

WESTERN REGION NEWS

SPRING 2010

CSA WESTERN REGION MEMBER ELLEN MICHELSON IS LEAD DONOR FOR MAJOR EUROPEAN COSTUME ACQUISITION

by Nancy Fadis
Past President, CSA Western Region

On October 2, 2010 the Los Angeles County Museum of Art debuts selections from a recent major acquisition of European dress of the eighteenth through twentieth centuries. *Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915* will present more than 100 garments and accessories, a majority formerly owned by art dealers Martin Kamer of London, England and Wolfgang Ruf of Beckenried, Switzerland. Ellen Michelson of CSA's Western Region provided the lead donation that enabled LACMA to purchase the collection.

A long-time member of the Costume Council, LACMA's support group for the Costume and Textiles Department, Ellen learned in 2006 that the Department Head, Sharon Takeda, was hoping to acquire the collection. Kamer and Ruf, formerly competitors in the historic dress trade, had merged their holdings and were offering the collection for sale to a small number of museums. LACMA had to move quickly for the possible acquisition of this incredible collection. In October of that year, Ellen accompanied Sharon and LACMA's new CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director, Michael Govan, to



Ellen Michelson.

Basel, Switzerland. Joining them was Costume Council member, Vicki Steele. Formerly a CSA Western Region member (she now works in New York), Vicki had earlier sponsored Ellen for membership in the Costume Council and had brought the collection to Ellen's attention, piquing her interest.

Upon arriving at a warehouse in Basel, the group spent five hours viewing dressed mannequins and rolling racks of men's, women's and children's garments arranged by historical periods. Kamer and Ruf provided background on every piece. Kamer, originally a theatrical costume and set designer, and Ruf, former managing director of his family's furniture manufacturing business, each began acquiring



Émile Pingat
France, active 1860–1896
Detail of Mantle, c. 1891

Wool plain weave and silk velvet with silk and metallic-thread embroidery, glass beads, and ostrich feather trim

Purchased with funds provided by Suzanne A. Saperstein and Michael and Ellen Michelson, with additional funding from the Costume Council, the Edgerton Foundation, Gail and Gerald Oppenheimer, Maureen H. Shapiro, Grace Tsao, and Lenore and Richard Wayne

M.2007.211.38

Courtesy of Los Angeles County Museum of Art



WESTERN REGION

The Western Region of the Costume Society of America is made up of members from Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Northwest Territories, Oregon, Saskatchewan, Washington, Wyoming, and the Yukon Territories.

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MEET THE BOARD

Meghan Grossman Hansen has been the Registrar for the FIDM Museum at the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, Los Angeles for almost two years. Previously she worked as Assistant Registrar at the FIDM Museum, concentrating on the Annette Green Fragrance Collection.



She received her master's degree in 2008 from the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, in Fashion & Textiles: History, Theory, and Museum Practice. Her master's thesis, titled "Louise Dahl-Wolfe and Diana Vreeland: The Collaborative Process in Fashion Photography," focused on the role of magazine fashion editors in the fashion photography process from conception to execution.

Other areas of interest include the history of fashion photography, fashion history as portrayed in literature, collections management and conservation of historic clothing, exhibition design, and standards in museum registration.

As a board member of the Costume Society of America – Western Region, she is excited to be an integral part of planning and executing events. Over the last three years, she has become familiar with the people, activities, and spirit of CSA, and hopes to make her contribution to this fantastic organization through membership to her regional board.

MEMBER NEWS

Jill D'Alessandro has been named Curator of The Caroline and H. McCoy Jones Department of Textile Arts. Jill has been with the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco since 2002 and has curated exhibitions on a diverse variety of subjects including *Vivienne Westwood: 36 Years in Fashion* (presenting curator), *Nan Kempner: American Chic*, *The Language of Beads: Decoding a Collection--The Diane and Sandy Besser Collection*, *Yves Saint Laurent* (co-curator), *Amish Abstractions: Quilts from the Collection of Faith and Stephen Brown*, and *To Dye For: A World Saturated in Color* for the museums.

