KMAC COUTURE IS A WEARABLE ART RUNWAY SHOW PRESENTED ANNUALLY BY KMAC MUSEUM.

A SIGNATURE EVENT FOR THE MUSEUM, KMAC COUTURE PROVIDES FUNDING FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EXHIBITS.

THIS EVENT OFFERS A UNIQUE WAY TO EXPERIENCE THE INTERSECTION OF ART AND FASHION. KMAC COUTURE FEATURES AND SUPPORTS BOTH EMERGING AND ESTABLISHED ARTISTS, COSTUMERS, DESIGNERS, AND MILLINERS THROUGH THE EXTRAORDINARY PRESENTATION OF ORIGINAL COUTURE PIECES OF WEARABLE ART.

KMAC COUTURE 2023
Saturday, April 15, 2023
Pre-Show Cocktail Hour, 7:00p
KMAC Couture Runway Show, 8:30p
After-party immediately follows runway show

KMAC Museum is where Art is the Big idea and Craft is the Process. KMAC is a contemporary art museum in downtown Louisville on Museum Row. Through exhibitions, education, and outreach, KMAC works to connect people to art and creative practice.
KMAC is thrilled to embark on another year of KMAC Couture, the Museum’s annual fundraising event that celebrates the electrifying juxtaposition of fashion, art, design and performance. Over the past ten years, KMAC Couture has rapidly evolved from a small, but unique fundraising event, to one of the most exciting annual displays of innovative fashion in the state. Each year, artists challenge the boundaries that exist between costume, sculpture, ready-to-wear fashion and couture design and enchant audiences with garments that explore the full range of artistic expression.

As KMAC Couture turns the page on the story of its first decade and embarks a new chapter, the curatorial committee is calling on artists to find inspiration within the pages of a treasured book or piece of literature. Books are fundamental to our humanity. They communicate our shared experience of the human condition and exist as a record of how our civilization has evolved. The possibilities for creative inspiration are as endless as the number of books there are to reference as your source material.

Perhaps beloved characters from fictional novels or historical figures immortalized in famed biographies will inspire your look. Epic poems and oral histories from ancient societies are also suitable as a guide for your design.

The influence for your biggest fashion fantasy could also be drawn from comic book superheroes like Thor, Wonder Woman, or Black Panther, as well as the eccentric personalities in graphic novels from The Watchmen to Ghost World. From Southern Gothic surroundings to Jazz Age ambience, inspiration could come from any literary theme and from any time period that has captured your imagination.

After 10 years of incredible creativity, the curatorial committee will be looking for unique ideas that tell a story and elevate the narrative of KMAC Couture as an event that champions wearable art and spectacle. Stand out proposals will be those that activate the crowd, contain a performative element or transition in some way as they walk down the runway. We look forward to receiving proposals that successfully translate themes from the page to the runway and hope you will help us make KMAC Couture 2023 one for the books!

Joey Yates
Curatorial Director
GUIDELINES

Submission does not guarantee selection. Past participation in KMAC Couture does not guarantee selection for this year's event. All designs should be for an adult garment to be modeled by ages 14+

Artists may submit up to four designs. All artists must be 14 years of age or older. High school Students may submit multiple designs, but only one will be accepted.

Any accepted designer under the age of 18 will need to have signed parental permission in order to participate in the KMAC Couture process.

Submissions may be conceived by “teams” of two or three artists. Teams must choose a primary artist that will handle the submission. Communication on the acceptance status of the garment will be directed toward the primary artist. If selected for KMAC Couture, communication from KMAC Museum will be expanded to include the full team of Artists.

Artists selected for this year’s event who reside more than 100 miles outside of Louisville may not be required to attend all of the events leading up to KMAC Couture. If accepted, out-of-town artists will need to notify staff of their travel limitations and exchange information accordingly throughout the process. The KMAC Museum staff will keep the artists informed of all pertinent information.

Artists selected for this year’s event will be eligible to apply for an Artist Stipend to be awarded solely based on cost of material(s), and at the discretion of the KMAC Couture Committee and/or KMAC Museum.

Accepted entries will either be presented in runway format or fashion presentation/ exhibit format. More information can be found in the FAQ section of this packet.

Each design will need to withstand being taken on and off multiple times and be able to move safely through standard doorways. The widest portion of the garment should not exceed 4 feet across. There will be a height restriction as well that will be announced in January 2023.

KMAC accepts no responsibility for lost or damaged wearable art.

Artists are encouraged to recruit their own runway model(s) but it is preferred that the model have experience walking in a runway show. All models must be 14 years of age or older in order to participate in any aspect of the evening. All participating models under the age of 18 will need to have signed parental permission in order to participate in KMAC Couture.

