

16Arlington Autumn Winter 2024: I'm Not Sorry, It's Human Nature

17th February 2024, London

“Monsters cause trouble, they disturb definition, they discombobulate what we think we mean. (...) I'm through with thinking of the monster as a wholly negative role.” – Charlie Fox, *This Young Monster*

What makes a monster? Is it their physical freakishness? Is it their bloodlust? Or is it their status as something other than human, something abject, unnatural? Is a monster born, or are they made? Whether witches burned at the stake or the creatures that stalk video nasties, monsters haunt our cultural imagination. In them, we find scapegoats, displacing our fears around sex, death, change, and all manner of anxieties onto the outcast, the freak, the other. They are an easy target, a way to avoid an uncomfortable truth. What if the real monsters lie within ourselves?

For 16Arlington's Autumn Winter 2024 collection, Creative Director Marco Capaldo draws inspiration from writer and curator Charlie Fox's exhibition *My Head is a Haunted House*, presented at Sadie Coles HQ in 2019. The show was a house of horrors walkthrough of the darkened corridors of Fox's brain: Alex Da Corte's video mediation of a lonely Frankenstein; the famous floor of *Twin Peaks*' Black Lodge; Winona Ryder as Lydia Deetz in *Beetlejuice*, as captured by Sam McKinniss's vivid brushstrokes.

“Meeting Charlie and Sadie and hearing about their work together, I fell in love with the beauty of the monstrous,” Capaldo said. “Sometimes darkness has more depth than light.”

For Autumn Winter 2024, the hallowed space of the art gallery is transformed into a show venue as the Barbican's Curve is used for the first time in a runway context. Models appear in a beam of light through the shadows, dressed in black gowns and slippery optical illusion organza, skin-like croc and ostrich leather. There is a tension between the refined and untamed – the elegance of twill tailoring and fine rib knits, contrasted with the wildness of animalistic touches, with Lynchian chevron patterns forming panels in outerwear. Shoes, a collaboration with Gina, are rendered in patent leather and shearling, their silhouettes intentionally awkward, while boots are swathed in perverse stretch leather with uncanny hints of fleeting feet. The collection's closing looks – a procession of silver – recall the shimmer of moonlit bathers.

For all the darkness, this isn't a musing on gothic costume. “It's not about Halloween – it's about human nature,” says Capaldo. “Hence the title of the show, borrowed, of course, from Madonna. Those who go against conventions are often ostracised, but there's so much strength and power and beauty in rejecting norms. These are the people I design for.”

16Arlington: the London-based Italian luxury house bringing a hedonistic spirit to the modern woman's day-to-day wardrobe. At the brand's heart is a captivating tension between the subversive and the sensual, the precise and the provocative. It is a celebration of femininity, culture, power and self-expression – values reflected in its community of future thinkers and creatives.

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Art Direction: Emmanuel O'Brien at Bene Studio

Styling: Julia Sarr-Jamois

Casting: Shelley Durkan Casting

Hair: Sam McKnight at Premier Hair and Makeup

Make-up: Lauren Parsons at Art Partner, using Code8

Nails: Sylvie Macmillan at Management Artists

Composer: Felicita

Music Direction: Alex Putman at untitled (recs)

Text: Emma Hope Allwood

Production: Studio Boum

Communications: A.I.

Special thanks to:

Gina

Charlie Fox

Sadie Coles HQ

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