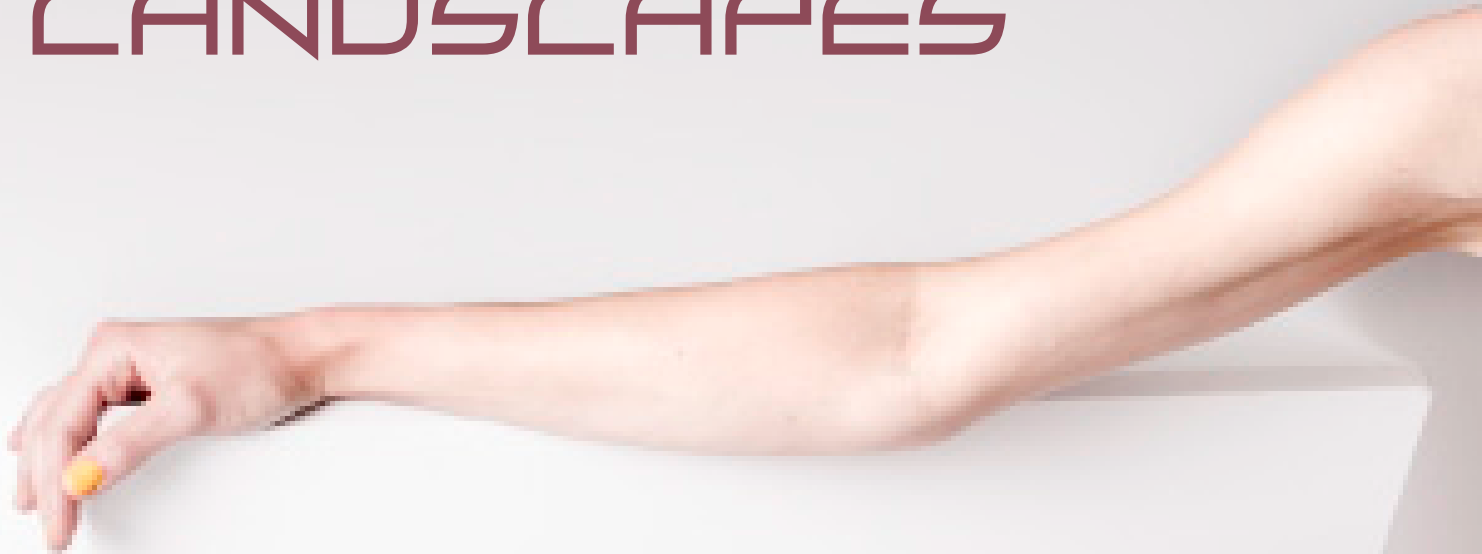


PAULINE
VAN
DONGEN
KINETIC
LANDSCAPES







The Benelux region has been an incubator of avant-garde fashion creating such sartorial luminaries as the Dutch duo Viktor & Rolf, 3D-printed fashion visionary Iris van Herpen, and the legendary “Antwerp Six,” which include Walter Van Beirendonck, Ann Demeulemeester, and Dries van Noten. Pauline van Dongen, an upcoming Dutch designer, has been building on the legacy of this creative dynamism to carve a place for an emerging generation of fashion designers exploring new approaches to materialities and technologies. A graduate of Fashion Institute Arnhem, Dongen has already presented a number of international collections, of which she gained notoriety with her 3D printed “Morphogenesis” shoe fabricated in collaboration with the Amsterdam 3D design studio Freedom of Creation in 2010. Dongen’s recent “Kinetic Landscapes S/S 2012” collection features an evocative array of design structures situated at the juncture of art, sculptural science, and body extension. Inspired by natural and abstract forms found at the sites of erosion of

landscapes and organic materials, Dongen’s goal was “to capture the strength of two powerful elements—air and water—and their impact on our surroundings.” This musing on the slow transformation of seemingly immutable matter over time is in marked contradistinction with fast-fashion’s consumer culture of corrosive material practices. A need for an awareness of the unsavory and dangerous consequences of fast consumption cycles and cheap material exploitation existent in popular clothing brand manufacturing is at the forefront of Dongen’s critique. Kate Fletcher, author of the recently published “Fashion & Sustainability: Design for Change,” muses how: “in spite of our best efforts, it is still unclear whether as a society (and a sector within that society) we [the textile and fashion industry] are moving towards greater ecological integrity, human empathy, interconnectedness with each other and the natural world...” Fletcher questions our fundamental choices as consumers and makers to suggest that a change of resource uses and worker efficiencies in the fashion industry is incumbent on a perception change shaped



over a “long time frame” solution. Given the fact that corrosive mainstream apparel production is likely a mainstay for some time to come, Dongen’s designs propose an aesthetic vision of future fashion focused on the slowing of time and the re-valuing of natural elements. Bringing together innovative design structures with a sustainability ethos, “Kinetic Landscapes” elicits the wearer and viewer to contemplate organic shapes hand-in-hand with bespoke production practices, suggesting a more gentle and slow-culture usage of resources. The garments further solicit a critical stance on practices relative to the environment, design, fashion and materiality by embracing the

transformative and destructive powers of natural forces (such as the carving of rock formations over time by water and wind) as opposed to those of humans. Hence, “Kinetic Landscape” places us at the centre of the ecological debate—the collection’s undulating organic shapes and structures transmuting into a highly wearable collection where fluid forms, abstract shapes, hug and tug at our mortal shell and conscience.

PAULINE VAN DONGEN.NL





*Photographed by Mike Nicolaassen
Model: Macha at Fresh Model Management
Hair styling: Tommy Hagen at House of Orange
Make-up: Vera Dierckx at House of Orange
Styling: April Jumelet
Jewelry: NAT art & Jewelry*