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Penny Slinger's Photocollage Couture

Arts writer Rachel Ashenden explores Penny Slinger's recent mesmerising fashion collaboration with



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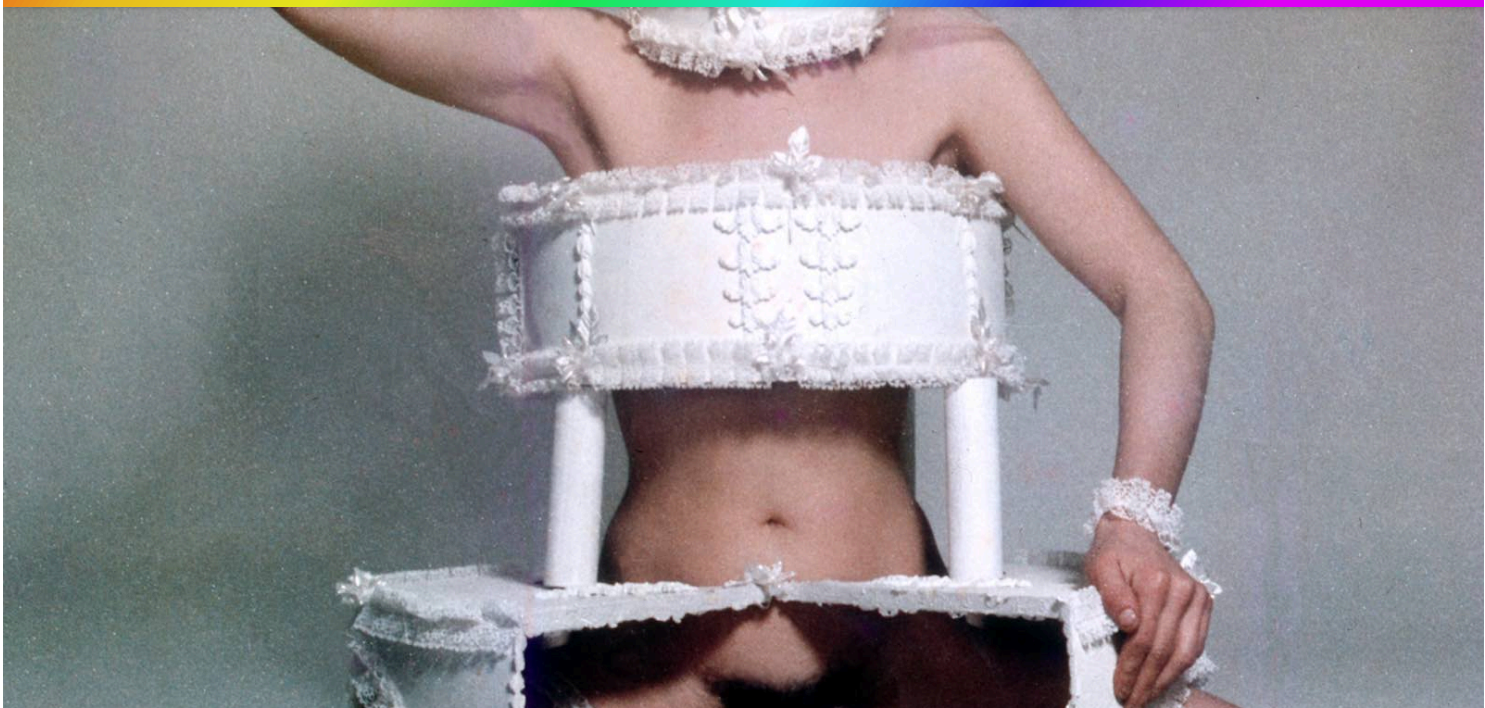
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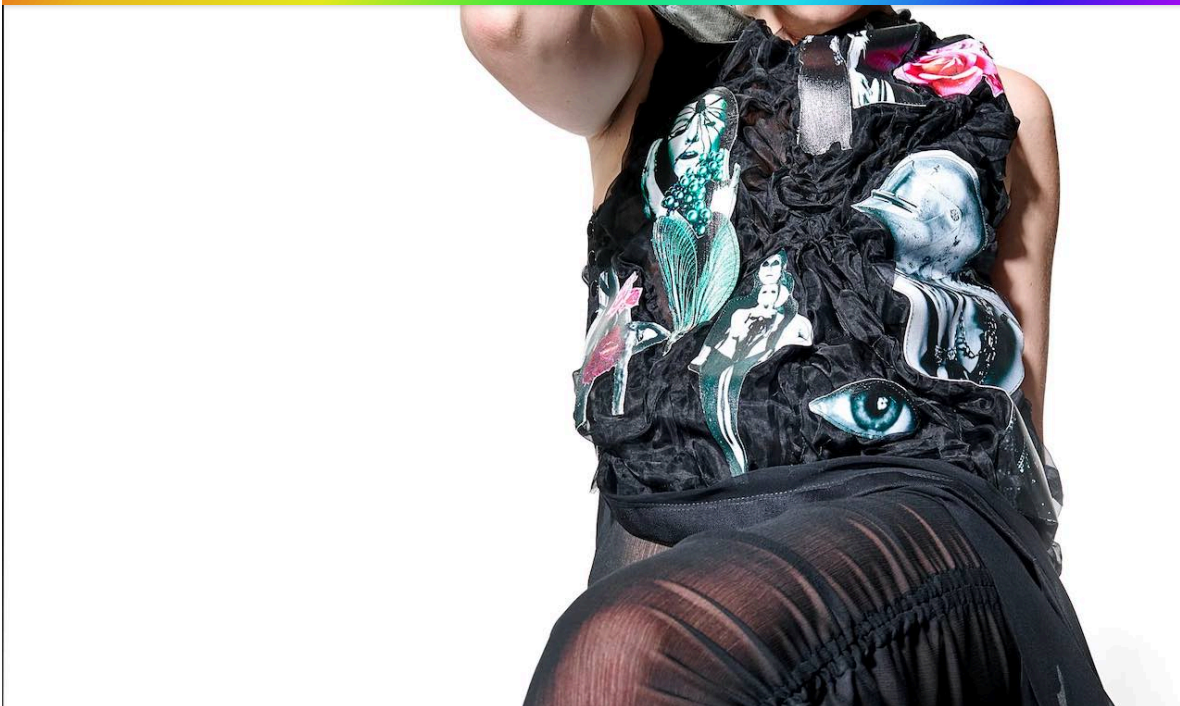
are an invitation to revisit some of her most iconic photocollages, but recontextualized for the present,

