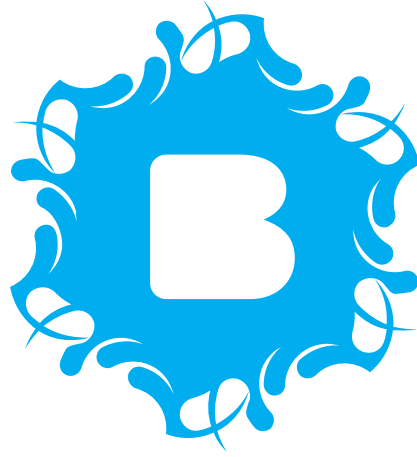


Press Release



December 2009

Brooklyn Museum Presents Major Fashion Exhibition Celebrating Landmark Costume Collection Partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art

**On View May 7 through August 1, 2010, Press Preview May 6, 2010
Gala Benefit Preview April 22**

A major exhibition celebrating the Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection and the unique collection-sharing partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art will be presented at the Brooklyn Museum from May 7 through August 1, 2010. *American High Style: Fashioning a National Collection* will include some 85 masterworks from the newly established Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and mark the first time in more than two decades that a large-scale survey drawn from the Brooklyn Museum's pre-eminent collection will be on public view. The exhibition opening will be preceded by a special preview on April 22 at the Brooklyn Ball.

The exhibition is organized by Jan Glier Reeder, Consulting Curator for the Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and coordinated by Kevin Stayton, Chief Curator of the Brooklyn Museum. It includes works that have never been on public view, as well as many that have not been displayed in more than 20 years. A simultaneous exhibition, *American Woman: Fashioning a National Identity*, the first at the Metropolitan Museum to be drawn from the Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection, will be on view at the Met from May 5 through August 15, 2010.

The Brooklyn exhibition will present works dating from the mid-19th century to the late 20th century, augmented by a selection of accessories, drawings, sketches, and other fashion-related materials. It will include creations that were milestones in the collection's acquisition history, many of which were gifts from leaders of fashion and major donors to the Brooklyn Museum.

"This is truly a landmark moment in the history of museum exhibitions. It is at once a celebration of a unique collection-sharing program between Brooklyn and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a remarkable history of the Brooklyn collection that traces the evolution of fashion in America from its 19th-century European beginnings through the late 20th century," comments Brooklyn Museum Director Arnold L. Lehman.

To celebrate the opening of the exhibition, the Brooklyn Ball, the annual benefit gala of the Brooklyn Museum, will take place on Thursday, April 22, 2010. The Brooklyn Ball is the Museum's major annual fund-raising event.

Brooklyn Museum

200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238-6052
T (718) 638-5000 F (718) 501-6134
www.brooklynmuseum.org

The exhibition will document the development of the Brooklyn Museum costume collection from its inception in the early 20th century to its function as a working design lab, and its development into one of the premier costume collections in the country. The story is one of great patrons of fashion—the Hewitt sisters, the women of the Prince family, Millicent Rogers, and Austine Hearst—and great designers.

The exhibition will be organized in groups that represent the most important strengths of the collection. Featured will be works by the first generation of American women designers such as Bonnie Cashin, Elizabeth Hawes, and Claire McCardell, as well as material created by Charles James, Norman Norell, Gilbert Adrian, and other important American designers. Also included will be works by French designers who had an important influence on American women and fashion such as Charles Frederick Worth, Elsa Schiaparelli, Jeanne Lanvin, Jeanne Paquin, Madeleine Vionnet, and Christian Dior.

The objects range from ball gowns to beachwear. Included are Schiaparelli's Surrealist insect necklace, considered by experts to be one of the most important works in the collection; elaborate ballgowns and day wear by Charles James; evening ensembles by Charles Frederick Worth, Christian Dior, and Mainbocher; street wear by mid-20th-century designers including Vera Maxwell, Claire McCardell, and Elizabeth Hawes; a group of hats by legendary milliner Sally Victor; and dazzling evening wear by Norman Norell.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's concurrent exhibition, *American Woman: Fashioning a National Identity*, is the first drawn from the newly established Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at the Met. Organized by Andrew Bolton, Curator of the Costume Institute, it explores developing perceptions of the modern American woman from 1890 to 1940 and how they affected the way in which American women are seen today. On view May 5 through August 15, 2010, the exhibition is made possible by Gap with additional support from Condé Nast and will include works by Travis Banton, Gabrielle Chanel, Callot Soeurs, Elizabeth Hawes, Charles James, Jeanne Lanvin, Paul Poiret, Elsa Schiaparelli, Valentina, and Charles Frederick Worth, among others. A catalogue celebrating the Brooklyn Museum collection by Ms. Reeder will accompany the exhibitions.

The Brooklyn Museum's landmark collection-sharing partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art went in to effect in January 2009. At that time Brooklyn's renowned costume collection of 23,500 objects, acquired over the course of a century of collecting, was transferred to the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where it is fully integrated into the Institute's program of exhibitions, publications, and education initiatives and remains available for exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum.

Prior to the collection transfer, the Brooklyn Museum completed an intensive three-year assessment and photographic documentation of the entire costume collection that was supported by an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant of \$3,925,000. Portions of the collection are now also available digitally through ARTstor, an online initiative created by the Mellon Foundation that provides access to art images and related data for scholarly and not-for-profit educational use.

Press Contact:

Sally Williams, Public Information Officer, (718) 501-6330, sally.williams@brooklynmuseum.org

Adam Husted, Media Relations Manager, (718) 501-6331, adam.husted@brooklynmuseum.org

Marcus Romero, Associate Publicist, (718) 501-6354, marcus.romero@brooklynmuseum.org

GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution \$10; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$6. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48.

On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.