

IN THE FOLD

A FASHION VISIONARY'S MOST POPULAR DESIGNS INSPIRE PERSONAL STYLE AND CUTTING-EDGE ART IN ISSEY MIYAKE: PLEATS PLEASE.

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There are some books—just like there are certain clothes—that you just feel compelled to touch, to see with your hands as well as your eyes. The new TASCHEN release, *Issey Miyake: Pleats Please* is that book—just like the Pleats Please pieces themselves are those clothes. Launched in 1993 and more popular than ever, the Pleats Please clothes are the result of a unique fabrication process developed by Miyake's Tokyo-based design studio that infuses visual intrigue and tactile drama into a ready-to-wear product that is not only gorgeous, but also convenient, comfortable, and affordable. What this hefty, 500-plus page volume depicts and evokes is how Miyake's signature invention has inspired photographers and fine artists—turning a fashion concept into a palette for all manner of visual invention.

The book looks at the inception and evolution of the designs, also taking an unprecedented tour of the fabrication process, a painstaking manual-press technique that permanently creases the polyester fabric. The noir-ish melodrama of the black-and-white production shots plays off the vibrant, saturated colors and crisp crinolation of the clothes, creating optically vibrating abstraction through close-up and color-blocked cropping. Models are often dancers, whose

movements show off the rich textures and create shapes that read more like modern sculpture than magazine editorial. But the pictures of the clothes are not the only artistry they inspire—there is also the most unique and unexpected part of the book, the Guest Artist Series, chronicling intense and genre-blurring collaborations with some of the world's greatest gallery artists.

Cai Guo-Qiang, whose fireworks-based performance/sculpture/installations recently lit up LA's Museum of Contemporary Art, gives the same treatment to some formerly pristine pleated garments. Yasumasa Morimura, a photographer known to museum audiences as the subject of self-portraits in the guise of art history's most famous images of women, introduces images from the Renaissance and antiquity into the visual dynamic, creating anatomical and narrative puns. Photographer Nobuyoshi Araki modifies the clothing and arranges scenarios more reminiscent of Nan Goldin or early shots of Blondie than Vogue. And LA-based sculptor Tim Hawkinson not only creates stunning fabrics, but fully integrates the raw materials of Miyake's line into his large-scale avant-garde video and architectural installations, proving that the mirror on the wall isn't the only place to get inspired by beautiful clothes.

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