

Can Design Reveal the Essence of a Nation?

As part of Swedish Style New Zealand, an exhibition of wearable art entitled “Sweden in Ten Visions” will be shown at AUT’s Gallery 3 in 39 Symonds Street, Auckland City.

The exhibition runs from Saturday, October 18 until Friday, October 24, 2008. This is the first time this exhibition has been shown in the Southern Hemisphere.

Curator Ingrid Giertz-Mårtenson developed this exhibition for a major festival of Swedish culture in Rome in 2003. The intention was to balance the showcased objects rooted in the past, with a selection of forward-thinking garments from the present day.



“I identified nine phenomena, each one a unique concept that employs design and text to illustrate the elements that characterise life and values in Sweden today,” said Giertz-Mårtenson. “These are our *Nature* and our *Water*, our intense seasons with the long *Winter Darkness*, the longed-for *Summer Light* and the sparkling *Northern Lights*; our social model with elements of *Equality* and *Care* and our fascination with technology which results in both *Innovation* and *Function*.”

To translate these concepts, she worked with artist and avant-garde fashion designer Hjördis Agústs dóttir. “Hjördis crafts visions in fabric as one would render shapes on a canvas. Her canvas is the human body, and with the help of colours and fabrics, details and patterns she expresses strong emotions and creates powerful visual experiences.”

Giertz-Mårtenson and Agústs dóttir added another piece later, to express the very Swedish concept of *Lagom* which, roughly translated, means “just so.”

“Sweden in Ten Visions” is not a fashion show, nor is it an exhibition of clothes,” insists Giertz-Mårtenson. “Instead, it poses a series of open-ended questions to prompt discussion about how much of ourselves we express by using what we choose to frame our bodies with.”

An opportunity to interview the artists will be given during 2 hours before the official opening of the exhibition series on Monday 20 at 3-5pm or it can be arranged by email on beforehand.

For further details contact:

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This exhibition is a part of the Swedish Style New Zealand event initiated by the Embassy of Sweden. Other events of Swedish Style New Zealand include symposia on subjects that are highly relevant for both Sweden and New Zealand, Swedish cuisine, music, literature and films and the event hosts a number well-renowned guests from Sweden including the patron of the event, HRH Princess Birgitta of Sweden. For more information see the website www.swedishstyle.co.nz.