



MICHAELA STARK'S PANTY SHOW

in collaboration with Charlotte Rutherford

exhibition

Tuesday 20th – Sunday 25th February, 11.00 am – 7.30 pm

performance

Thursday 22th February, at 7 pm

With

Michaela Stark, artist

Yasmin El Yassini, model

Child + the Banned, musician

On the occasion of **Milan Fashion Week 2024** and for the first time in Italy, **Fondazione Sozzani** in via Tazzoli 3, presents **Michaela Stark's Panty Show**, with photographs by **Charlotte Rutherford**.

The exhibition features photographs, artworks and the debut of Michaela Stark's new collection, **Panty**, as well as a performance centered around her transgressive body morphing couture and artistic practice. The central theme is **living dolls**, exploring the idea of **womanhood**.

A three-part artistic expression of her personal experience, The **Panty Show** is a hyper feminine and playful exhibition, performance and presentation of her Panty collection. Michaela's process and practice is confessional and comes from her perspective that she shares with her generation. The Panty Show combines several aspects of her body of work. The show narrates the path she has taken from her early years experimenting with draping on her own body alone in her Paris apartment to how she gained liberation through fashion.

The conceptualization of Panty began as a heavily emotional journey. When her personal work and experimentation with reshaping her body began to get her noticed, this often led to appropriation of her body and her intimacy when collaborating with other artists.

Artists **Hans Bellmer** and **John Kacere** are the backdrop for the exhibition and performance at the "Panty Show". Two male artists who overtly took the female form and its autonomy projecting their own ideas onto it. Stark reverses these outdated attitudes by reclaiming her voice as a female artist and by being the protagonist in her work.

The set for the performance recreates her atelier, a dusty pink chaotic tableau vivant of ribbons and dried flowers. The audience and viewers are invited to join and share her experience. In the set, Michaela will dress her model, **Yasmin El Yassini**, who will act as her human doll. She dresses Yasmin in her body morphing corsetry, transforming her body completely, and then stage her almost lifeless body for photographs.

For her second collaboration with **Charlotte Rutherford**, Stark remarks the photographer's ability to see the fantasy in everyone who steps in front of her camera and capture their unique energy as well as to foster an environment where everyone can act with agency over their body's representation.

The final act of "The Panty show" showcases a series of lingerie esque garments. Stark created ten sculptured dolls made out of tulle, using couture corsetry techniques and crinoline to give structure.

Her note books documenting her process, will also be on display, giving insight to her practice.

Showing at the Fondazione Sozzani brings Stark back to Milan. The first city outside Australia she settled in during her early studies. The city that ultimately led her to leave Australia behind and settle in Europe to pursue her ambitions.

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Michaela Stark is an Australian “body-morphing” artist and couturier based in London. Her main practice is to create custom made, one-off lingerie pieces that are designed to sculpt and disfigure the body. Michaela often models and photographs her own pieces as part of her artistic practice. Her culture-expanding body of work has garnered her the undivided attention of the fashion and culture media such as i-D, Dazed, AnOther, Vogue US, Vogue UK, Vogue Italia, New York Times, Document Journal, Show studio and Arte TV. Additionally, Michaela often creative directs and collaborates with other visual artists and creatives. She has collaborated with Nick Knight, Solve Sundsbø, Jack Davison, Katie Grand, Paul Kooiker, Brigitte Niedermair, Lea Colombo, Charlie Chops, and Casper Sejersen, to name a few.

Michaela has created custom pieces for Beyoncé, Shy girl, Tove Lo, Sam Smith. Most recently she created couture pieces for the Victoria's Secret World Tour 23, that were exhibited during New York Fashion Week and featured in the film available on Amazon Prime.

For further information, please email:

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Charlotte Rutherford is a director, photographer, and creative director based in Los Angeles. Creating extraordinary portraits that invite play and imagination is the core of her identity as an artist. For Charlotte, there is an immense thrill in capturing fleeting glimpses of ever-changing individuals — and placing them within imaginative, fabricated scenarios.

For further information, please email:

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Panty by Michaela Stark is the designer's new RTW line, in collaboration with partner Raga Munecas, set to be released during fashion week AW24. PANTY aims to redefine the inclusive lingerie market by providing unapologetically feminine and inclusive pieces. It is lingerie designed for the female gaze, for women, and by women.

“The mission is to show what it means to be truly inclusive as this is the brand ethos throughout the entire design process, by sampling a wide range of sizes and creating diverse styles that are made to flatter different body types, including trans and plus sizes. Over time Panty will aim to become line that is trusted by women, where they know that no matter who they are, they can feel confident in coming to us for garments that fit beautifully and also reflect their femininity aesthetically.”

Fondazione Sozzani is a cultural institution established in Milan by Carla Sozzani in 2016 for the promotion of photography, culture, fashion and the arts. The Foundation has assumed the patronage of the Carla Sozzani Gallery and continues the important public function that the gallery has carried out since 1990. From 2021 Sara Sozzani Maino takes care of and coordinates the projects dedicated to education, responsibility and new generation creatives.

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