



What is fashion?

in Marc Jacob's mind and the influence of Veerlands

"I have been thinking about Diana Vreeland a lot, or, not her particularly, but that kind of obsession and addiction to fashion and the pleasure and then pain that the addiction causes," says Marc Jacobs.

"Things shouldn't be easy or sloppy, I'd like to see women get dressed and polished and look perfect."

What is your inspiration?

"You know, I am an older person now, I'm going to be 52 in a couple of months, but I look at young fashion and it seems like it's all the same - the idea of what is edgy or cool. It's style with no substance; it doesn't really seem born of anything. I don't see the rebellion or edge in it. It just looks like a cliche: salad oil in the hair, Frankenstein shoes and the trappings of punk and all these other things. I just hope that somebody - like a younger person - will have that energy and power, or maybe there is nothing going on that has inspired that. But it doesn't seem like 'the street' or that idea of cool is new. That's why I became interested in someone who found an allure in the past, but was curious about the future. That's how I got into this whole Vreeland thing."

"I love how the reality of fashion is all about something for that moment and then the extremity of dismissal, I have often been criticised

for doing an about-face from one season to the next - as has my wonderfully inspiring lady designer whom I love so much, Miuccia Prada

- but that is what I love about fashion. I love that kind of dedication, devotion obsession with what looks so amazing that you have to have it now. And then saying next season, 'well I wouldn't be caught dead in it.' I love the obscenity and the perversity of that."

We always react to what we did the season before. Last season the clothes were all inspired by a military palette and a cartoon vision

of military decoration. This time I still wanted the precision, but more fastidious, sophisticated, severe."Some people saw,

in the intensity of this Parisian perfection, a touch of Schiaparelli (and that house's creative director job is currently up for grabs).

Marc Jacobs admits that he misses Paris, where he spent more than a decade and a half building up Louis Vuitton, not just as handbags -

but as a brand. At the same time he was developing his own namesake label and its less expensive offshoot,

Marc by Marc Jacobs. The workers at his studio, sitting at long tables and focused on almost haute couture-like details,

are a testament to his years away from New York. He shows me a kilt skirt that is actually made of 100 pieces intersected with tulle

and embroidered with crystal; and then knitwear that looks like traditional Argyle or Fair Isle, but is in fact embroidered, riveted with grommets and nailed.

Can you explain more about Diana Vreeland?

He explained about the Vreeland book Allure, and his fascination with its inclusion of everything from Russian ballerinas to newly discovered plastic surgery. With his slender figure and lively stance, Jacobs could be taken as

a decade younger than he is. But on one subject he will not budge. "I am so appalled by the whole social media thing," he says.

"I don't get it, it doesn't appeal to me, neither does a computer, or working on a laptop. I don't want to read a book on a device.

I like a book with a hard cover, and text on a piece of paper. I like magazines. I don't care if I carry around 100lbs of magazines,

I'd rather do that than look at them on the internet. I am just not of that generation. I get it the allure of it, but it just doesn't appeal to me."

About the collection

-----particularly a yellow flowery dress, which seems outside the Vreeland frame; and coats,

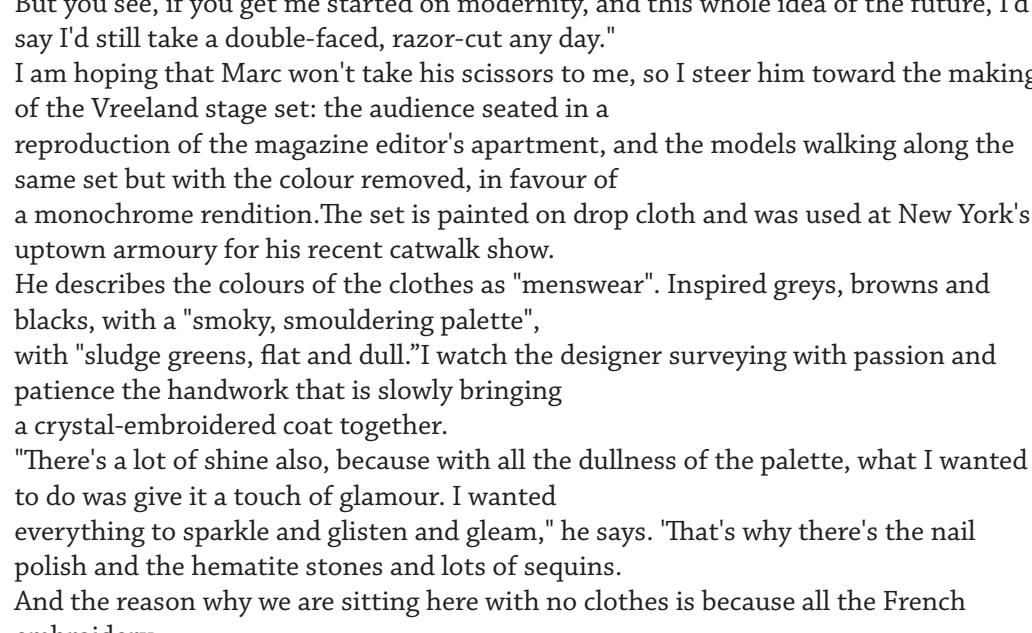
that turn out to be mink, but feather-light with no linings or facing.



Diana Veerland



Marc Jacob



"There is nothing modern about doing this," says the designer about another coat.

"This is razor-cut, double faced, which has been around since the Sixties. And I still think it is more modern than any laser cutting or gluing that falls apart at the dry cleaners.

But you see, if you get me started on modernity, and this whole idea of the future, I'd say I'd still take a double-faced, razor-cut any day."

I am hoping that Marc won't take his scissors to me, so I steer him toward the making of the Vreeland stage set: the audience seated in a reproduction of the magazine editor's apartment, and the models walking along the same set but with the colour removed, in favour of

a monochrome rendition. The set is painted on drop cloth and was used at New York's

uptown armoury for his recent catwalk show.

He describes the colours of the clothes as "menswear". Inspired greys, browns and blacks, with a "smoky, smouldering palette",

with "sludge greens, flat and dull." I watch the designer surveying with passion and patience the handwork that is slowly bringing a crystal-embroidered coat together.

"There's a lot of shine also, because with all the dullness of the palette, what I wanted to do was give it a touch of glamour. I wanted

everything to sparkle and glisten and gleam," he says. "That's why there's the nail polish and the hematite stones and lots of sequins.

And the reason why we are sitting here with no clothes is because all the French embroidery

houses are working around the clock."

The two Marcs

the one who is clearly passionate about his work, and the grumpy old man complaining about selfies, the celebrity circus (of which he and his friends, such as Sofia Coppola, are a part). It seems that Diana Vreeland, or her spirit, is the link.

"Well I've read and re-read the Vreeland Vogue memos book because it is hilarious," Marc says. "She literally calls her editors 'silly cows'

for having done something she told them to do the day before. That was so yesterday!

But I love the audacity of it. And it's not that she couldn't make up her mind. She was terribly decisive. It's just that she changed her mind a day later. She got tired of something she was