

BETONY VERNON



Nothing reveals the functionality of the objects Betony Vernon designs. Yet, her works are at the service of the body, exacerbated, loved. The tassel attached to her iconic Sado-Chic bracelet caresses the balls on her favorite Double Sphere ring massage. Betony Vernon is invested in the field of erotic and sensual doing. The development of her work is multidisciplinary, spanning sessions of practical teaching and curative sharing, the writing of her book “The Boudoir Bible” currently translated in 9 languages and the design of sublime objects — jewels, sculpture, furniture, objets d’art — as well as happenings. Through this wide fan of mediums, none of which abstract the human body, Betony Vernon signs an aesthetic of wellness, a sophisticated interaction to the other and above all, to oneself. — Michele Heuze

BIOGRAPHY

Daring, provocative and boundary-defying, Betony Vernon is an American-born designer, sexual anthropologist and author. Her aesthetic is formed by her explorations in spirituality, sex, sensuality and the erotic body realm. She holds degrees in Art History and metalsmithing from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Masters degree in Industrial Design from Domus Academy in Milan, Italy.

Betony's design work has been included in a number of international exhibitions, from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London to the Triennale Design Museum in Milan. She has also collaborated with several celebrated brands including Maison Valentino, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Missoni, Gianfranco Ferré, Swarovski, Pampaloni, Karl Lagerfeld, and Fornasetti. In 2002, her Paradise Found Fine Erotic Jewelry collection, composed today of over 400 jewels and jewel tools, became the interface for what she describes as her mission, to empower women and men to enjoy and share greater pleasure.

Vernon's designs are crafted in Italy using natural, durable materials such as gold, silver, marble leather and wood. *The Origin Chair*, a functional sculpture carved in statuary marble from Monte Altissima was unveiled in December 2012 at The Triennale Museum of Design and has since traveled to MUDAC, Museum of Design and Contemporary Art, Lausanne. In November 2015, the work was also exhibited in Vernon's carte blanche for the Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur. She also participated in the group exhibition *Federn* in the same museum in-between 2019 and 2020.

In 2017, Vernon unveiled the *Boudoir Box* for the first time to the general public as part of the *Medusa* exhibition at the City of Paris Museum of Modern Art. The transportable work was created in 1999 to present her erotic jewelry to collectors around the world.

Vernon's ultimate goal both as a sculptor and a designer is to create durable designs that defy the hands of time and intimately empower her collectors.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2023 *Modern Sex: 100 Years of Design and Decency*, Museum of Sex, Miami, USA

2023 *Artifact (xxx): Selections from Secret Collections*, Museum of Sex, New York, USA

2023 *Molinier Rose Saumon*, Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA, Bordeaux, France

2022 *Les Flammes – L'Âge de la Céramique*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France

2020 *Boudoir Box Event*, Saint Joseph's Arts Society, San Francisco, USA

2019 *Federn*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland

2017 *Medusa*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France

2016 *BODY*, Wroclaw, Poland

2015 *Strange Forms of Pleasure*, carte blanche, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland

2015 *Sado-Chic Jewelry* on Cara Delevigne wax sculpture, Grévin Musée, Paris, France

2014 *Nirvana, Strange Forms of Pleasure*, MUDAC Museum of Design and Contemporary Art, Lausanne, Switzerland

2013 *Soul-less Shoes*, GRASSI Museum of Applied Arts in Leipzig, Germany

2013 *KAMA Sex and Design*, carte blanche, Triennale Design Museum, Milan, Italy

2012 *Selling Sex*, SHOWStudio, London, UK

2011 *Limited/Unlimited*, Casanatense Library, Rome, Italy

2009 *The Fashion Body*, curated by Nick Knight, Somerset House, London, UK

2009 *Red Light Design*, Salone del Mobile, Milan, Italy

2008 *Sex in Design, Design in Sex*, Museum of Sex, New York, USA

2005 *Touch Me*, Victoria and Albert Museum, Contemporary Gallery, London, UK

2003 *Body Craze*, curated by Rankin, Selfridges, London, UK

2002 *Science of Love*, Permanent Collection, Fukui Prefecture Museum of Design, Japan

SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES

2021 *Women in Tech*, podcast with Bishi

2019 *I am Heretic – “Dismantling the pleasure taboo”*, podcast with Douglas Little

