



**ROYAL
DE LUXE**
NANTES

The Mannequin's revolt

Creation 2007

The first mannequin that was returned to the city of London was found in 1750 by Lord Baker whilst sailing the Pacific in search of French privateers. Having stopped at an unknown island, he witnessed the sinking of a boat. There were no human beings on the horizon, but there was a body floating near the wreck ; it was an ample female bust made of wicker.

Back in England, he presented his discovery to the queen. Her counselors, probably frightened by the potentially negative consequences this female form could have on the population, hurried to hide it in a cell of a French Chateau.

One hundred years later, Empress Eugenie who was curious and innovative, took the mannequin out from the castle cellar. The object, which was in deplorable condition, was taken charge of by Archbishop Alexis de Lavygne, inventor of the flexible centimeter and the Empress's personal tailor. Having padded it with fabric and covered it with leather, he turned it into something close to a living person, able to wear clothes.

In 1900, a little known Dutchman developed the mass production of anatomical models, which was a huge success at the World Expo. But several months later, this same Dutchman went mad, and killed himself stating that tears often ran on the faces of his creations. For him, no doubt these models were prisoners in their shells.

In 1952, the company Segrel Stockman devised a revolutionary method of reproduction. With the mannequins multiplying, they displayed a remarkable ability to adapt, using newly invented materials.

During this time, a group of philosophers developed the thesis of the probable existence of emotion in these sophisticated mannequins. A witness declared he had seen some at night, passing through windows without being damaged, then walking from to shop to shop. From then on, everything picked up pace : department stores covered up rumors of the real existence of these plastic individuals, and they were then colonized. Thus began, the story of the inhumane exploitation of mannequins by man.

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