

CHARLES JEFFREY LOVERBOY

AUTUMN / WINTER 2021 – ‘GLOOM’

From a moment to a movement - a manifesto in fractured images

This manifesto is written in invisible ink, this prose-poem will explode.

Burnt brushstrokes on your back, silver frogging trailing ties, knitted knots of gestural abstraction. A gaudy visage in the gloom.

Let's nail this jelly to the wall. Catch "a breath before taking a jump".[i]

Gloom is about stillness, the stillness of an Irving Penn portrait, of a daguerreotype, of a vanitas painting: the fruit is rotting and everyone aches from holding a pose, but in this anticipation there is excitement. The moment before 'curtain up' is stretched out, suspended, pregnant with potential.

In this stillness there is also movement. Garments are assembled to suggest a tumbling of fabric, an unravelling, a coming undone: they are perpetually on the brink of dissolving before one's eyes. A threadbare tartan, elevated through impoverishment, is fragile, translucent, ghostly and vivid. The Corbusian façade reveals disorder within.

Theatricality, extremity and heightened sensory states permeate all aspects of the work. Grounded in club culture expression LOVERBOY takes fleeting, sensuous experiences and pins them down with various techniques (from holes and splashes to sophisticated jacquards). Dodecahedrons – twelve-sided shapes – are warp, weft and woven: a contour map of the human form.

Louise Bourgeois owns the means of production, but who makes up this menagerie of misfits arrayed in such delicious confections? Venetian courtesans balance on chopines, a violet-hued soldier with shadowy eyes wears tarnished braid, atenderly buttoned harlequin and exquisite corpse; Tam O'Shanter dances a bolero, while a peroxide beauty is resplendent in an action painting gown.

Oh Madchester Loverboy, why so reticent? Orpheus, pluck your lyre!

Photomontage overcoats, cordate polka-dot, apertures: fabrics reveal the evidence of the hand in marks, gestures, and cut-ups. The TV crackles with static, a journey underground.

Gloom embraces the catharsis of negativity and the relief of undisciplined affective responses. Gloom signifies a "transitorystate"[ii]– the quiescence, stasis and repetition of lockdown – the liminal, chrysalis-like suspension of adolescence: "it is about moving from one world to another".[iii]

Gloom speaks to the moment in which we find ourselves, for how could it do otherwise? Teetering on the edge of somethingnew and gazing into the unknown. Multiple, shifting, mercurial and all-encompassing, LOVERBOY is an artwork, a brand, a collective – celestial bodies in a constellation.

KEY STOCKIST LIST

DOVER STREET MARKET - LONDON

BROWNS - LONDON

H-LORENZO - LOS ANGELES

DOVER STREET MARKET – NEW YORK

NUMERO 30 - MILAN

THE STORE X - BERLIN

JOYCE – SHANGAI, HONG KONG

GR8 - TOKYO

GALLERIA - SEUOL

SSENSE - MONTREAL

CLUB 21 – SINGAPORE

SSENSE.COM

MATCHESFASHION.COM

BIOGRAPHY

Charles Jeffrey LOVERBOY is the fashion house founded by Glaswegian designer, illustrator, stylist and radical creative, Charles Jeffrey. Described by Sarah Mower of American Vogue as "the upholder of all that is human, creative and cheerful about British fashion" Jeffrey has steered the LOVERBOY label from fledgling, outsider brand-of-the-moment to a burgeoning business with a retail network of the most revered stores in the world.

LOVERBOY's visual identity is steeped in Jeffrey's autobiographical primary research. The collections are anchored by the Charles' personal styling codes, as well as those of his friends and collaborators. The result is a potent clash of references both subcultural and traditional, Scottish and Pagan, interpreted through an illustrative, DIY approach to design.

The meteoric rise of the Charles Jeffrey LOVERBOY label is best encapsulated by Tim Blanks for Business of Fashion: "*Jeffrey is speaking to young London the way Alexander McQueen spoke to his generation.*"

Looking back to look forward, the collections re-render historical references as intrinsically modern while paying respect to an ancestral line-up of costumiers, performance artists and queer icons. Jeffrey's nightlife-influenced thirst for experimentation, and belief in the validity of mistakes, result in a colourful tension between control and chaos.

LOVERBOY's roots are fixed in London's queer nightlife scene, having been born in 2014 as both a fashion label and a cult club night. The LOVERBOY parties, first staged while Jeffrey was studying for his Masters in fashion design at Central St Martins in London, were attended by the city's up-and-coming artists, performers, musicians, drag queens and poets, many of whom became Jeffrey's future muses and creative collaborators.

As a label born on the dancefloor, a sense of event will forever be at the heart of LOVERBOY's output. The brand's spectacular shows are explorations of diversity and identity. Performance, 'dress up' and the transformative power of make-up are hallmarks of the brand and hark back to the energy and originality of the club nights, promoting kindness, friendship and collaboration as the truest virtues of the human condition.

Charles Jeffrey LOVERBOY is a NEWGEN recipient and has been honoured with a number of industry accolades. Upon leaving university Jeffrey quickly won two Scottish Fashion Awards, the first in 2016 as Graduate of the Year and later as Young Designer of the Year in 2017. The label has since been a finalist in the 2018 edition of the LVMH Prize and was nominated for the BFC/Vogue Fashion Fund in 2019. In 2018, Jeffrey won the British GQ Award for Emerging Designer. In 2017, he received the British Fashion Award for Best Emerging Menswear Designer - presented to him by John Galliano, Jeffrey's hero.

As a stylist, Jeffrey works across special projects for some of the world's leading fashion publications. Commissions have included the creative direction of a Vivienne Westwood archive story for AnOther Man, Maison Margiela retrospective shoot (in collaboration with John Galliano) for LOVE, and a Schiaparelli haute couture story for 10+. His wider portfolio includes stories for GQ Style, Replica Man, Buffalo Zine and CANDY.

Jeffrey is a practicing artist. A celebrated illustrator, his artwork - developed both digitally and by hand - lives within each LOVERBOY collection. In 2018 he presented 'The Come Up', his first solo exhibition of sculpture in London's NOW Gallery. Further examples of Jeffrey's sculptural practice have also featured as part of LOVERBOY's installation projects, most recently in Beijing and Los Angeles in partnership with Dover Street Market.