

# GRAY M.C.A

FASHION ILLUSTRATION

DESIGN

MODERN TEXTILES

## **The Italian & The Milliner**

**SCHAPARELLI**

**CHANEL**

**Sculpture in Bronze by Robyn Neild**

GRAY M.C.A PRESENTS A NEW EXHIBITION OF BRONZE SCULPTURE BY ROBYN NEILD

**6 – 10 December 2023**

Cromwell Place . London . SW7 2JE



(Chanel & Schiaparelli in Bronze by Robyn Neild)

**December 2023, LONDON** - Gray M.C.A hosts the latest work from the talented and award-winning sculptor Robyn Neild at Cromwell Place in an exciting exhibition that celebrates the dominance of two iconic designers Elsa Schiaparelli and Coco Chanel from their early rivalry to their legacy today. 40 unique bronzes of celebrated designs from 1926 to the present day will be exhibited within the installation.

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The designers Coco Chanel and Elsa Schiaparelli would liberate women's fashion with their uniquely provocative and innovative creations. While Chanel's designs would free the female form from corsetry, Schiaparelli's bold surrealism would express women's previously repressed intellectualism and wit - both pushing the very limits of female acceptability. In the 1920s and 30s these two designers' fearless creations expressed their dynamic personalities and views of women's role in society. Though infamous rivals, referencing each other respectively as 'The Italian' and 'The Milliner', together they would begin a legacy that continues to inspire and influence the greatest fashion designers in the world a century later.

Robyn Neild has always considered the human body as a fluctuating vessel, carrying narratives and the possibility of transformation. After a degree in Fashion Design, at London's Middlesex University, Neild began her career as a fashion illustrator for magazines such as Vogue & Glamour. Later, relocating to the Kent coast and collaborating with a foundry, she began to explore the possibilities of the three-dimensional. The concept of the body as an art-object became more of a focus.

Robyn Neild's training in Fashion Design brought with it the practice of couture draping (draping white toile directly on a dress form). This technique revealed to her the invisible secrets of darts, hemlines, seams, used by Masters of Fashion to transform sketches into garments. As a sculptor, Neild has retained this strict discipline in the assemblage of garments on to wax figures that replicate runway designs, though often using botanicals and organic materials to create the intricate embellishments so synonymous with haute couture.

## **Sculptor Robyn Neil commented:**

"Chanel's commitment to fluid lines, often generously embellished showcases the brand's commitment to craftsmanship. On the garment different techniques would be used to disguise certain parts of the figure and enhance other areas and I want to try and capture some of these fine textural qualities in my bronze castings."

"Schiaparelli's dramatic vision uses the body as a motif to create exaggerated silhouettes featuring sculptural and architectural elements, making use of trompe-l'oeil and giving garments unconventional twists that provide an exciting provocation to my sculptural work."

## **Ashley Gray Gallery Director of Gray M.C.A and curator of *The Italian and the Milliner* says**

"Robyn Neild's use of the lost wax technique is magnificent. Once perfected, the figure is encased in plaster and placed in a furnace to burn away the wax creation, leaving a hollow silhouette into which molten bronze fills every fine niche. The figure that emerges is rich in texture, capturing the craft and complexity of the original garment. And yet with these sculptures, Neild does not solely pay tribute to the craft within her fashion inspirations but shares her imaginative flair and fearless attitude. The figures are the culminations of technique, study, insight and experimentation. Their confident stances worn with timeless ease. Robyn Neild has found an exciting new language to communicate fashion "

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## NOTES TO EDITOR

### Listing Information:

The Italian & The Milliner  
6 - 10 December 2023  
Gray M.C.A  
Cromwell Place  
London SW7 2JE

For press enquiries, please contact [Gallery@graymca.com](mailto:Gallery@graymca.com)

### Opening Hours

Tuesday - by appointment / Wednesday - Saturday 10am - 6pm / Sunday - 10am - 4pm

### Private View

Wednesday, 6th December, 2023, Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JE

### About Gray M.C.A

Gray M.C.A is the international leader in 20th & 21st century Fashion Illustration. The gallery curates specialist exhibitions both in the UK & USA and represents the estates and archives of many of the most celebrated fashion artists of the past 100 years. They deliver educational lecture programmes worldwide to broaden the understanding and appreciation of fashion illustration, design and modern textiles as important and historical art genres. The annual Drawing on Style exhibitions held by Gray M.C.A during London and New York Fashion Weeks are recognised as key events for international collectors and followers of fashion and fine art. [www.graymca.com](http://www.graymca.com) | Instagram: [@graymca](https://www.instagram.com/graymca)

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