

**LACMA ACQUIRES MAJOR EUROPEAN FASHION COLLECTION;
MUSEUM CATAPULTS TO LEADER IN THE FIELD**

**More than 500 examples of eighteenth through twentieth-century
dress and accessories join costume and textiles collection**

Los Angeles—The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) announces the acquisition of an exceptional European fashion collection that includes approximately 250 examples of fashionable dress and more than 300 accessories for men, women, and children dating from 1700 to 1915. The collection significantly enhances LACMA's eighteenth and nineteenth-century European costume collection, elevating the museum's holding in this area to one of the very best both nationally and internationally. Highlights include a singular collection of complete three-piece men's suits from 1750 through 1810; an impressive array of women's dress documenting the significant stylistic changes that occurred over the span of 200 years; outstanding children's garments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and a wide range of accessories and undergarments such as fans, hats, purses, shawls, shoes, and corsets. This acquisition comes near the end of a year of significant acquisitions for LACMA including a landmark fifteenth-century painting by Cima da Conegliano, a contemporary African sculpture by El Anatsui, unparalleled collections of both Pre-Columbian and Oceanic art, the Marjorie and Leonard Vernon Collection of 3,500 photographs, and many others. LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director Michael Govan noted, "The acquisition of this transformative collection of dress—which has instantly propelled our Costume and Textiles Department into one of the world's most pre-eminent—is a wonderful addition to what has been a spectacular year for the growth of our collections."

Acting on a challenge made by Govan to all LACMA curators to identify museum-altering acquisitions, Senior Curator and Department Head of Costume and Textiles Sharon S. Takeda proposed the incredibly rare costume collection meticulously put together by London collector Martin Kamer and

Galerie Ruf in Beckenried, Switzerland, both established dealers of fine historic European costume. Govan and Takeda made a trip to view the collection with Costume Council member Ellen Michelson, which resulted in a significant gift from her and her husband Michael for a third of the collection and the rights to have the entire collection shipped to Los Angeles in order to pursue additional funds. Presentations of the collection made by LACMA curators resulted in additional gifts from the Costume Council and other patrons. A final major gift this summer from patron Suzanne Saperstein - for more than half of the acquisition price -- ensured that the entire collection would remain at LACMA.

Couture fashion collector and major donor Ms. Saperstein noted, "A collection of this caliber rarely enters the market and we simply couldn't pass up the chance to bring it to LACMA. I'm sure visitors to the museum will be just as awed by the objects as I am."

Takeda noted, "We feel fortunate to have the extraordinary opportunity to acquire a collection of this quality and depth. These new additions, which will certainly make LACMA a major study center for scholars of European fashion, represent the museum's commitment to enriching its increasingly prominent holdings in costume and textiles."

LACMA will present an inaugural exhibition of its new acquisition in 2010. *Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915* will tell the story of fashion's technical and aesthetic development from the Age of Enlightenment to World War I. It will examine minute details of textile and clothing construction as well as broader cultural themes. Remarkable examples of women's dress illustrating changes in the fashionable silhouette over the course of more than two centuries will be on view. Rare menswear including a 1790s waistcoat knitted in colors and motifs sympathetic to the French Revolution and a hunting ensemble (c. 1830) complete with red wool coat, white leather breeches, and black riding boots will be showcased along with many other men's ensembles in rich silks, velvets, and woolen fabrics. A woman's silk *robe à la française* (c.1745-60) from the Netherlands with brocaded *chinoiserie* pattern and an English boy's frock (1855-60) constructed of embroidered cashmere imported

from India will be two of several examples illustrating the influence of Orientalism on European dress. Court fashion, such as a stunning black silk-satin gown embroidered in gold metallic thread and sequins once belonging to Queen Maria II of Portugal (reigned 1826-53), will represent the important role dress played in the royal courts of Europe. Iconic works by early French couturiers such as Emile Pingat (active 1860-1896) and Paul Poiret (1879-1944) will also be presented.

LACMA is announcing the formation of "Atelier" an elite group of patrons who will support the Costume & Textiles Department's acquisition, exhibition, and publication programs. The primary goal of Atelier will be to raise funds that will allow LACMA to take advantage of opportunities when rare collections or extraordinary objects come on the market. Through such support, Atelier will elevate LACMA's Costume and Textiles Department and develop stellar collections in strategically chosen areas.

About LACMA

Since its inception in 1965, LACMA has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography—and represent Los Angeles' uniquely diverse population. Today, the museum features particularly strong collections of Asian, Latin American, European, and American art, as well as a new contemporary museum on its campus, BCAM. With this expanded space for contemporary art, innovative collaborations with artists, and an ongoing transformation project, LACMA is creating a truly modern lens through which to view its rich encyclopedic collection.

General Information: LACMA is located at 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA, 90036. For more information about LACMA and its programming, call 323 857-6000 or visit lacma.org.

Museum Hours and Admission: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, noon-8 pm; Friday, noon-9 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am-8 pm; closed Wednesday. Adults \$12; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+ \$8; children 17 and under are admitted free. Admission (except to specially ticketed exhibitions) is free the second Tuesday of every month and on Target Free Holiday Mondays. After 5 pm, every day the museum is open, LACMA's "Pay What You Wish" program encourages visitors to support the museum with an admission fee of their choosing.

Press Contact: For additional information, contact LACMA Press Relations at press@lacma.org or 323 857-6522.

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