

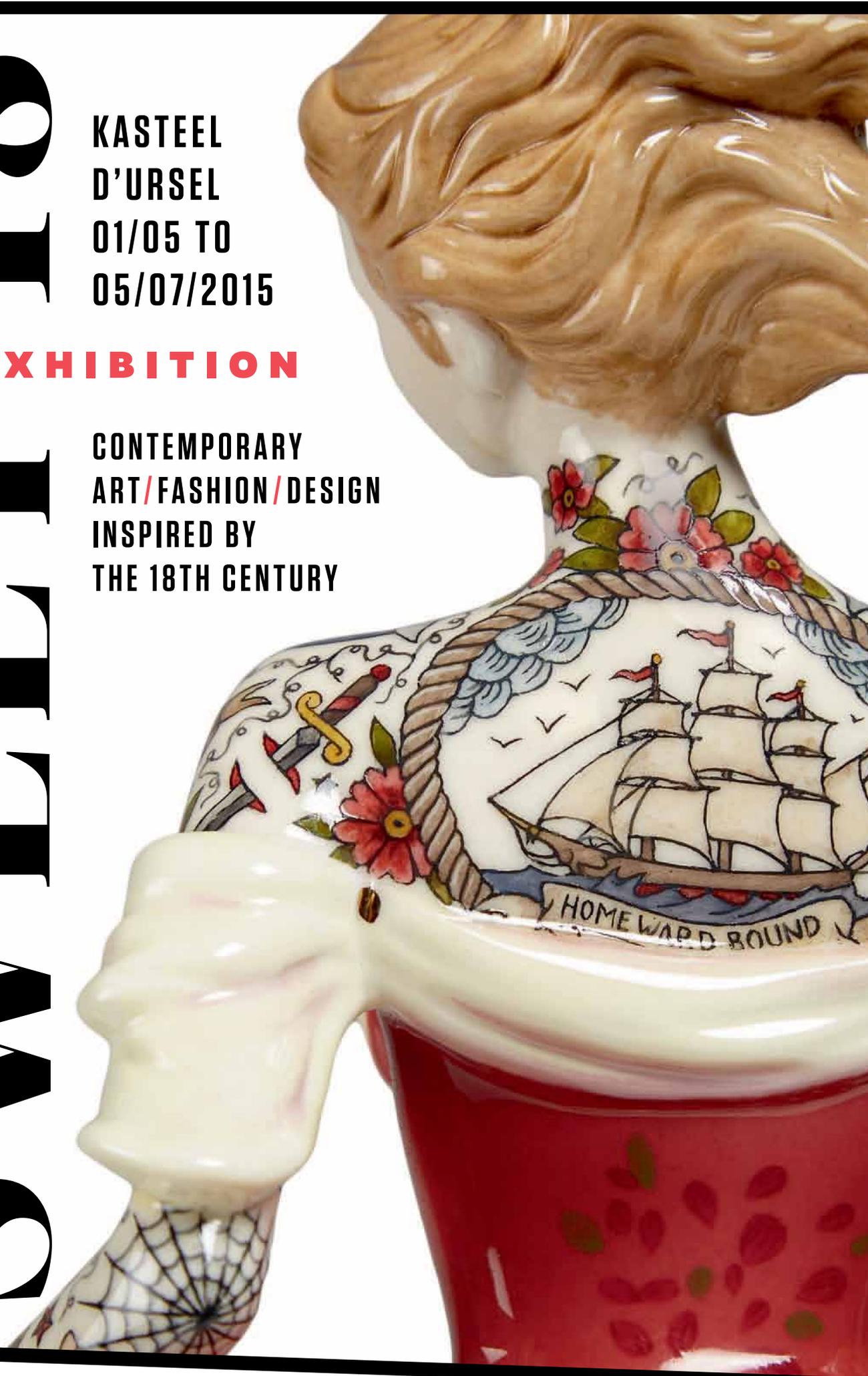
# SWEET

# 18

KASTEEL  
D'URSEL  
01/05 TO  
05/07/2015

**EXHIBITION**

CONTEMPORARY  
ART/FASHION/DESIGN  
INSPIRED BY  
THE 18TH CENTURY



Provincie  
Antwerpen

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# Exhibition

## SWEET 18

Contemporary Art, Fashion and Design inspired by the 18th Century

1|05 ▶ 5|07|2015

Next Spring the former summer residence of the aristocratic d'Ursel family will be the setting for an unusual exhibition. SWEET 18 will show you the 18th century through the eyes of fifty contemporary designers, artists and fashion designers: from Erwin Olaf and Wim Delvoye to Walter van Beirendonck and Philippe Starck.

