

Vacas Flacas are Carolina Azcona and Miriam Cobo. Within a few months of launching in April 1993, this fashion firm's designs were celebrated as a revolution on the Spanish catwalks. They created their products from recycled materials: some considered old fashioned, others leftover in storage - none second-hand. Vacas Flacas modelled over mannequins or their own bodies, and re-used everything they could: zippers, suspenders, knickers, ties, gloves, socks, scarves, napkins, dusters, and swimsuit linings. Each garment was unique, in a handcrafted and clever way.

In September 1993, when Pasarela Cibeles (comparable to Fashion Week in other European cities) took place in Madrid, Chanel's fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld declared that their work was the most interesting he had seen at this Spanish fashion event. This remark gave the firm impetus and visibility. They won first prize at the International Fashion Fair of Bilbao in 1993, and showed their work at Pasarela Cibeles (1998/99), ARCO Art Fair (Madrid, 1998), the International EXPO 98 (Lisbon), and in the art gallery H2O (Barcelona). Their shops - decorated in a do-it-yourself way - were where their work could really be appreciated. The first shop (1994-1996) opened in an old garage on Joaquín M<sup>a</sup> López St, the second unit in Claudio Coello (1996-1999), both of them in Madrid.

Vacas Flacas made garments for TV series and films. Their work was widely documented in fashion magazines and youth culture publications. Carolina and Miriam hardly had any money and did everything by themselves. As is often the case with pioneering projects, people wrote to them asking for grants and funding.

The inspiring work of these young women opened up a space for young women fashion designers in the 90s, even without support from the industry. Vacas Flacas marked almost ten years in fashion with their courage, intelligence, creativity and immense capacity to make themselves visible with the means at hand.