

Fashion Meets Freud in FIT's Daring New Exhibition Dress, Dreams & Desire

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Can what we wear reveal more than just taste? A daring new exhibition at **The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York**, suggests exactly that. Titled ***Dress, Dreams & Desire: Fashion and Psychoanalysis***, the showcase draws unexpected yet fascinating links between **Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis** and the world of fashion.

Curated by **Valerie Steele**, the exhibition gathers nearly 100 garments spanning decades and designers, framing clothes as reflections of **desire, fantasy, protection, and the unconscious mind**. "Despite all the problems with psychoanalysis, it provides clues to the power and allure of fashion," Steele noted during the preview.

Among the striking highlights is **Elsa Schiaparelli's 1938 Hall of Mirrors jacket**, with gold and silver trompe l'oeil panels, connected to psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's "*mirror stage*" theory. The narrative continues with **Jean Paul Gaultier's iconic cone-bra corset dress**—immortalised by Madonna—as well as daring designs that explore themes of fetish, identity, and sexuality.

Fashion's flirtation with Freud is not new. **Marc Jacobs** once debuted the cheeky *Freudian Slip dress*, while **John Galliano** explored fantasy and fetishism in Dior's *Freud or Fetish* collection. Even **Prada** toyed with psychoanalysis in Roman Polanski's Cannes short film *A Therapy*.

Visitors can also revisit unforgettable cultural moments, like **Jennifer Lopez's green Versace gown** from the 2000 Grammys—an enduring example of how the "naked dress" balances allure, taboo, and exposure.

From **Issey Miyake's red leather bustier** to **Rei Kawakubo's architectural silhouettes**, the exhibition's final rooms explore fashion as a *second skin*—protective yet exposing, sensual yet suffocating. As psychoanalyst Pascale Navarri remarks, "*Fashion exposes, simultaneously, our vulnerability about being seen and not being seen.*"

Running until **January 4, 2026**, *Dress, Dreams & Desire* challenges viewers to see clothing not just as fabric and form, but as a profound dialogue between psyche and style.

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