

A WARDROBE OF ONE'S OWN

Dissident Femininities in the 19th Century

PALAIS GALLIERA
Paris Fashion Museum

EXHIBITION
26 SEPTEMBER 2026
14 FEBRUARY 2027



www.palaisgalliera.paris.fr

This autumn, the Palais Galliera is presenting an exhibition titled *A Wardrobe of One's Own: Dissident Femininities in the 19th Century* and shines a light on a still little-known phenomenon: the appropriation by nineteenth-century women of the male dress codes of the day.

Conceived as a response to the often-normative approaches to femininity in fashion exhibitions, *A Wardrobe of One's Own: Dissident Femininities in the 19th Century* intends to fill an important gap in fashion history. The exhibition reveals how the growing adoption of male dress codes went together with a desire for a profound transformation of women's place in nineteenth-century society, not only in France but also in Anglo-Saxon countries.

Featuring almost five hundred works, the exhibition presents numerous iconic fashion pieces and accessories: Amazonian costumes, trousers, tailored suits, cravats, bow ties, top hats, etc. It also boasts a remarkable and previously unseen collection: the wardrobe that once belonged to Rosa Bonheur, shown here in its entirety.

The exhibition gives pride of place to iconography, with a selection of paintings, fashion posters, and one hundred-and-fifty amateur photographs, brought together for the occasion, and seen for the first time. This juxtaposition of silhouettes and images offers a better understanding of the cultural and social significance of the fashions of the day and highlights how the masculinization of female fashion challenged the gender binaries that structured nineteenth-century society.

It also aims to provide a fresh perspective on the evolution of nineteenth-century women's fashion. From women wearing men's clothing to the styles privileged by artistic and lesbian Paris around 1900, including working women in suits and boots, the exhibition examines the impact of dissenting expressions of femininity and how these contributed to redefining women's wardrobes during this period.

Featuring a selection of key historical figures, from Marie Antoinette to Natalie Clifford Barney or from George Sand to Rosa Bonheur, as well as a multitude of unknown women presented through vernacular photography, the exhibition invites visitors to identify with and reclaim this heritage.

Beyond its historical anchor, the exhibition also touches on contemporary issues and encourages reflection on the place of clothing and fashion in the transformation of identities and social roles, whether in the nineteenth or in the twenty-first century.



Female couple next to a tree, around 1910
© Lesbian Herstory Archives

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Palais Galliera
Paris Fashion Museum

10, Avenue Pierre I^{er} de Serbie
75116 Paris

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday from 10am to 6pm

Late opening on Fridays until 9pm
Closed on Mondays

Admission

Solo ticket: 14€ (reduced rate 12€)

Combined ticket for the two

exhibitions: 17€ (reduced rate 15€)

Free entry under 18 years

Booking advisable

www.billetterie-parismusees.paris.fr

Getting there

Metro: line 9, Léna or Alma-Marceau

RER: line C, Pont de l'Alma

CATALOGUE

A Wardrobe of One's Own: Dissident Femininities in the 19th Century

(Book in French)

Éditions Paris Musées

Price: 35€

CURATORS

General curator

Émilie Hammen,
Director of the Palais Galliera

Scientific curator

Marine Kisiel,
Head of the 19th-Century Fashion
department at the Palais Galliera

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