We all have somewhere in our minds the same images of the 18th century. Wigs and hooped petticoats. Towering hairstyles and elegant furniture. Fine porcelain on lavishly decked tables. Sensual portraits and frivolous paintings. The 18th century was the time of the Enlightenment and of the flowering of the arts and sciences. But it also created a playful, artificial world for aristocrats wanting to escape reality and immerse themselves in fantasy. A charmed world of pleasure, abundance and voluptuousness, of pastel tints and curlicues, a world which inspires many an artist to this day. Spreading themselves over all three floors of the castle these artists will show you the 18th century as you have never seen it before.

SWEET 18 has been brought together by the following team of curators: Luisa Bernal (art), Dieter Van Den Storm (design), Wim Mertens (fashion) and Hélène Bremer (art).

### Ode to Marie Antoinette

Whether it be for her extravagant lifestyle, influential fashion sense or her tragic death, French Queen Marie-Antoinette still speaks to our imagination. Director **Sofia Coppola**'s film spearheaded the revival. **Charlotte De Cock**'s painting perfectly match the theme and for pop stars like **Madonna** and **Beyoncé** she is also a powerful icon. German illustrator **Olaf Hajek** gives his own take on her in the *Black Antoinette* series while top Dutch photographer **Erwin Olaf** offers up a gory portrait of the queen: beheaded.



Erwin Olaf, *Royal Blood*, Marie Antoinette

## Exuberant fashion

The extravagant wardrobe of Marie-Antoinette is the springboard for many a contemporary fashion designer: from the minimalism of Japanese **Yohji Yamamoto** and eccentricity of German **Bernhard Willhelm** to French fashion houses **Nina Ricci** and **Thierry Mugler**. English milliner **Stephen Jones** is inspired by her to create his evocative hats. The outsized dresses, tight corsets and tailored jackets of Belgian designers **Walter Van Beirendonck** and **Olivier Theyskens** also sample the 18th century.



Walter Van Beirendonck, Photo: Ronald Stoops

## Transparent plastic en burnt wood

Dutch designer **Hella Jongerius** immersed herself in the archives of the German porcelain manufactory Nymphenberg to come up with plates which combine hand-painted patterns and little sculptured animals, all done in 18th century style.



Hella Jongerius, *Animal Bowl with frog*

Designer **Maarten Baas** literally set fire to a number of antique chairs before reworking them in lacquer. His *Smoke Chair* has become a classic. Even more famous is French star designer **Philippe Starck's** *Ghost Chair*, which references a Louis XV chair in a pared-down, transparent design.

Spanish designer **Jaime Hayon's** lounge chair and an outlandish seat by British designer **Nina Saunders** also find a home in the exhibition. One absolute high point is *Lornement jamais* by Swiss designer **Philippe Cramer**, an outstanding piece of pine furniture executed in 18th century style and partially dipped in liquid gold.



Chris Antemann, *Ambrosia*

Courtesy, MEISSEN COUTURE® Art Collection & The Cynthia Corbett Gallery

## Deformed status symbols

The fine china of Meissen, Sèvres and Wedgwood remains to this day an inexhaustible source of inspiration. The sculptural groups of American artist **Chris Antemann** may look like replicas, but reveal themselves on closer inspection to be rather wicked tableaux, full of forbidden fruit.

British artists **Jessica Harrison** and **Claire Partington** make superficially sweet female figurines that are actually hideously mutilated, with their deformed heads and coloured tattoos.



Claire Partington, *Goldilocks*

With *War and Pieces* Dutch ceramicist **Bouke de Vries** offers a modern interpretation of the extravagant banquets that were thrown the night before a battle.

