

Food, sexuality and domesticity: Anthea Hamilton reconsiders the familiar in Antwerp

Subversive and playful, Anthea Hamilton's first survey exhibition, 'Mash Up' has opened at the Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp



Anthea Hamilton, 'Mash Up' at the Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp. *Installation views by Kristien Daem*

British artist Anthea Hamilton brings a subversive edge to everyday motifs in her first major survey exhibition. 'Mash Up', produced with the support of Loewe and now open at the M HKA, Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, rethinks familiar pop culture references in a playful infusion of materials, lending a discomfiting aura to familiar tropes.

The new exhibition encompasses 70 works, both new and taken from throughout her two-decade-long career. They build on Hamilton's history of creating large-scale, immersive pieces which encourage a visceral reaction in the viewer, creating a utopian world in which gender roles, sexuality and domesticity cease to be stereotypical but instead become in flux, fluid.



Installation views by Kristien Daem

Hamilton is inspired by French dramatist Antonin Artaud's emphasis on creating a tangible understanding of images, emphasising the role of the body in both the works themselves and in the reactions they elicit from the viewer. In this, her largest exhibition to date, she continues to explore these themes through an amalgamation of sculpture, performance and installation, while inviting a deeper reading into her practice. By taking the body out of context, she invites a new consideration of representation and identity politics. The inclusion of unexpected materials and staging lends a slyly humorous edge to installations that trigger a jarring discombobulation.

Hamilton juxtaposes elements coaxed from fashion, architecture, food and design in the works, which include *The Squash* (Tate Britain, 2018), *The New Life* (Venice Biennale, 2019, and Secession gallery, 2018), and *Lichen! Libido! Chastity!* (Turner Prize, 2016 and SculptureCenter, 2015). Installations draw both on Hamilton's interdisciplinary approach and her preference for vast performance spaces for pieces that are defined by an anthropomorphic physicality.

These post-identity themes, first explored by Hamilton in 2014 upon her participation in the research exhibition 'Don't You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity Politics' at M HKA, are explored deeper in 'Mash Up' thanks to the collaborative nature of the project. Co-creators include artist Nicholas Byrne, architect and designer Gaetano Pesce, gardener and writer Roger Phillips, performer Carlos Maria Romero, photographer Lewis Ronald, as well as Loewe, and the brand's creative director, Jonathan Anderson. ✱



Anthea Hamilton, Kabuki Chef (detail), Installation view, Anthea Hamilton: Sorry I'm Late, Firstsite, 2012 © Anthea Hamilton. Courtesy the artist, Thomas Dane Gallery and Kaufmann Repetto. Photo: Andy Keate



Anthea Hamilton, in collaboration with Loewe, Giant Pumpkin No.3, 2022. Anthea Hamilton, in collaboration with Loewe, The Squash (Look 1), 2018, Courtesy of Jonathan Anderson



Anthea Hamilton, Wavy Thigh High Giallo Boot, 2016, private Collection Milan / Genoa / Rome. Anthea Hamilton, Wavy Concrete Boot , 2018 (exhibition copy 2022)



Anthea Hamilton, Leg Chair John Travolta, 2010 © Anthea Hamilton.
Courtesy the artist, Thomas Dane Gallery and Kaufmann Repetto

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