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Denver Art Museum Presents Fashion Designs of Carla Fernández in Spring 2022

Carla Fernández Casa de Moda: A Mexican Fashion Manifesto *highlights the artist's eponymous fashion house and its integration of Mexico's textile legacies into contemporary fashion*

Denver—Jan. 28, 2022—The Denver Art Museum (DAM) presents the first exhibition to fully explore the career of Mexican artist and fashion designer Carla Fernández, founder of the eponymous fashion brand in May 2002. The acclaimed Mexico City-based fashion brand, Carla Fernández, established in 2000, is a couture house that aims to bring new meaning to the luxury world as an agent of social and ethical change and innovation. *Carla Fernández Casa de Moda: A Mexican Fashion Manifesto* will premiere May 1 and will run through Oct. 16, 2022, in the Martin Building's Level 6 Textile Art and Fashion galleries. The exhibition will be included in general museum admission.

Taller Flora mobile laboratory—Carla Fernández's traveling studio—meets with communities throughout Mexico at the invitation of artisan cooperatives that create handmade textiles and crafts. Over time, Fernández has learned and witnessed how these master artisans draw upon oral history and transmission of techniques. She collaborates with the artisans in the creative and production processes, creating contemporary designs for the global market



Carla Fernández Casa de Moda explores how the design house links ancient and contemporary techniques. Mexican artist, architect, sculptor and activist Pedro Reyes designed the gallery for the exhibition using sculpture, architecture, video and photography.



"There are strong and clear connections between the past, present and future of the immensely rich and complex cultural heritage of Mexico," said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "Carla Fernández and her husband, artist Pedro Reyes, are both represented in the museum's permanent collection. We are proud to be able to support a collaboration between the two with Carla's fashion and Pedro's gallery design for this special exhibition."

"This is the first exhibition that fully presents Carla Fernandez's entire career trajectory, which emphasizes the collaboration between the fashion house and the master artisans," said Florence Müller, Avenir Foundation Curator of Textile Art and Fashion at the DAM. "The concepts and ideas proposed in Carla's designs and creations are contemporary and edgy, with warm and thoughtful touches. She works with ancient patterns which are based on the use of squares and rectangles to create contemporary designs demonstrating—as Fernández says—that tradition is not static."

Carla Fernández Casa de Moda is segmented into eight sections, based on key components of Carla Fernandez's career and the themes of her creativity and inspiration. Jane Burke, Curatorial Fellow, and Courtney Pierce, Curatorial Assistant, worked alongside Carla Fernández and her team to create and conceptualize the presentation alongside Cristina Rangel and Pedro Reyes.

The exhibition begins with "To be Original is to Go Back to the Origin," which introduces the unique vision of the Carla Fernández house, followed by "Fashion as a Collaborative Process," which maps out the communities that Fernández works with throughout Mexico, and highlights the artisans and their crafts through videos.

The third section, "Fashion is not Ephemeral," is about the geometric patterning followed by traditional Mexican garments. Carla Fernández and Pedro Reyes created lamps using traditional amate paper made by Arisbeth González and Zacarías Hernández to illustrate the beauty of these patterns. The fourth section, "Tradition is Not Static: Fiestas," features some Fernández garments and masks designed in collaboration with artist Leonardo Linares—among others—who is inspired by his grandfather, Pedro Linares, originally commissioned by Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera for many paper-mâché art pieces.



Next, “The Origin of Textile is the Earth” showcases both design and production techniques derived from plants, animals and minerals. Garments exhibited here include woven details achieved by use of a backstrap loom, a technique practiced by artisans for more than 3,000 years. This section illustrates the rich texture and colors which lend themselves to versatile styling, a signature of the house.

Next, in the section “Tradition is Not Static: Charrería,” the iconic Mexican horse riders and their culture—born out of Arab, Spanish and Mestizo influences on Mexican culture—are front and center.



The penultimate section, “Collectors,” features long-time collectors of Carla Fernández’s work and how they interpret her designs. The eighth and final section concentrates on protest and political activism, titled “Fashion as Resistance.” Here, Fernández’s garments were inspired by women’s and immigrants’ rights, reproductive rights and the anti-nuclear

movement. This exhibition shows how “another fashion system is possible,” according to Fernández.

Carla Fernández Casa de Moda: A Mexican Fashion Manifesto is organized by the Denver Art Museum. It is presented with generous support from Bridget and John Grier, donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS4.

Planning Your Visit

The most up-to-date information on planning a visit to the Denver Art Museum can be found online under the [Plan Your Visit](#) tab. Use this page to find details on ticket pricing, public transit options and access information. General admission for museum members is free every day. Youth aged 18 and under, regardless of residency, receive free general admission everyday thanks to the museum’s Free for Kids program. Free for Kids also underwrites free admission for school and youth group visits.

COVID-19 Protocols

The safety of visitors and staff remains a top priority, and the museum is continually updating its COVID-19 safety and security protocols based on advice from the CDC and federal and local guidelines. Current protocols can be found in the “Visit” section of the museum’s website:

denverartmuseum.org/visit

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its mission is to enrich lives by sparking creative thinking and expression. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.

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Image Credits

Image 1: Fashion designer Carla Fernández wearing the Coyolxahuqui Jumper from her *Nuestras Diosas Collection* (Spring–Summer 2020), made in collaboration with Emmanuel García Ramírez, Mexico City. Photo by and © of Ben Lamberty. Image courtesy Carla Fernández.

Image 2: Models wearing Kaan Poncho and Kaan Calado Jumper (*Marina Collection*, Spring–Summer 2022); Pistolas Dress (*Manifiesto Collection*, Fall–Winter 2021–22); and Tzompantli Pants (*Manifiesto Collection*, Fall–Winter 2021–22), all made in collaboration with Fidel Martínez, Chimalhuacán, State of Mexico. Photo by and © of Fabiola Zamora, courtesy of GH Management/Isela Fernández/Flor Huez/Federica Rigoletti. Image courtesy Carla Fernández.

Image 3: Headpieces made in collaboration with Mariana Palacios, Mexico City. Photo by and © of Sandra Blow, courtesy of GH Management/Bárbara Vergara/Rochel Weor; courtesy Queta Rojas/Carina Orellana. Image courtesy Carla Fernández.

Image 4: Model wearing Molinillos Vest and Pants (*Manifiesto Collection*, Fall–Winter 2021–22), made in collaboration with Juan Alonso, Santa María Rayón, State of Mexico. Shoes made by Baku Artesanal, Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca. Photo by and © Ricardo Ramos, courtesy GH Management/Naomi Smith. Image courtesy Carla Fernández.

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