



## PARMA HAM,

DJ,

*on fluidity*

“I found a quote I had written down in an old notebook from ten years ago. It was before I became more fluid, and it’s weird because it predates the battles and complexities of identity I know now. It’s from Susan Sontag’s *I, etcetera* – ‘I am tired of being a person. Not just tired of being the person I was, but any person at all.’ When I was younger, being tired of being a person was being tired of the expectations of friends, family, society – then I went further and started dismantling the expectations around my gender and sexuality. The realisation of being non-binary kick-started a process for everything I approached, in that nothing should have rigid or fixed ideas. Binary thinking is a way to repress. Things should be fluid to help us understand the world – putting people into boxes is never going to get you anywhere. I like the idea of the Renaissance man, the idea that you can do so many different things and never be limited by the rest of the world.”

Parma Ham provides the soundtrack for London’s various neo-goth club nights, among them *Mønster Queen* and *Slimelight*, where they are resident DJ. Recognisable by their 3-foot-high black mohawk, the rest of their persona defies easy categorisation: nightlife impresario, gallery producer, curator, visual artist, provocateur ... Parma Ham is all of these at once. “When you define something you limit it, and then everybody expects a certain thing from it,” they say. It was while DJing that they caught the attention of *Comme des Garçons*’ president Adrian Joffe: a request to do the music for Rei Kawakubo’s Autumn/Winter 2019 show swiftly followed. Parma Ham’s mutating, feverous soundtrack – which swayed from whirling helicopter rotors to a children’s chorus – perfectly backgrounded Kawakubo’s defiant, goth-inflected collection, named *The Gathering of Shadows*.

WORDS JACK MOSS

PARMA HAM IS WEARING A WOOL AND SILK BLAZER BY HILLIER BARTLEY

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THANKS TO JJ LOCATIONS