

Press release
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'MODA: Moroccan Fashion Statements' opens 3 October in Centraal Museum Utrecht

From 3 October, DAR Cultural Agency and Centraal Museum Utrecht present the exhibition *MODA: Moroccan Fashion Statements*. The exhibition showcases the versatility of contemporary makers from Morocco and the Moroccan diaspora in the Netherlands. The exhibition comprises about one hundred objects, curated across seven themes ranging from cosmopolitan to monumental. Together they tell transhistorical, intercultural and personal stories from the perspective of fashion. The exhibition will run in Centraal Museum Utrecht until 2 March 2025.



Fashion statements

MODA is the common word in Moroccan to refer to fashion. The exhibition centres on the makers and presents the artistic work and personal stories of cutting-edge designers and artists: the game changers that led the way for several generations of makers, enthusiasts and consumers, far beyond the national borders.

The versatility of the exhibition and the Moroccan fashion world is demonstrated through various themes. 'Monumental' presents the striking designs by for instance Sara Chraibi, Daily Paper, New Tangier and MAISON ARTC, while in 'Cosmopolitan', the rural and urban worlds merge, as observed through the eyes of multidisciplinary artists. Here, videos, photographs and textile art reveal the stories of groundbreaking creative makers such as Joseph Ouechen and Meryem Slimani. The theme of 'Amazigh Hair Heritage' is the result of a unique collaboration with the world-famous hair stylist Ilham Mestour.

'Friendship' focuses on the iconic Tamy Tazi and her friendship with Yves Saint Laurent. In the 1960s and 70s, Tazi was part of the avant-garde of Moroccan fashion with her innovative application of embroidery. Specifically for this exhibition, Hassan Hajjaj created an Intermezzo: a lounge space for personal encounter, inspired by his new space JAJJAH in Marrakesh. In this intermezzo space visitors can find a selection of books curated by Yasmina Naji of Kulte Editions: Morocco's only independent publisher of art books. In 'Artists & Artisans', the focus is on the manufacturing process, with designs by Fadila el Gadi and others, and new work by both Mina

Abouzahra and Said Mahrouf.

Zineb Seghrouchni, founder of art platform DAR Cultural Agency and co-curator of *MODA*: 'Moroccanness fascinates me: it is elusive, continually developing, and rooted in a rich heritage. *MODA* is a manifestation of *Moroccanness*, created by and for those who embody it.'

Ninke Bloemberg, curator of fashion at Centraal Museum: 'With *MODA* we want to convey the energy of contemporary makers that have a relationship with Morocco. Beyond the stereotypes, from high fashion to streetwear and from hyperlocal to international, *MODA* is full of zest.'

From hyperlocal to international

MODA presents stories from the Moroccan diaspora in the Netherlands as well as of creative makers in Morocco. The exhibition shows that these groups are not worlds apart, but that they mutually inspire and influence each other. *MODA* captures the many layers and complexity of Moroccan cultures, through the different art forms and perspectives, and the statements and questions posed by the makers.

Designers - provisional line-up

MODA features work by makers including Mina Abouzahra, Nouredine Amir, Yto Barrada, Said Belhadj, Laila Hida, Meriem Belkhat, Mohamed Benchellal, Meriem Bennani, Samira Charroud, Sara Chraïbi, Daily Paper, Hassan Hajjaj, Said Mahrouf, MAISON ARTC, Chaimae el Masmoudi, Karim Adduchi, Yousra Razine Mahrah, Stone Stories, YUSRA, Ilham Mestour, New Tangier, Joseph Ouechen, Tamy Tazi, Meriem Yin, Fadila el Gadi and DIOR.

Programme and publication

MODA consists of an exhibition, a linkage programme and a publication, all of which are co-productions by DAR Cultural Agency and Centraal Museum. The shape and content of the activities programme will be announced in time. The lavishly illustrated book is published by Wbooks and contains conversations with and (visual) essays and reflections by the participating designers.

Centraal Museum x DAR Cultural Agency

Centraal Museum and DAR Cultural Agency are joining forces for this remarkable exhibition. Zineb Seghrouchni: "The aim of DAR Cultural Agency is to stimulate meaningful collaborations between artists, museums, brands and communities. *MODA* is a manifestation of how these different worlds are connected. The stories that *MODA* presents demonstrate how art is part of everyday life: you literally wear it on your skin."

DAR Cultural Agency

DAR Cultural Agency was founded by Zineb Seghrouchni in 2022. The art platform aims to establish a new norm. This new norm already exists, in the fringes of society, neighborhoods and disciplines and emerges outside of the traditional institutions. DAR brings new streams and dreams to art through thoughtful curation and represents artistic talent in the field of art, design and architecture. Between 2017 and 2022, Seghrouchni created and led the first large-scale international design programme involving Morocco and the Netherlands.

Centraal Museum

Centraal Museum has a fashion collection comprising more than 10,000 items, ranging from 19th century corsets to contemporary designs by Duran Lantink and Iris van Herpen. The museum regularly organises prominent fashion exhibitions, such as the current *MODE * CHAPEAU* that presents hidden gems from private collections. Previous fashion exhibitions at the museum include *Voices of Fashion: Black Fashion, Beauty & Styles*, *Duran Lantink: Old Stock* and the solo exhibition by Jan Taminiau.