The KMAC Couture team will provide models to artists that express need. Models will be selected by the KMAC Couture team by early February. KMAC will put the Artist in contact with the Model once one has been selected.

Artists are also responsible for developing all details of the finished look including hair, make-up and accessories. Hair and make-up stylists will be on hand during the event itself to assist those who express need after being accepted into KMAC Couture.

All accepted High School Student Artists and first time KMAC Couture Artists will be automatically admitted into the KMAC Couture Mentor Program. Each of these Artists will be paired with a Mentor (a fellow Artist or Arts Advocate) that will help advise the Artist through the construction process and offer guidance in order to achieve completion of the garment. The KMAC Couture Mentor Program is a series of three personal check-ins (in-person or virtual) where the Artist and Mentor discuss the challenges and successes of the garment construction.

Artists will be asked by KMAC Museum to provide work-in-progress photos at various times during the construction process to show the progress of the garment. As part of this process, KMAC Curatorial Committee members and the artist may discuss the process of construction, and guidance may be provided concerning technique, material and realization. Failure to provide photos and participate in this process could result in the garment being removed from KMAC Couture.

At any time during the design process the Selection Committee reserves the right to remove a design from the runway show with valid reasoning, and at the discretion of the KMAC Couture Committee and/or KMAC Museum.

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CRITERIA

Submissions are evaluated by the KMAC Couture Curatorial Committee.

The committee consists of KMAC Curatorial Staff, KMAC Board Members, and other art professionals.

Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- Design relevant to Curatorial Statement
- Creativity
- Originality
- Feasibility
- Durability
- Performative Aspects
- Innovation in use of technique and material
- Completeness of submission (see page 10 for full guidelines)
DESIGN SUBMISSIONS MUST INCLUDE:

– Artist Bio: A brief bio that tells us about you and your background and/or career in art/design.

– Resume/CV

– Sketch/Drawing of the design

– Description of technique to be used to achieve desired look

– List of materials to be used

– At least 1 paragraph relating the design to the curatorial statement

– Photos of previous work(s).

Provide 4 quality photos (front, back, side views and a detail shot showing a close-up on technique of previous work(s)). These images are used to verify you possess basic garment construction and artist experience.

Lack of completeness in submission will hinder design acceptance.

KMAC COUTURE DESIGN SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED STARTING SEPTEMBER 2, 2022.

Artists must submit all designs through the KMAC Museum website at KMACmuseum.org/KMAC-couture-submissions by midnight on Saturday, December 3, 2022.

TO SUBMIT
When and how will I find out about my submission acceptance?

We will notify you via email (at the email you provide with your submission) by the first week of January 2023. All Artists who submit will be notified of the acceptance status of their submission.

Are there any Artist discounts for KMAC Couture tickets for friends and/or family to attend KMAC Couture?

Yes, there will be a discount ticket code provided for each selected Couture 2023 artist. This discount code may be used by the artist's friends and/or family. The artist does not need to purchase a ticket for the event since artists are backstage during the runway show. Further details about available discounts will be announced in early January 2023.

If I apply for an Artist stipend, what amount of funding can I expect?

The Artist Stipend is solely based on the cost of materials and is awarded at the discretion of the KMAC Couture Committee. Funds for the stipends are made possible through sponsorships and donations. Accepted artists may apply for stipends in January 2023 (on the Artist Information Form), once the design is accepted into KMAC Couture 2023.

What is the Debbie Huddleston-Mitchell Young Artist Award?

The Debbie Huddleston-Mitchell Young Artist Award provides a one-time stipend to a 2023 artist that is either a high school senior or college student who is planning on or currently studying art at the college level. Student artists may apply for this award once selected for KMAC Couture. Details of the application process will be announced in January 2022.

If my design is selected for KMAC Couture 2022, may I model my own design during the event?

An artist may opt to model their own garment for KMAC Couture. That being said, we do encourage each Artist to consider choosing another person as their Model. This allows the Artist to experience garment construction and fitting for another person, an experience that can help the Artist grow in their craft. Using another person as a Model also frees up the Artist on the day of KMAC Couture to solely focus on the garment and various activities of the event. All Models must be 14 years of age or older. Models under the age of 18 must submit a signed parent/guardian consent form to KMAC Museum in order to participate in KMAC Couture.

I don’t want to model my own garment. How do I go about finding a model?

Selected artists in need of a model will indicate this on the Couture 2022 Artist Information Form that will be sent to artists along with their acceptance email early January 2022. KMAC Couture Committee and KMAC Museum Staff will hold a model call in February 2022 for all artists who indicate they require a model. Artists will be responsible for specifying requirements for their model, including measurements and other considerations. KMAC Museum strongly encourages artists to be as inclusive as possible in their model requirements so that individuals of all genders, sizes and abilities may apply.

What’s the difference between the runway show and pre-show cocktail presentation?

