

Shoes in Art - Shoes as Art

'A shoe is a sculptural problem in which the centre is always a void'. Roger Vivier

*'A pair of shoes must be perfect like an equation,
and adjusted to the millimetre like a motor piece'* André Perugia

'My shoes are not fashion. They are gestures: objects that happen to be fashion'.
Manolo Blahnik

'A shoe without sex appeal is as barren as a tree without leaves'.
Rita de Acosta Lydig, patron of Yantorny



A seemingly frivolous subject, but one which is layered in symbolism, fantasy, desire and status. We will look at representations of the historic shoe in art of various periods, and also the late nineteenth/twentieth century developments which led towards the shoe as an art form and the enhanced status of the designer working for an international celebrity clientele.

Whether it be the extreme elongated points of medieval *poulaines*, denoting an impracticality which was of no concern to its wealthy male wearers (infact setting them apart from the mundane worker), or the towering chopines seen in Carpaccio's courtesans, or red heels as symbol of aristocratic status, or Sex in the City character, Carrie Bradshaw, whose pair of Manolos become a mugger's object of desire - we will explore the powerful symbolism of footwear, and enjoy the sheer beauty of these creations as seen through paintings, portraiture, film and fine examples of footwear in worldwide historic collections.

The changing styles, shapes, and materials of male and female shoes and footwear will be examined in their social, cultural and sartorial context.











