ALMINE RECH

Valentino Garavani - Ewa Juszkiewicz
AURA

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The Fondazione Valentino Garavani e Giancarlo Giammetti unveils 'AURA. Valentino Garavani – Ewa Juszkiewicz', its third exhibition at PM23, the Fondazione's cultural venue in Piazza Mignanelli, in the heart of Rome.

'AURA' evokes the threshold where the familiar remains recognisable, yet suddenly takes on a new form: a space between reality and imagination, where transformation generates a new way of seeing.

In Valentino Garavani's creative language, the female figure is central: colour, material, volume and movement enhance the silhouette, with the aim of heightening each woman's presence and allowing her own aura to shine through.

In Ewa Juszkiewicz's paintings, portraiture undergoes a process of metamorphosis. Drawing on the European tradition of female portraiture, she transforms her sitters' faces into configurations of hair, fabric, flowers and other organic forms, disrupting established conventions and opening the image to new interpretations.

Across both practices, familiar forms and historical motifs are transformed and reinterpreted, becoming part of new visual languages and establishing points of connection between fashion and painting. The exhibition brings together 38 dresses selected from the Maison Valentino archives and 26 paintings by Juszkiewicz.

Especially for 'AURA', Ewa Juszkiewicz has created a new painting, titled *A PORTRAIT in VALENTINO RED*, presented here for the first time, which takes as its point of departure a gown from Valentino's Autumn/Winter 2007–08 Haute Couture collection, in his signature red, and carries its sculptural force into the pictorial space.

An elaborate red textile formation incorporating a palm-leaf motif transforms the portrait, altering the figure's presence. Suggestive at once of a rose, a bow and organic growth, it responds to and expands the dress's visual vocabulary, introducing a tension between portraiture, materiality and ornament.

Valentino Garavani, widely regarded as one of the most influential couturiers in twentieth-century fashion, articulated a distinctive and enduring vision defined by an extraordinary sensitivity to colour, fabric, silhouette and ornament.

Polish artist Ewa Juszkiewicz has developed a highly individual visual language through a sustained engagement with the history of female portraiture. Her work challenges and reinterprets the codes through which femininity and beauty have been represented and constructed throughout art history.

Brought together for 'AURA', the work of Valentino Garavani and Ewa Juszkiewicz invites viewers to consider metamorphosis as a shift in perception — one that reframes established notions of beauty and allows for alternative readings.

“With 'AURA', we wanted to explore the ability of fashion and art to transform the way we look at beauty,” says Giancarlo Giammetti. “Through materials, colour, form and metamorphosis, Valentino’s creations and Ewa Juszkiewicz’s paintings invite us to move beyond what is familiar and discover new perspectives. This vision has always accompanied my journey with Valentino and continues to guide the work of our Foundation today: a belief in beauty as a force capable of generating culture, imagination and change.”

Ewa Juszkiewicz adds: “For the painting I created especially for this exhibition, I chose a gown in Valentino’s emblematic red, whose sculptural presence and visual power immediately captured my imagination. I am particularly drawn to Valentino’s vision of femininity, which moves between delicacy and strength, with the woman at its centre retaining a powerful, self-assured presence.”