

The Wallace Collection - New Exhibition Announcement:

An Enquiring Mind: Manolo Blahnik at the Wallace Collection

10 June – 1 September 2019

Free entry

Partnership between Manolo Blahnik International Limited and the Wallace Collection

In June 2019, the Wallace Collection and Manolo Blahnik will present *An Enquiring Mind: Manolo Blahnik at the Wallace Collection*. The exhibition features a personally selected edit of shoe designs from Blahnik's private archives set amongst the masterpieces of the Wallace Collection. This exciting venture juxtaposes an icon from the world of contemporary fashion with Wallace's outstanding collection that has been an inspiration to artists since it opened to the public in 1900.

Co-curated by Wallace Collection Director, Dr Xavier Bray, and Manolo Blahnik himself, the partnership celebrates the renowned designer's long-held fascination with the Wallace Collection and provides an unprecedented exploration of his creative process. The exhibition places Blahnik's exquisite designs in the intimate context of the Wallace Collection alongside the paintings, sculpture and furniture that inspired his enquiring mind, leading to a dialogue between the old and the new, the art and the craft, the real and the fantasy.

Each room explores a particular theme associated with Blahnik's work, demonstrating his thirst for knowledge and the wide ranging influences upon his designs. Visitors are taken on a journey through Blahnik's imagination, spanning the theatre and spectacle of the Commedia dell'arte, the fashions inspired by Blahnik's native Spain, 18th-century Rococo style, his own personal interpretation of Englishness and much more. The full diversity of Blahnik's work is on display, from the candy-coloured shoes designed for Sofia Coppola's award-winning film, *Marie Antoinette*, seen here alongside Fragonard's *Swing* and Boucher's *Mme de Pompadour*, to his carefully worked, jewel-encrusted shoes which reflect the diamond-mounted gold boxes and delicately painted miniatures of the Wallace Collection's Boudoir Cabinet.

Both Blahnik's designs and the works of art with which they are interspersed reflect a commitment to the highest levels of artistry and craftsmanship. Just as the founders of the Wallace Collection sought to acquire the most beautiful, the most captivating and the most precious, Blahnik also seeks to produce shoes of refined quality and elegance. This is a rare opportunity to see excellence in contemporary design alongside the exceptional quality of the Wallace Collection's own art works.

Alongside the exhibition, a series of panel talks further explores the themes which permeate Manolo Blahnik's designs and the works contained within the Wallace Collection.

Dr Xavier Bray, Director of the Wallace Collection, says:

"This is an incredibly exciting opportunity to showcase the way in which the Wallace Collection has inspired one of the world's greatest fashion minds. It also enables our audiences to see the collection in a new light and make connections between the many artistic disciplines to be found in the museum."

Manolo Blahnik says:

“The Wallace Collection has been a point of reference for me since my early days in London. It was – and remains – one of my favourite museums with the most refined selection of art. I am incredibly humbled and honoured to be a part of the project and have my work displayed at the museum.”

ENDS

Notes to Editor

For further press information please contact Eleanor Nimmo on press@wallacecollection.org / 0207 563 9516

Membership

Members of the Wallace Collection enjoy free unlimited entry to all Wallace Collection exhibitions, as well as exclusive previews, private views and special events, plus discounts in the Wallace Collection Shop and Restaurant. For further information please visit:

www.wallacecollection.org/support-us/become-a-member/

Opening hours

Open daily 10am-5pm.

Social Media

Join the conversation here:

Instagram: [@wallacemuseum](https://www.instagram.com/wallacemuseum)

Facebook: [@wallacecollection](https://www.facebook.com/wallacecollection)

Twitter: [@WallaceMuseum](https://twitter.com/WallaceMuseum)

About the Wallace Collection

The Wallace Collection is one of the most significant collections of European fine and decorative arts in the world and the greatest bequest of art ever left to the British Nation. The collection encompasses old master oil paintings from the 14th to the late 19th-century including works by Titian, Velazquez, Rubens and Van Dyck, princely arms and armour, and one of the finest collections of French 18th-century art in all media.

www.wallacecollection.org

Also at the Wallace Collection in 2019:

Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads

6 March – 23 June 2019

Tickets on sale now: <https://www.wallacecollection.org/henry-moore/>

Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads is the first major exhibition to explore the great twentieth century British sculptor's fascination with armour. Ground-breaking new research reveals that Moore's long relationship with the Wallace Collection directly inspired the creation of his celebrated Helmet Head sculptures, which are shown here together for the very first time.

Presented in collaboration with the Henry Moore Foundation, the exhibition uncovers the previously unknown role of specific helmets and armour from the Wallace Collection in influencing Moore's ideas and creations. This is the first time that Moore's helmet-related works, comprising over sixty sketches, drawings, maquettes and full-sized sculptures in plaster, lead and bronze, have been comprehensively assembled, to be juxtaposed with the Renaissance armour that inspired it.

Organised with the Henry Moore Foundation

About Manolo Blahnik

With a career spanning almost 50 years, Manolo Blahnik is one of the world's most influential footwear designers. His shoes have spellbound an international set of adoring and loyal devotees across the globe. Blahnik is a craftsman. To this day he makes a trip to the factories in Milan every season for a few weeks to personally bring to life every collection. All the shoes he develops are based on his sketches which are translated into prototypes at the factories. The exquisitely shaped lasts and heels he creates for his shoes are still perfected with his very own hands.

Through the years Blahnik's achievements have been recognised by various bodies in many countries, most recently the Couture Council of America and as an Honorary Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) awarded by Her Majesty The Queen. He has also published numerous books, the latest being *The Art of Shoes* with Rizzoli in 2017. Most recently Mr Blahnik was awarded the Luxury Legend Award by the independent luxury body, Walpole.

Along with a leading women's line which includes evening and day bags, the brand also has a successful men's collection.

Manolo Blahnik has 318 points of sale in 35 countries worldwide with 18 standalone stores and a re-launched ecommerce platform - manoloblahnik.com.

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Image sheet



Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Les hasards heureux de l'escarpolette* (*The Swing*), France, c. 1767 - 1768
© The Wallace Collection.



ANTOINETTA, © Manolo Blahnik



Nicolas Lancret, *Mademoiselle de Camargo*, France, 1730, © The Wallace Collection.



Wardrobe, attr. André-Charles Boulle,
France, c. 1700, © Wallace Collection.



OLVIDA, © Manolo Blahnik



Manolo Blahnik. Image © Jason Hughes



Dr Xavier Bray, Director of the Wallace
Collection. Image: © Julian Calder