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THE ART OF THE TAILOR TAKES CENTER STAGE AT FIT'S FASHION AND TEXTILE HISTORY GALLERY

An exhibition on tailoring and its influences on fashion will open in May at the Fashion and Textile History Gallery at the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT). *The Tailor's Art* will feature tailoring techniques and demonstrate how they have shaped fashion over the past 250 years. The exhibition will be divided into four rooms: an introductory gallery, and three galleries that survey fashions and fabrics from the 18th century to the present.

The exhibition is organized by Patricia Mears, research curator; Fred Dennis, associate curator of Costume; Clare Sauro, assistant curator of Accessories; and Lynn Weidner, technologist, Textiles.

“One of the most important but understudied elements of modern fashion is the art of tailoring and its profound influence on fashion for both men and women,” Patricia Mears said. “While more emphasis has been placed on the development of draping, a modern invention that emerged from the ateliers of Parisian haute couture prior to World War I, tailoring was truly the first form of constructed dressmaking. It highlighted the idealized human form.”

The introduction to the exhibition begins with a man's embroidered velvet suit from 1785. Created in the 18th century, the man's suit was considered the modern ensemble of its day, and gave menswear a leadership role in pushing fashion forward.

In the first gallery, viewers can compare the 1785 velvet suit with an embroidered leather one from 2003 by Roberto Cavalli. “Tailoring has not drastically changed over the last 250 years,” Mears said. “It remains relevant today because of its classic look and the fact that a tailored suit still conveys strength and modernity.”

-please turn over-

To illustrate tailoring techniques, particularly the seaming of complicated garments, ***The Tailor's Art*** displays muslin versions that show how the garment is made next to finished garments for both men and women by Adrian and Balenciaga. "We selected these two designers because they are masters of the art of tailoring," Mears said.

Gender differences are further explored by presenting flamboyant and tailored fashions for women that complement and contrast with the menswear on view. Among them are a painted silk and cotton "Iris" dress that likens the wearer to a flower, and a camel wool day suit with elaborate soutache trim. The historical survey of tailoring for women begins with a blue quilted silk petticoat from 1770 and culminates with a 1996 tuxedo dress suit by Ann Demulemeester.

Examples of lush, colorful textiles, an important element in tailoring, include a tartan plaid kilt and waistcoat from the 18th and 19th centuries, and a 1930 emerald green silk chiffon by Molyneux that could have inspired Noel Coward. This romantic attire contrasts with the sobriety of the gray flannel suit that Gregory Peck wore to symbolize conformity in *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*.

The Tailor's Art ends with a display of the most modern examples of tailoring today. Highlights are Yohji Yamamoto's deconstructed, reconstructed suit and a "ghetto fabulous" suit by Sean Jean, also known as "P. Diddy."

Every six months, the Fashion and Textile History Gallery presents a new exhibition, showcasing garments, accessories, and textiles from the museum's extensive permanent collections.

The museum's permanent collection houses approximately 50,000 garments and accessories from the 18th century to the present. The collection also includes more than 30,000 textiles, 300,000 textile swatches, and about 1,500 sample books from the 6th century to the present, which illustrate a broad variety of techniques and traditions from around the world.

ELLE Magazine and Redken are sponsoring The Fashion and Textile History Gallery.

"In every issue, ELLE looks forward --new designers, the next trend, what's coming," Roberta Myers, ELLE Editor-in-Chief. "FIT's collection is extraordinary, and the launch of the museum's new gallery gives us an amazing opportunity look at how the past influences the future of fashion. We are delighted to be able to help share their collection with the world."

"The Redken brand truly covets the art of fashion," notes Shae Kalyani, Redken Assistant Vice President, Media. "FIT has done an outstanding job bringing some of fashion's true masterpieces to life with their exceptional new gallery. We are proud to be a part of it."

ELLE

About ELLE

ELLE is the largest fashion magazine in the world with 37 editions on six continents. It is also the foundation of numerous brand extensions including *ELLE Decor* (19 editions), *ELLEGirl* (ten editions), *ELLE Cuisine* (five editions), *ELLE Accessories* (one edition), *ELLE.com* (16 languages) and licensed products including books, footwear, eyewear and other fashion accessories. Last year, ELLE-branded products generated \$1 billion in retail sales worldwide. The U.S. edition reaches an audience of 4.5 million readers who find in ELLE style and substance with an independent point of view.

REDKEN

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ABOUT Redken

Redken 5th Avenue NYC (a division of L'Oreal USA), is a leader in backstage beauty, editorial and technologically advanced salon products that meet the needs of both salon professionals and consumers. Working with industry greats like Guido Palau, one of the world's most conceptual hairstylists, Redken is backstage at fashion shows in New York, Milan and Paris such as Marc Jacobs, Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Prada, Versace, Balenciaga, Louis Vuitton and Alexander McQueen. Redken's team of talented session stylists work in film, television and print and have contributed to the trendsetting hairstyles of Natalie Portman, Scarlett Johansson, Hilary Swank, Uma Thurman and Chloe Sevigny. Get inspired, be part of it!

The Museum at FIT is located on the southwest corner of Seventh Avenue at 27th Street. Exhibition hours are Tuesday through Friday, noon to 8 pm; Saturday 10 am to 5pm; closed Sundays, Mondays, and legal holidays. Admission is free. For museum information call (212) 217-5800 or go to: www.fitnyc.edu/museum.

For further press information contact the Office of College Relations at (212) 217-7642 or press@fitnyc.edu. Visuals are available upon request via mail or email.