

PUNK: Chaos to Couture exhibit opening this week at the Met

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Designer Zandra Rhodes being interviewed during press preview for "Punk: Chaos to Couture" exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, 5/6/13.

Leslie Feffer

Low-end collides with high-end fashion when [PUNK: Chaos to Couture](#), the spring 2013 exhibition at The Costume Institute of the [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), opens to the public this Thursday, May 9.



Leslie Feffer

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The exhibit, which features approximately 100 pieces and runs through August 14, places original punk clothing side by side with some of the high-end fashion directly influenced by punk, such as the [black Versace dress held together by safety pins](#) that Elizabeth Hurley wore to a movie premiere in 1994.

During a press preview at the museum yesterday, Andrew Bolton, Curator in The Costume Institute, spoke about how the beginnings of punk – [CBGB](#) in New York and the [Seditionaries](#) boutique (owned by Malcolm McLaren and [Vivienne Westwood](#)) in London – came to influence high fashion and how they'll be represented. “In the exhibition, both of these venues will be faithfully recreated, with the intention of distinguishing between American and British punk,” Bolton said.

Four other multimedia galleries – each with videos (by photographer and the exhibit's creative consultant Nick Knight) and music blaring – in the exhibit focus on the Do-It-Yourself nature of punk alongside luxury couture: Hardware, Bricolage, Graffiti and Agitprop, and Destroy. Each gallery features high-low fashion juxtapositions, such as designs by Westwood and Zandra Rhodes next to those of Rodarte, Dolce & Gabbana, and Dior. “The ethos of Do-It-Yourself is punk's greatest legacy,” said the curator.

Bolton also talked about why he believes punk is still relevant. “Punk endures today because it reflects our longing for a time when originality and creativity were celebrated, a time when fashion was provocative and confrontational,” he said.

Speaking of provocative, one highlight of the show is the apparently exact re-creation of the bathroom in [CBGB](#) circa 1975.