Congratulations to **Laura Bellew Hannon**, winner of the 2010 Jack Handford Summer Internship sponsored by CSA Western Region. She is currently a PhD candidate in History at the University of California, Riverside, studying Public History, 20th Century United States History and Gender History. This \$2000 award will help support her internship with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, working with Senior Curator and Department Head Sharon Takeda and her staff on an assessment of LACMA's eighteenth through twentieth century collection of men's fashion.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear CSA-Western Region Members,

It is difficult to believe that Jo Ann Stabb has completed her term as President of the Western Region. If you see her at an event, please be sure to thank her for her leadership over the last two years. Ask her what she is going to be doing with all her new-found time!

The summer has been a time of transition for the Western Region Board. We have been sorting out who will perform the various tasks that need to be done. And I am still on a very long learning curve. As I work through this transition, I have been giving a great deal of thought as to what I think we should accomplish during my Presidency. It is easy to have a lot of goals in mind – but not as easy to reach them. So, part of the Region's Board meeting in August (following the program at the Fowler at UCLA) is to discuss what we, as a Board, feel are the priorities for the next two years, both in continuing programs and new initiatives. I will report on this conversation in our next newsletter.

We have two exciting “formal” programs in the works. As you read this, we should be ready to visit the East Bay for a full day of examining exhibitions and collections. Due to a lot of hard work by Inez Brooks-Myers and Heather Vaughan the cost has been kept to a minimum but with a maximum of activity. I am personally looking forward to visiting institutions that I have not seen before. I always find something new and interesting. So, if it is not too late, come and join us.

Be sure to reserve December 4 for our day at The Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The exhibition “Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915” has generated widespread publicity since the museum announced the acquisition of the collection from which the exhibition is drawn. Our annual business meeting will be held in conjunction with this event. The meeting will be short, but such meetings are very important to our organization. It provides members with information about the running of the Region, and, more importantly, offers you the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions.

I have always benefited from the friendships and exchange of ideas that membership in CSA has provided. Therefore, I look forward to meeting and getting to know as many of you as possible during the next two years.

Shelly Foote
satalexandria@aol.com

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Shelly Foote,
 President,
 CSA -WR

ELLEN MICHELSON (CONT.)



Detail of Vest
France, 1789–94

Linen canvas with silk needlepoint, linen plain weave with silk supplementary-warp cut-pile trim and silk embroidery

Purchased with funds provided by Suzanne A. Saperstein and Michael and Ellen Michelson, with additional funding from the Costume Council, the Edgerton Foundation, Gail and Gerald Oppenheimer, Maureen H. Shapiro, Grace Tsao, and Lenore and Richard Wayne

M.2007.211.1078

Courtesy of Los Angeles County Museum of Art

the finest of historic dress from auction houses, estate sales, and dealers approximately twenty-five years ago.

The following day after their viewing, as the group awaited their return flights home at the Zurich airport, Ellen pledged to Michael Govan one-third of the purchase price – sufficient to secure the exclusive right to purchase and to bring the collection to LACMA in 2007. Fundraising for the remaining sum began in earnest and was completed in 2009.

“Studying historic dress tells us so much more than just what people wore. It is a study in cultural anthropology.”

Ellen recalls her inspiration that day to provide, with her husband Michael, the crucial funding:

“I am a person who has a fascination and love of history and historic objects. Historic dress is just one of many objects that I love to look at and study. Studying historic dress tells us so much more than just what people wore. It is a study in cultural anthropology. So many clues are given in one single garment. These clues can tell us about the politics of the period, the religious beliefs of the wearer, the manufacturing and trade industry of the period, the artistic aesthetic of the period and so much more. I understood the importance of this collection and the incredible opportunity that had been presented to LACMA. I wanted to be able to bring such an astonishing collection of fashion to the west coast. This gift to LACMA is also a legacy that I have been able

to leave to my two daughters – both who share in my enthusiasm for the decorative arts and historic costume.”

The Western Region extends kudos to several of its members, past and present, who were involved in the preparation of the exhibition and accompanying publication – Sharon Takeda, Kaye Spilker, Clarissa Esguerra, