

Spring 2005

Portrait of a Newport Lady: The Fashionable Woman in 1900

Features Life of Gwendolen King Armstrong.
On display at Rosecliff, Newport, RI
through November 10, 2005

Portrait of a Newport Lady: The Fashionable Woman in 1900 examines the transition from Victorian to modern ideas of dress and lifestyle in Newport through the rich collections, photographs and letters of Kingscote (1841), the Gothic Revival cottage that was home to five generations of the King family, whose fortune was made in the China Trade.

The exhibit will be on display at Rosecliff, 548 Bellevue Avenue, through November 10. It is included in the regular price of admission to the Rosecliff tour.

Gwendolen King Armstrong (1876-1968) lived much of her very long life at Kingscote in Newport. From her 1901 Parisian-made wedding trousseau, including ball gowns, riding costumes, finely embroidered linens and lingerie, to

the more casual, department store fashions she favored just a few years later, she epitomized the changing tastes of American women at the beginning of the 20th century, as they began to modify their dress in order to facilitate and

accept changing societal roles. Personal letters between Gwendolen and her mother reveal the later years of the Gilded Age as a complex, transitory period of American history. Ella King held fast to her 19th century tastes while obliging her daughter's new, modern ideas about dress and lifestyle.

The surviving pieces of Gwendolen's trousseau on display include two formal evening gowns, a dinner dress, and a

tailor-made walking suit, all by the Paris fashion house of Raudnitz and Co., Huet and Cheruit. There is also a custom-fit riding habit made in London by habit-maker and tailor J. A. Matheissen, as well as other sportswear items. Each of her gowns had an appropriately matched pair of evening shoes; four pairs survive, made by P. Elliot Monquignon of Paris, and a pair of riding boots also Parisian-made. Many other accessories, from parasols to jewelry and handbags, round out the exhibit.

Also on display are copies of letters and photographs and other artifacts, such as the menu for Gwendolen's wedding reception. Included are wedding invitation response cards, some from the Kings' famous neighbors, Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt and Mrs. Astor.



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The Region I Newsletter is published three times a year. The deadline for the next issue is **August 15, 2005**. Please send exhibit listings, new book notices, professional news, job listings, classes, etc., to:

Joanna Cadorette
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Welcome New Members!

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 Greenfield, MA

JoAnn Steere
 East Greenwich, RI

Erin E. Eisenbarth
 New Haven, CT

Register Early!!!

Space is limited for the summer study day in Newport.

Reservations are absolutely required to participate in this event, after registering a specific schedule, stating meeting times and places will be sent to you. Phone or e-mail registration is accepted prior to July 8th, 2005. Respond to Rebecca Kelly, rkelly@newportmansions.org, or office phone, 401.846.9521, to reserve your place.

President's Message

Dear Fellow Members of Region I:

Thank you to so many of you who attended the fabulous symposium at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, on Saturday, March 12th—"What is Costume?: New Perspectives and Approaches to Dress Scholarship"—the first of a two-part series of symposia dealing with exploring concepts and definitions that concern our field. The papers were of the highest quality, and the tour of the exhibition was highly informative and interesting. A big thanks to Rebecca Kelly and Tiffany Webber-Hanchett for organizing this successful event!

At the symposium you may have seen or picked up CSA's new membership form. It is a beautifully designed, professional quality form, and we hope that it attracts some new members. Speaking of which, we have only one more month to pull in new members for our membership drive "High Five for '05." If you know of anyone who might be interested—colleagues, friends, neighbors, or relatives—please let them know how much you appreciate CSA and encourage them to join.

I was very happy to find out that our non-member speakers at the MFA symposium, who had never attended a CSA event, were very impressed by our group and the quality of the presentations. Let's work together to stay in touch with these people, as well as other people in related fields, as it is a benefit to all of us when we share our research, knowledge, and insights.

As we announced at the symposium, the 2006 National symposium will be held in Hartford, Connecticut, May 31–June 3. The theme is "Unlocking the Trunk: Collections, Collectors, and Collecting." The call for papers will be out by the national symposium in Philly in late May. Because the 2006 symposium is falling in our region, WE NEED YOUR HELP! If you are interested in volunteering either before or during the symposium, or have any suggestions for tours or institutions that we should visit, please contact the co-chairs Donna Locke, d.locke@snet.net, 203-426-9604, and Aimee Newell, anewell@osv.org, 508-347-3362, ext. 238.

Carrie Alyea
 617-338-8635
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Snow Storms, Scholarship and Hoop Skirts: Spring Symposium at the MFA, Boston

By Rebecca Kelly

Saturday March 12th, 2005, in true New England fashion, dawned to a mix of inclement winter weather. However, over 75 members of The Costume Society of America braved wind, snow, and mixtures of sleet and rain to arrive at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for the spring symposium, *What is Costume: New Perspectives and Approaches to Dress Scholarship*. This symposium was the first of a two part series to provide a forum for exploring the study of dress from conceptual and theoretical perspectives. The papers presented discussed dress from many different vantage points, and brought the multi-disciplinary nature of the field to the forefront.

The day began with an excellent paper by MFA staff member Tiffany Webber-Hanchett. The paper was a retrospective look at the MFA's Textile and Fashion Arts department. The department has under gone a number of changes since its inspection. Issues of exhibition, interpretation, and lexicon were highlighted. Aaron Wong, a PhD candidate at Yale University, further helped set the progressive and scholarly tone of the day with his paper, *Fashion Sense: Redefining Fashion and Its Study*. His presentation put much landmark research into context, and proposed methodologies for further scholarship.

The next block of papers focused on dress from an art historical perspective. Amanda Wunder from the University of New Hampshire presented her preliminary research on 17th century Spanish court paintings and their representations of costume. Amanda will be continuing her work on this fascinating topic at the Ratti Textile Center at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Helen Burnham, a PhD candidate at NYU, spoke of representations of fashion in the pastel portraiture of Edouard Manet. The presentation was an excellent juxtaposition of pastel portraits versus photographic depictions of women in late 19th-century Paris.

Rebecca Houze closed this section with an intriguing look at the influence of German architect, art critic and professor Gottfried Semper's, "Theory of Costume" on modern art and design in Vienna.

The last group of papers linked costume and science. Charlotte Nicklas, an MA candidate at The Bard Graduate Center, presented her paper on costume, chemistry and early aniline dyes. Joel Thompson discussed her recent conservation of complex, mixed media, 1850s fancy evening headdresses, in the MFA's collection. The day



photo credit: Susan Hannel

Carrie Alyea, Amanda Wunder and Pat Warner

concluded with an in-depth tour of *High Style and Hoopskirts: 1850s Fashion* led by exhibition curator, Lauren Whitley and textile conservator, Claudia

Iannuccilli. The group was treated to first hand information about the show's development, conservation work, and installation.

The day's events also included the region's annual meeting where board members spoke of up-coming regional events and news from national. A silent auction, with items ranging from great textile books, to fun vintage accessories, raised close to \$500 for the region's student scholarship. All and all, even with the continuing snow and rain it turned out to be a great day. Members enjoyed juried papers, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and had ample opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues from around the region.

The Region I Board would like to offer a special thank you to the entire staff of the Textile and Fashion Arts Department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Your help in planning and managing so many of the logistics on the day of was invaluable. Thanks for helping to make our event such a great success! ☒

Region I Bids High for Its Student Scholars by Ned Lazaro, Region I Education Chair

I am very pleased to report that Region I raised a total of \$574.75 for the student scholarship fund during the March 12th symposium at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The silent auction brought in \$439.75, and registrants gave an additional \$135 with their registration forms. With this kind of generosity and enthusiasm, we can continue our annual scholarship goal to pay the partial costs of one student to attend the National Symposia.

On behalf of everyone on the Region I board, I would like to thank all of you for your continued generosity towards our student scholarship fund. Thank you!



photo credit: Susan Hannel



Helen Burnham

American Textile History Museum Explores the World of Batik in Pair of First Ever US Exhibits

Batik from Courts and Palaces: The Rudolf Smend Collection AND Batik Fashion / American Style

On Display through September 4, 2005



Photo credit: Brian Brake, Auckland

Kudhung Arabic signature Cirebon c. 1900
93 x 238 cm

From courts and palaces to American style, the extraordinary art of batik will be showcased in two special exhibitions opening May 7, 2005 at the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts.

The two new exhibits are titled *Batik From Courts and Palaces: The Rudolf Smend Collection and Batik Fashion / American Style*. Together they explore the rich style and color of batik from its traditional form to its ongoing influence on American contemporary fashion.

Batik From Courts and Palaces features over 35 historic pieces dating from the 1880s to the 1930s. They are on loan from German collector Rudolf G. Smend and include elaborate every day

clothing with intricate patterns and color along with special ceremonial textiles created for the highly sophisticated royal courts of central Java and the export market in Sumatra.

“The complexity, color and sheer beauty of the pieces is a testament to the skilled hands of the Javanese batik artists and the high esteem in which their artistic creations were held by royalty,” said Diane Fagan Affleck, director of interpretation at ATHM.

Batik Fashion/American Style focuses on contemporary fashions by several American designers collaborating with Javanese batik artists. Designers featured include: Nicholas Schwaebe of Dunia, Nia Fliam (American) and Agus Ismoyo (Javanese) of Brahma Tirta Sari, Caroline Miksch of Cinnabar Blue, Mary Vaughn Williams and Rudy Huston of White Rice,

and Lou Zeldis, Hoffman Fabrics and Nadya Collection.

This installation explores how the artistry of batik has influenced American style both in clothing and home décor. Over 25 pieces made of batik fabric are featured, including dresses and sportswear, shirts, scarves, bags, children’s clothing, and bed covers.

Leesa Hubbell, guest curator of the exhibition, says that Westerners who have made their way to Indonesia, “have found a culturally-charged community of batik experts—human repositories of technical knowledge—who regard the art of batik-making as a blessing passed down from their ancestors. They proudly use this knowledge to create prosperity and cultural value for themselves and their descendants—and for the American entrepreneurs with whom they collaborate.”

The exhibits are presented in connection with the June 7–15 World Batik Conference Boston 2005, the first convention in the United States that focuses on batik in its totality.

A catalog of the Smend collection, *Batik: Javanese and Sumatran Batiks from Courts and Palaces*, is available.

Special batik-themed activities for families with children ages 6–12 will run in the Museum’s Textile Learning Center (TLC) through September 4.

“We welcome the opportunity to host these extraordinary exhibits of fashion that carry the batik process forward in history and onto American



Photo credit: Bernhard Schaub, Köln

Tok wi Pasisir c. 1920 Batik seat for the ancestors. Cotton. Cloth often decorated with batik to cover the ancestral altar in a Chinese family home.

A Batik Cultural Experience for Families

May 7–September 4.

During the special exhibition, *Batiks from Courts and Palaces: The Smend Collection, and Batik Fashion American Style*, the TLC features a walk-in traditional Sumatran house with a water buffalo roof. Kids can dress-up in sarong wraps and play a fishing game that reveals cultural facts about the areas of Java and Sumatra. The hands-on learning table includes musical instruments to play, spices to smell, paper palms to fold, and resist-dye fabric patches to create. Families can construct their own Javanese-style puppet to use behind a shadow screen, and enjoy a rich display of Batik and resist-dye artifacts from around the world. Wayang puppets and props from Indonesia, and a community Batik created by Nashua, NH Senior High School students are also on display in the TLC.

The Preservation Society of Newport County

cordially invites the
Costume Society of America-Region 1
 for an afternoon study tour led by exhibition curator - Rebecca Kelly

Saturday July 16, 2005 1-5 pm

Day to include: a gallery talk and viewing of the exhibition at Rosecliff mansion
Portrait of Newport Lady: The Fashionable Woman in 1900
The Story of Gwendolen King Armstrong
 Concluding with a guided tour of the King family's
 summer cottage, Kingscote

Reservations required—free to Costume Society Members
 Suggested \$10 donation to CSA Scholarship fund
 \$25 fee for non-member guests
 Refreshments will be served
 For a detailed agenda and to reserve your place
 Please RSVP to rkelly@newportmansions.org by July 8th, 2005




Gwendolen King Armstrong
 c. 1901

From Jet Set to Jeans: The Wardrobe of Doris Duke at the Newport Restoration Foundation

Doris Duke was born to a life of privilege and wealth, traveling as part of the jet set, and living a life in high society from 1912 until the day she died in 1993. At almost 6' tall she could and did wear the most fabulous fashion the world could offer. Yet she was also an extremely private and quiet person who shunned the spotlight and hid from photographers behind sunglasses and scarves. Followed by photographers and reporters from childhood, her couture was a source of constant public comment.

In the exhibition, *Jet Set to Jeans: The Wardrobe of Doris Duke*, the Newport Restoration Foundation will shed first light upon the fascinating life of Doris Duke by examining the clothing she chose for herself. Clothing is one of the most personal statements that we make throughout our lives and opening her closet is to open up a life cloaked in privacy. It is also a history of high fashion in the 20th century. This exhibit will show visitors how Miss Duke chose to adorn herself both in public and in private, giving visitors a better understanding of this intriguing woman.

Starting in the late 1920s when Duke was in her late teens, the exhibition will take the visitor decade by decade through her life and provide a history of high fashion from each period. Doris Duke was named to the Best Dressed List TWICE in the 1940s for the beautiful, tasteful and stylish clothing she wore during that period. Suits during the day and exquisite dresses for the evening were a basic part of her public image. Besides the beautiful designer clothing she often wore in public photos the exhibit will also examine the private side of Miss Duke who wore jeans on her New Jersey farm, swimsuits to bathe in Newport and Hawaii, and kimonos for lounging around the house. She also chose clothing to fit her active lifestyle of swimming, dancing, skiing, and horseback riding. Many photos of Miss Duke in Hawaii were more likely to show her in a swimsuit and shorts than a designer evening gown. Her designer clothing reflects a classic grace touched with a dash of confidence and innovation. Balenciaga, Madame Grès, Mariano Fortuny, Yves Saint Laurent and Emanuel Ungaro filled her

collection with well-designed, artful and bold clothing. Rough Point opens its doors for 2005 on April 14th; tours run through Nov. 5th. Tickets are available at the Newport Gateway Visitors Center, 401-845-9130 and online at www.newportrestoration.org. We suggest reserving your tour early since tickets are limited, this can be done online. Tickets are \$25.00 children under 12 are free. 


New Shoe Exhibit at the Museum of Newport History

A new exhibit at the Newport Historical Society's Museum of Newport History offers a local look into women's pursuit of fashion in the eighteenth century. *On The Heels of Fashion: 18th Century Women's Shoes From the Collections of the Newport Historical Society* features highlights from the Society's rarely displayed costume collection. Shoes, slippers, and clogs reveal how Newport women



strove to keep up with the latest English and French fashions. In spite of war and trade restrictions, wealthy Newport women (assisted by shoe importers and shoe makers)

kept "on the heels" of ever-changing transatlantic trends.

The exhibit is part of broader changes to the Society's Museum of Newport History in the historic Brick Market (1762) at 127 Thames Street. Changing exhibits, a larger ticket sales area, and increased retail offerings on the building's ground floor will create a more inviting museum entrance and create an orientation center for Newport history. This exhibit of eighteenth-century footwear complements other costume exhibits opening in Newport this spring: an exhibit of nineteenth-century costume at the Preservation Society of Newport County and an exhibit of twentieth-century costume at the Newport Restoration Foundation. 

Happenings Around the Region

Massachusetts



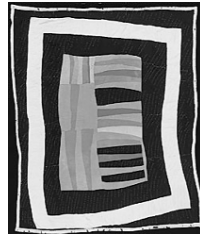
Batik from Courts and Palaces:

Through September 4, 2005
American Textile History Museum,
491 Dutton Street, Lowell, Mass.
978-441-0400 • www.athm.org

The Quilts of Gee's Bend

June 1 - August 21, 2005
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
465 Huntington Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts
617-267-9300 • www.mfa.org

See the quilts The New York Times called "some of the most miraculous works of modern art America has produced," when this widely hailed exhibition stops in Boston on its nationwide tour.



Men's Fashions in the 19th Century

June through August, 2005
Duxbury Rural and Historical Society, Duxbury, MA
781-934-6106 • www.duxburyhistory.org

Rhode Island



Jet Set to Jeans: The Wardrobe of Doris Duke

Newport Restoration Foundation
51 Touro St.
Newport, RI
401-849-7300 • www.newportrestoration.org

Portrait of a Newport Lady: The Fashionable Woman in 1900

On display at Rosecliff, 548 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI through November 10, 2005
The Preservation Society of Newport County
424 Bellevue Ave., Newport, RI
401-847-1000 • www.newportmansions.org

On The Heels of Fashion: 18th Century Women's Shoes From the Collections of the Newport Historical Society

82 Touro St., Newport, RI
401-846-0813 • www.newporthistorical.org

Connecticut

Romance to Rock and Roll: A Fashionable Reprise

May 21 – October 9, 2005
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art
600 Main Street, Hartford, CT
860-278-2670 • www.wadsworthatheneum.org



Québec

Frédérique Petit Miniature Carpets

On Display through June 12, 2005

The Marsil Museum invites you to embark on a voyage into another dimension as you admire the unusual work of French carpet-weaver Frédérique Petit. Her miniature creations may be barely larger than a postage stamp, but they reflect the artist's masterful exploration, in a new take on a great technical tradition.

One, Two, Buckle My Shoe & Children's Clothing

From the Collection of the Marsil Museum,
June 24 to August 28, 2005

The way in which we clothe ourselves is a cultural manifestation reflecting the social mores of a period. Children's clothing, moreover, not only illustrate their position within a society but also its perception of childhood.



Children's afternoon workshops held every Saturday & Sunday.
Musée Marsil, 349,
Promenade Riverside
Longueuil, arrondissement de Saint-Lambert Le Moyne, Québec,
450-923-6601 • www.museemarsil.org



Cool '60s Design

On Display through November 27, 2005

Beads of Life—Eastern and Southern African Adornments

On display through February 26, 2006

Canadian Museum of Civilization
100 Laurier Street,
P.O. Box 3100, Station B,
Gatineau, Quebec
819-776-7000 • www.civilization.ca



Longfellow House Welcomes Costume and Textile Enthusiasts and Researchers



The Longfellow House is a beloved landmark in Cambridge, Massachusetts, now managed by the National Park Service. Members of the Costume Society might enjoy learning about its little-known collection of costumes and textiles.