2018 *Viceland*, Luxury Sex episode with Karly Slutever

2017 *Fashion TV* interview with Vix Foster

2016 *Ovation TV* interview

2016 *Europe1*, Radio France with Frederic Taddei at Social Club talking sex, love, cinema and the new augmented edition of *La Bible du Boudoir*

2015 *Canal+ France* with Antoine de Caunes

2013 *Canal+ France Le Grand Journal*

2013 *Canal+ France* Thierry Ardisson, *Salut les Terriens*

2013 *Hunger TV* Interview with Rankin

2013 *Showstudio.com* Nick Knight - interview

2012 *Gucci-Fiat 500* Betony Vernon stars in *Polaroid Papillon*, a short advertisement/film by Olivier Zahm

2011 *Canal+ France Sex Wiz Antoine*, interview with Antoine De Caunes

2011 *Le Figaro*, art critic Valérie Duponchelle cites Betony Vernon as one of the most influential artists in Paris, *Le Paris du Boudoir*, March 23/2011

2011 Karl Lagerfeld Pirelli Calendar 2011

2011 *Canal+ France*, interview for Frédérique Barraja's documentary film on female pleasure

2011 *TV Globo Brazil*, interview for *Amor e Sexo*

2010 *Mutantes* interview for pro-sex feminist documentary film by Virginie Despentes

2010 *Vogue.it*, Focus on Betony Vernon, interview

2009 *En Attendant Minuit*, interview by 909 TV productions, France

2008 *El País*, Interview for documentary film series, Contemporary Sex Workers

2008 *MTV Italy*, writes and hosts *Le Boudoir*, didactic programming

2008 *Sex TV*, interview for Canadian public broadcasting

2006 *Pink TV*, France, Interview with Mathieu Lecerf

2005 *Paris Dernier television*, interview with Frédéric Taddeï

2004 *The Banquet* on-line event with Nick Knight, SHOWstudio London

SELECTED BOOK FEATURES

2021 *How To Be A TasteMaker* by Semaine, Gestalten éditions, Paris

2021 *Still Here: Moments in Isolation*, edited by Elizabeth Edelman, Matthias Kliefoth, Mafalda Millies, Roya Sachs, Distanz, Berlin

2018 *The Sex Issue* by The Editors of GOOP, foreword by Gwyneth Paltrow, Grand Central Life & Style, New York

2017 *Medusa: Jewellery & Taboos*, Musée D'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris: Paris Musées, Paris

2016 *Kris Dewitte: Night Mood – Soft Irruptions in a Private Place* by Kris Dewitte & Galerie Jan Dhaese, Gent

2016 *Sex in the Museum: My Unlikely Career at New York's Most Provocative Museum* by Sarah Forbes, St. Martin's Press, New York

2016 *A Night on the Town in Paris*, SNEL-Grafics, Belgium

2016 *Katerina Jebb Musée Réattu*, éditions Skira, Paris

2015 *Your Beauty Mark: The Ultimate Guide to Eccentric Glamour* by Dita Von Teese and Rose Apodaca, Dey St./William Morrow Publishers, New York

2014 *Nirvana. Les étranges formes du plaisir*, MUDAC Museum, INFOLIO éditions, Switzerland

2013 *Rock Star Chic: The Dark Side of High Fashion* by Patrice Faramah, Faramah Media, The Curated Collection, New York

2013 *Fetishism in Fashion* by Lidewij EdelKoort, FRAME

2012 *KAMA. Sesso e Design*, edited by Silvana Annicchiarico & Triennale di Milano, Triennale Design Museum, Corraini Edizioni

2011 *High Heels: Fashion, Femininity & Seduction* by Valerie Steele, Thames & Hudson

2011 *DESIGN BEHIND DESIRE: The Sensuous Textures of Wanting* by Lisa Z. Morgan, Faramah Media, The Curated Collection, New York

2011 *Francesco Clemente – The Tarots*, Hirmerverlag, Germany

2008 *Style File: The World's Most Elegantly Dressed* by Iké Udé, Collins Design, UK

2006 *Bordello*, Edel Classics GmbH, Hamburg / Germany

2006 *Dizionario del gioiello italiano del XIX e XX Secolo* by Lia Lenti and M. Cristina Bergesio, Umberto Allemandi & C., Turin

1998 *Dictionnaire International du Bijou* by Marguerite de Cerval, Éditions du Regard, Paris

1995 *Anni' 90. Arte a Milano*, edited by Rolando Bellini, Abitare Segesta – AIM (Associazione Interessi Metropolitani), Milano