, JP
Mario Testino, IT
Matteo Thun, IT
Morgane Tschiemer, FR
Walter Van Beirendonck, BE
Atelier Van Lieshout, BE
Lucas Van Vugt, NL
Nick Veasey, UK
Olivier Védrine, FR
Jean-Luc Verna, FR
Betony Vernon, USA
Vero Profumo, CH
Rein Vollenga, NL
Mark Woods, UK
Jeff Zimmermann, USA
Nika Zupanc, SI
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Public opening  Tuesday 28 October 2014 from 18.00

Dates & hours  29 October 2014 - 26 April 2015
Tuesday-Sunday 11.00-18.00
Open on every bank holidays, Mondays included
Holiday season:
24 and 31.12.2014: 11.00-16.00
25.12.2014 and 01.01.2015: closed

Venue  mudac - musée de design et d'arts appliqués contemporains
Place de la Cathédrale 6
CH-1005 Lausanne
t +41 21 315 25 30 / f +41 315 25 39
www.mudac.ch / info@mudac.ch

Media contact  Danaé Panchaud, public relations
t +41 21 315 25 27, danae.panchaud@lausanne.ch

Visuals  High-resolution visuals available at www.mudac.ch/presse
Login: presse2014/images 2014

Jacques Le Corre, Escarpins épines laquées, 2002, python, wood
VISUELS

The high-resolution visuals are available at www.mudac.ch/presse with the login presse2014 / images2014

Mark Woods, *And in Her Reflection, She saw The Thing That She would become*, 2013, silver-plated rhodium, wood, leather, plastic, wax, fake nails
Dimensions: 23 x 20 x 16 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *War Heart Fetish (Hung out to Dry)*, 2014, leather, white metal, plastic, wax
Dimensions: 26.5 x 9.5 x 6.5 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *Blonde Bombshell*, 2014, silver-plated rhodium, phenolic resin, hair
Dimensions: 68 x 27 x 6.5 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *To be aroused in Hell, would Only Mean Torment*, 2013, leather, oxidised silver, plastic
Dimensions: 33 x 8 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *And in Her Reflection, She saw The Thing That She would become*, 2013, silver-plated rhodium, wood, leather, plastic, wax, fake nails
Dimensions: 23 x 20 x 16 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *Flesh Gordon*, 1999, silver, gold, synthetic rubies
Dimensions: 7 x 5 x 3 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *Brownie Box Fetish*, 2014, leather, white metal, hair
Dimensions: 68 x 27 x 6.5 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Mark Woods, *The Word made Flesh*, 2013, silver-plated rhodium, phenolic resin, lace, suede
Dimensions: 17 x 5 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Dimensions: 18 x 13 x 13 cm
Image © Paul Tucker

Atelier Van Lieshout, *Body Sofa*, 2009, fibreglass, textile
Dimensions: 117 x 325 x 220 cm
Image © David Brook

Studio Job, *Tit lamp*, 2010, glass
Dimensions: Ø 30,5 cm, L 26,3 cm, H 30 cm
© Studio Job

Nika Zupanc, *Till death do us part (Black Cherry Lamps)*, 2009-2011, blown glass, metal
Dimensions: 82 x 36 x 85 cm
Image © Dragan Arrigler

Nika Zupanc, *Till death do us part (Homework Cabinet)*, 2009–2011
Dimensions: 61 x 74 x 250 cm
Image © Dragan Arrigler
Rachel Freire, *Immodesty Jump-suit*, FW 2010 collection, lycra and synthetic textile
Image © Diego Indraccolo

Mustafa Sabbagh, *Just in Black*, 2014, Photograph (lambda print)
Dimensions: 100 x 90 cm
Image © Mustafa Sabbagh

Rein Vollenga, *Untitled (Wings)*, 2013, epoxy resin
Dimensions: 50 x 63 x 27 cm
Image © Jonas Lindström

Abdi Abdelkader, *Eureka*, 2007, DACRYL ®
Dimensions: 23 x 4.5 Ø cm
Image © Christian Ghion

Betony Vernon, *Minerva (pièce unique)*, 2006, silver
Dimensions: 20 x 25 x 20 cm
Image © Ale Mosso

Betony Vernon, *Lovelock Collier*, 2003, silver
Dimensions: 34 x 4 cm
Image © Lara Giliberto

Dimensions: 25 x 9 x 16 cm
Image © Michael James O'Brien

Betony Vernon, *The Origin Chair 1/8*, 2012, marble
Dimensions: 56 x 105 x 112 cm
Image © Ale Mosso

Bina Baitel, *Saddle Swing*, 2013, leather, metal
Dimensions: 250 x 70 x 44 cm
Image © F. Kleinefenn

Petros Chrisostomou, *Big Wig 5*, 2006, photograph
Dimensions: 150 x 120 cm
© Petros Chrisostomou

Dimensions: 40 x 19 x 8 cm
Image © Roberto Greco

Dimensions: 40 x 12 cm, 22 x 18 cm, 30 x 5 cm, 20 x 20 cm, 11 x 7 cm, 7 x 7 cm, 4.5 x 42 cm
Image © Paul Scala
Maison Martin Margiela, *Epaulettes en perruque*, SS 2009 collection, acrylic, synthetic textile
Dimensions: 75 x 25 cm
Image © Maison Martin Margiela

Milen Altni, *Sans titre*, 2013
Leather, iron
Dimensions: 360 x 400 x 500 cm
Image © Mustafa Sabbagh

Cary Kwok, *Desire - British (1940s)*, 2009, acrylic, ink and gold leaf on paper
Dimensions: 42 x 29.7 cm
© Cary Kwok