British artist **Amy Hughes**'s *Trésor découvert* suggests treasure that has been lying buried for centuries under that same battlefield; treasure that has lost its gleam but has a story of the past and its rediscovery to tell. Italian artist **Paolo Pollonato** sources antique moulds and decorates his best finds with architectural images of 21st century buildings.

## Fêtes galantes

In *Stavronikita Project* Austrian photographer **Andreas Franke** recreates 18th century festivities. By situating them in the unusual setting of a sunken ship he emphasises the beauty that underlies decadence and decline.



Andreas Franke, *Stavronikita Project*

The tableaux of Canadian artist **Ray Caesar** border on the surreal, while the work of English painter **Patrick Hughes** plays games with the laws of perspective.



Ray Caesar, *Day Trip*

## Pastoral scenes

Nothing is more typical of the 18th century domestic interior than 'toile de Jouy', cotton wall-coverings depicting scenes of rural life. American artist **Richard Saja** pimps its little cowherds into clowns or punks, while the French **Collectif Ensaders** transforms them into figures of fantasy and **Virginie Broquet** gives them an erotic spin.



Richard Saja

Scottish design studio **Timourous Beasties** substitutes its idyllic villages with views of the London skyline, while French artist Joël Ducorroy reduces it to its bare essentials.

## Lavish finery

British artist **Jo Taylor** translates the extravagant stucco ornament of the grand 18th century house into three-dimensional porcelain objects. Taking as her inspiration the bizarre wigs of the French court, English artist **Kathy Dalwood** turns casts of utilitarian objects into plaster portrait busts. Japanese artist **Kimiko Yoshida** does self-portraits based on iconic portrait busts. So she is Marie-Antoinette as a flaming red geisha girl and she is Louis XIV as a neon yellow man/woman cross.

American photographer **Cindy Sherman** designed a soup tureen with Madame de Pompadour as inspiration. And the controversial figure of King Gustav III of Sweden is the starting point for **Yinka Shonibare's** (UK/ Nigeria) film *Un ballo in Maschera*.



Cindy Sherman, *Madame de Pompadour née Poisson*



Kathy Dalwood

## Made in Belgium

Belgian artists easily hold their own amongst all these international heavyweights. **Isabelle Copet** lays a gigantic lace collar in the pool behind the castle. In the park **Michaël Aerts** places an inverted statue of Louis XIV on a pedestal made of flight cases and builds a seven metre high obelisk from the same black cases.

Two twisted sculptures by **Wim Delvoye** overlook the entrance hall. **Zaza** contributes a print. In the mirrored room **Bart Ramakers** has filmed a richly imaginative ballet on the theme of romantic love. Painter **Jan Devliegher** exhibits gigantic porcelain plates and **Nick Ervinck** has printed two stunningly designed vases in 3D.



Nick Ervinck, *Nabekiesav*

A design for a bedroom by architect **Koen Deprez** combines classic panelling and Fragonard paintings with Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

## More about Kasteel d'Ursel

For nearly four centuries Hingene Castle was the favourite summer residence of the aristocratic d'Ursel family. Every summer the Duke would travel with family and servants to his magnificent country house. Now it is the property of the Province of Antwerp, which is restoring it to its former glory.

The exhibition begins on the first floor and leads you through the noble family's former bedchambers. The service stairs bring you directly to the second floor where once the servants and the children of the family were accommodated. The circuit ends in the hall of mirrors and the reception rooms of the ground floor. The restored castle, with its characteristic Chinese interior decoration, is the perfect setting for this contemporary look at the 18th century. In 2014 Kasteel d'Ursel was the winner of the Flemish Monuments Prize.



### SWEET 18

Contemporary Art, Fashion and Design inspired by the 18th Century

Kasteel d'Ursel (Hingene, Belgium), 1 May - 5 July

The exhibition is open to individual visitors on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays, from 1pm to 6pm.

Group visits, with afternoon tea provided, take place on weekdays between 10am and 6pm

Castle entrance: 8 euros

For more information, reservations for group visits or for a programme tailored to your needs you can contact the Castle directly on [info@kasteeldursel.be](mailto:info@kasteeldursel.be) or 03 820 60 11