The Longfellow House, at 105 Brattle Street, was built in 1759 and served as George Washington's headquarters during the siege of Boston in 1775-76. But the big yellow mansion takes its name from the poet and language professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), who lived there for much of the 19th century. In 1843 the poet married Fanny Appleton, daughter of Nathan Appleton,



Child's shirt from Longfellow family collection late 1840s

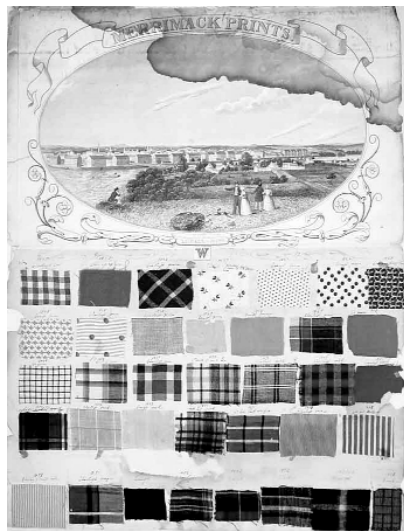
part owner of textile mills at Waltham and Lowell. The bride's father used his wealth to buy the Georgian mansion and refurbish it for the couple.

As a young wife and mother, Fanny Longfellow (1817-1861) often ordered

textiles from her father's mills. The house collection includes pages of Merrimack Prints' fabric samples, marked by Fanny with what garments were made from each pattern.

The Longfellow House collection is unusual in preserving clothing and furnishings accumulated by a single New England family over many decades. The Longfellows were wide-ranging in both their interests and their travels. Thus, from Henry and Fanny's oldest son, Charles (1844-1893), the collection includes clothing he wore as a boy; his Civil War army uniform, complete with bullet holes; and high-style kimono, obi, and other textiles that he collected in Japan in 1871-73.

In all, the Longfellow House collection contains over a thousand textile fragments, providing a chronology of costume and interior decorating styles from the 1840s to the 1950s. All objects in the house have been catalogued by the National Park Service. The



Textile samples from Lowell mills used for Longfellow children's clothing Late 1840s

Longfellow House archives also include some papers of the Appleton family, starting with documents from textile magnate Nathan.



Longfellow House is open to all visitors from June to October, depending on the level of federal funding; look for announcements at <http://www.nps.gov/long/>. Groups can arrange for special tours in the off-season by calling 617-876-4491. Researchers may access the museum archives year-round on Tuesday and Wednesday by contacting archivist Anita Israel at anita_israel@nps.gov.

Simply Montréal— Come Take Another Look!

Permanent exhibition receives an injection of 60s style at the McCord Museum

First opened to the public in 1998, *Simply Montréal — Glimpses of a Unique City* is the jewel in the McCord's crown. A thematic voyage in which photographs, furniture, archival documents and historic dress share the stage and figures from the city's past make memorable appearances, this sweeping and fanciful display rewards McCord visitors with insight into what makes Montréal a metropolis like no other.

Visitors may not be aware, however, that *Simply Montréal* undergoes frequent transformations. Periodic changes of the artifacts on display are a necessity with all permanent exhibitions, for conservation reasons.

The most recent transformation was the nightlife module, located in the section that explores the theme of Enjoying Montréal. In the spring of 2005 it was time to retire the evening dresses, whose silken elegance had brought turn-of-the-century high society to life. To replace them, it was decided to turn to that most stylish decade, the 1960s. The scenario— dressing up for a night on the town—remained the same, but modern fabrics like vinyl have replaced demure silk. Where there once were dance cards and sheet music now there are pop albums. False eyelashes and bright plastic jewelry sum up the 60s "look."

An image of a fashion shoot on Pine Avenue now has also replaced a backdrop illustration of a nineteenth-century charity ball. The smart and stylish young women in this photo capture the spirit of the 60s, when Montréal's fashion industry was coming of age with a host of new designers.

Watch for future rotations in *Simply Montréal* in the coming year. Planned additions include a segment on baseball in the sports and leisure section, as well as new elements in the fur trade display. Proof that there is always something new to see in *Simply Montréal!*





Photo credit: Bernhard Schaub, Köln

Sarong Signature: L. Metz, Pek. Pekalongan c. 1890-1900

Batik from Courts and Palaces:

The Rudolf Smend Collection AND Batik Fashion/American Style—American Textile History Museum, Lowell, MA