You may submit a design(s) to participate directly in the Runway Show and/or the Pre-Show Cocktail Presentation. All designs will be listed in the event program. The KMAC Couture Curatorial Committee designates whether the artist will present their design on the runway or during the cocktail hour.

The Pre-Show Cocktail Presentation displays the garment on a Model in an exhibition style. This opportunity allows a more intimate setting where Artists can speak more in depth about their work and process to KMAC Couture Guests. The Runway Show involves your design being displayed on a model in runway format.

What does it mean to consign my garment?

In addition to your acceptance to KMAC Couture you have the option to consign your design. If you choose to consign, the sale must be transacted through KMAC Museum and a portion of the proceeds will be split between the Artist and KMAC Museum. The Artist will be asked to set the sale price of the garment. The percentage split of the sale will be set by KMAC Museum and announced to the Artist before the Artist needs to commit to consigning the garment. The garment will be available for purchase after KMAC Couture 2022. Consigning your garment is voluntary.

I live outside the Louisville region, if my design is accepted into KMAC Couture, is there a way to get financial assistance for travel expenses?

Yes, if the Artist lives outside of the Louisville region, the Artist will have the opportunity to apply for a travel stipend to help defray the costs of travel for the day of KMAC Couture. Approval of the stipend and the amount awarded will be at the discretion of the KMAC Couture Committee and/or KMAC Museum. Please note, there are many mandatory dates leading up to the day of KMAC Couture that Artists are expected to attend. If the Artist lives outside of the Louisville region, that artist will not have to attend all events, but will need to notify and coordinate with KMAC staff accordingly.
Submissions Open Friday, September 2, 2022
Submissions Close Saturday, December 3, 2022 (midnight)

If design is selected for KMAC Couture 2023:

KMAC Couture 2023 Selected Artist Info Session
Monday, January 23, 2023 (time TBA)
KMAC Museum, 715 W Main St, Louisville

KMAC Couture 2023 Dress Rehearsal
Thursday, April 13, 2023 (time and location TBA)

KMAC Couture 2023 Show Day
Saturday, April 15, 2023 12p–10p
KMAC Museum, 715 W Main St, Louisville

KMAC Couture Information Sessions:
Tips for a Successful Submission
Monday Sep 12, 2022 5:30p–6:30p online via Zoom
Monday Oct 10, 2022 5:30p–6:30p KMAC Museum 715 W Main St, Louisville
Are you considering submitting a design for KMAC Couture 2023, but have questions about the submission process? These sessions will answer all of your questions
*Dates and times are subject to change. Please check KMACMuseum.org for most accurate dates and times.

KMAC Couture Critique Sessions
Tuesday, Nov 8, 2022 5:30p–6:30p KMAC Museum 715 W Main St, Louisville
Monday, Nov 14, 2022 5:30p–6:30p online via Zoom
If you are in the process of creating your submission for KMAC Couture but want some constructive criticism to see if you’re headed in the right direction, these sessions will provide additional guidance. Bring sketches, materials, and ideas pertaining to your design(s) to meet with KMAC Couture Mentors and Committee Members and receive feedback.

KMAC Couture Launch Party
Thursday, January 26, 2023 6:00p–8:00p KMAC Museum 715 W Main St, Louisville
Come celebrate the KMAC Couture 2022 Selected Artists and view the sketches of their designs. This is a great kick-off event to toast the Couture Artists as they begin garment construction.
All are welcome to bring friends and family as this event is open to the public.
FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO PARTICIPATE IN A SPONSORSHIP, PLEASE CONTACT:

Michelle Staggs, Museum Director
Michelle@KMACmuseum.org
502.589.0102

Kris Thompson, Development and Special Projects Manager
Kris@KMACmuseum.org
502.589.0102

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facebook.com/KMACcouture
instagram: @KMACcouture

SEE ALL PAST YEARS’ KMAC COUTURE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS ON OUR WEBSITE
KMACmuseum.org/couture

IMAGE CREDITS
(in order of appearance)

FRONT COVER
Artist: Isaac St. Thomas
Model: Sarah Belles-Simmons

PAGE 1-2
Artist: Sara Jane Coakley
Model: Madelynne Myers

PAGE 4
Artist: Alyson Thiel
Model: Alyson Thiel

PAGE 9-10
Artist: Fiyin Lasisi
Model: Joy Thompson & Brandi Hill

PAGE 13-14
Artist: Fiyin Lasisi
Model: Joy Thompson & Brandi Hill

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF CLAY COOK

MUSEUM HOURS
Wednesday - Sunday 10a-5p
Monday & Tuesday CLOSED
715 W Main St Louisville, Ky 40202
KMACmuseum.org 502.589.0102

KMAC IS ACCREDITED BY American Alliance of Museums

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