



Christian Dior in the plush-lined sitting-room of his home in Paris, 1957. Photo by Loomis Dean, Time & Life Pictures / Getty Images.

COUTURE AS QUEER AUTO/BIOGRAPHY

The prologue to the autobiography of the great couturier Christian Dior, translated into English by Antonia Fraser in 1958, provides a revealing insight into the inner life of a man whose name, more than any other, became synonymous with the production of a powerful form of elegant and luxurious femininity that defined the imagery and culture of the mid-twentieth-century couture industry. Offering up the concept of “The Two Christian Diors,” the great designer complains that,

Reviewers often describe authors of memoirs as “leaning on their past.” I have never liked this expression . . . it implies that [the writer’s] past is already dead and done with . . . I am convinced that my finest memories are yet to come, and that even my past is only just behind me. After all Christian Dior is only nine years old – which explains why the most interesting thing about him, for me, is not what has happened to him . . . but what is going to happen to him.¹