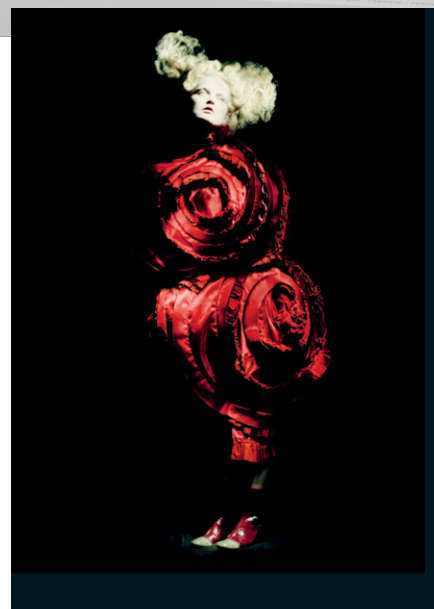


# Rei Kawakubo's vision of COMME DES GARÇONS

The first Monday in May, also known as the night of the **MET GALA**, has become synonymous with the most thrilling evening in fashion. As an (always lavish) fundraiser, **THE MET GALA** marks the opening of the *Costume Institute's annual fashion exhibit*. Aside from generally boasting the edgiest red carpet of the year, the Gala celebrates a designer who has truly shaped the industry, challenged us to re-think fashion, and has defined an aesthetic like no other. This year, the Gala honoured none other than **COMME DES GARÇONS** founder and designer, *Rei Kawakubo*. The *Tokyo-based designer* has been a consistent force in the fashion industry and is the *first living designer since Yves Saint Laurent in 1985 to have an entire exhibit dedicated to her work*. *By Megan West*



Rei Kawakubo established Comme des Garçons in Tokyo in 1973. Since its Paris fashion week debut in 1981, Comme des Garçons, under Kawakubo's direction, has been an unmistakable fixture in the industry. Kawakubo's work has never failed to redefine the ordinary and question the expected with an unconventional take on design. She's been able to create an aesthetic that boasts unbelievable levels of creativity, elevating her collections to that of artwork. While some may deem particular pieces outlandish, there's an otherworldly element to her work that can't be replicated. The Met exhibit is designed to showcase the ways in which Kawakubo's designs lead us to question conventional standards of fashion and beauty. For decades, her collections have continued to change the landscape of the industry merging fashion and art as one.

The exhibit, *Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between* features approximately 140 pieces from various Comme des Garçons collections dating back to the early 80s up until the

present. *Art of the In-Between* showcases the ways in which Kawakubo has relentlessly challenged the accepted standards of style, fashion, and beauty. Her use of mixed fabrications, architectural silhouettes, and juxtaposing aesthetics has never failed to push the industry in new directions. Evening wear aside, Kawakubo's talent for creating an unheard of aesthetic can be seen even in the simpler pieces, never failing to re-evaluate the norm and create the unexpected with what seems like the smallest of details.

**Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between** will be exhibited at the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** in New York City until September 4<sup>th</sup> 2017.