



News

Dior couture show stars paintings by Rithika Merchant.

Maxwell Rabb

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Dior runway models posed in front of Rithika Merchant's "The Flowers We Grew" installation during the spring/summer 2025 haute couture collection show. © Laura Sciacovelli. Courtesy of Dior.

On Monday, Dior unveiled its spring/summer 2025 haute couture collection in a presentation that featured artwork by Indian artist [Rithika Merchant](#), an alum of [The Artsy Vanguard](#). Titled "The Flowers We Grew," the installation was presented in a structure set up in the sculpture garden of Paris's [Musée Rodin](#) for the occasion. Installed inside were nine large-scale embroidered textile panels based on watercolor paintings by Merchant. The textiles, which were fabricated by the artisans of the Indian atelier Chanakya International and students of the Chanakya School of Craft, will be on view to the public at the Musée Rodin through February 2nd.

The site-specific installation was commissioned by Dior under the direction of fashion designer [Maria Grazia Chiuri](#). She has previously commissioned women artists, including [Mickalene Thomas](#) and [Judy Chicago](#), to create works as backdrops for her runway shows. Last January, [Isabella Ducrot](#) created the backdrop for Dior's presentation of its [spring/summer 2024 haute couture collection](#).



Interior installation view of Rithika Merchant's "The Flowers We Grew" at Musée Rodin. © Adriend Dirand © Rithika Merchant © Chanakya School of Craft. Photo by Adrien Dirand. Courtesy of Dior.

The nine paintings that make up "The Flowers We Grew" bring together "stories of womanhood across generations," according to a press statement from Dior. In particular, the installation draws from stories originating in Kerala, India, and passed down to Merchant on her mother's side. The works feature a rich tapestry of anthropomorphic figures, celestial symbols, and natural elements. The creation of the hand-stitched textiles took 306 artisans approximately 144,000 hours to complete, as reported by [Wallpaper](#).

Chiuri made a splash on the opening day of Paris Haute Couture Week, with rumors circulating it could be the designer's final show. Her spring/summer 2025 haute couture collection features skirts edged with lace and coats that echo the iconic "Trapeze" silhouette created by Yves Saint Laurent for Dior in 1958. According to Chiuri, the collection's dreamlike qualities are inspired by the work of [Dorothea Tanning](#). The designer posted two of Tanning's paintings, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* (1943) and *Birthday* (1942), [on Instagram](#), noting the artist's "unique ability to portray the challenges of transformation and maturity, creating a disorienting atmosphere similar to that of [Lewis] Carroll's Alice."

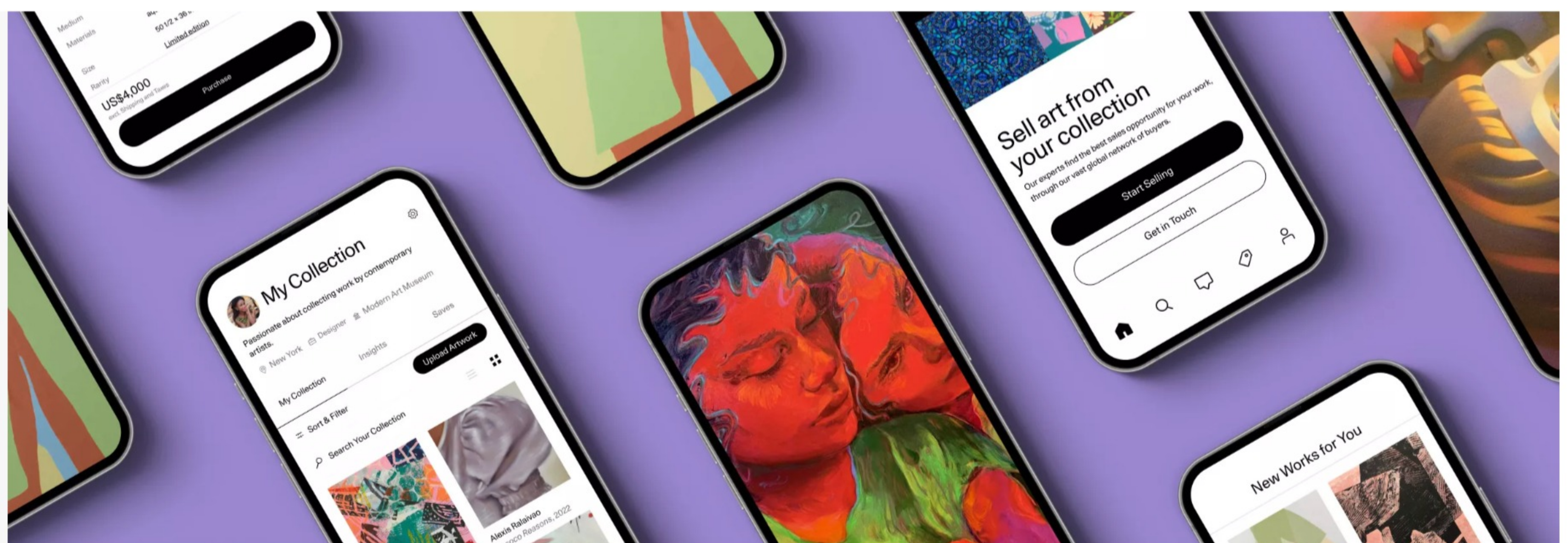
"I have forever been inspired by Dorothea Tanning's artworks," Chiuri wrote. "These artworks combine elements of fantasy and reality. I have always felt drawn to the imagined universe through the deep gaze of the women portrayed and an enigmatic composition." ■



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