they are a very tactile reminder that Penny is creating new works by the day.



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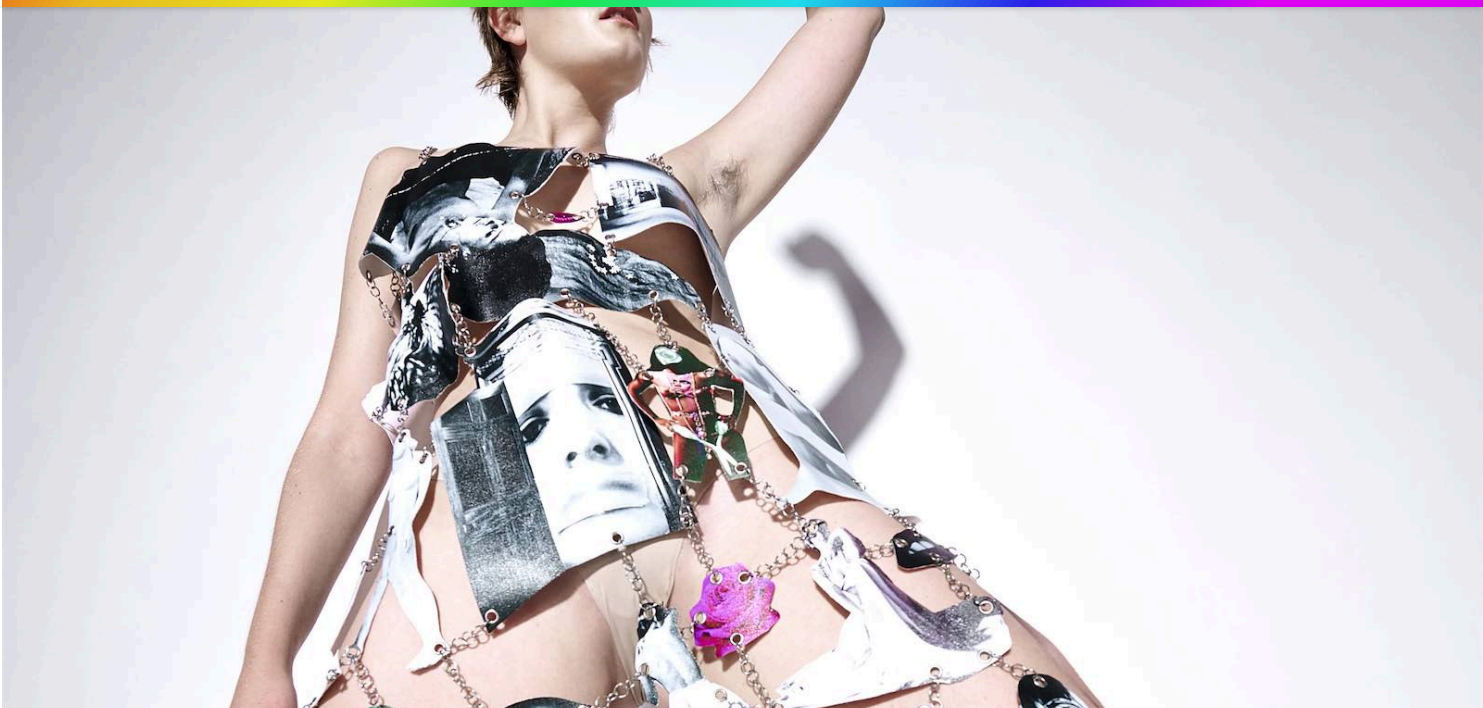
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Penny has transformed the model into a walking archive. To achieve this, she has transplanted startling and engrossing scenes from her ground-breaking photocollage series *50% The Visible Woman*, *An Exorcism* and *Mouthpieces*. The archetypal symbols which are repeated throughout these photocollage series – eyes, roses, snakes, feathers, lips – embellish these garments, too. It is your task to decipher these motifs, impose your own meaning, and piece together a story of her life and work, which, for Penny, are so entangled that they also take on a collage-like form. The challenge is that collage is inherently disruptive; there is no definitive narrative to be found.



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book which she made while studying at art school. There, she discovered the collage books of Max Ernst which, for her, were revelatory. Using her own image, photographs and found images, Penny compiled *50% The Visible Woman*. First published in 1971 as a bound book, and republished in 2021, Penny used photo prints of the collages and tracing paper overlays on which she printed the corresponding text to each image. Quite brilliantly and comically juxtaposing the very nature of climax, the corresponding text to *Orgasm* simply reads: 'Orgasm.'



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reading which Penny has ingeniously set up: as well as using photographic self-portraits made specially for the project, she has left a trail of her oeuvre, featuring the likes of the *Bride's Cake* series as well as her *Owl Mask* (1971).

As a young child Penny designed her own clothes which her mother brought to life. Ever since, Penny's surreal visions for fusing fashion and art have been “bubbling away”*. What is so satisfying about engaging with the artist's work is that you can trace how her ideas come to fruition across her career – ideas which are thematically and symbolically self-referential. Penny describes her ambitions to expand her fashion portfolio as “unfinished business”*; such a phrase can also be applied to art historical research about her life and continuously expanding art portfolio. So, I dare you: pick a collage from the andagainco collaboration and spend an evening down the brilliant rabbit hole that is Penny's digital



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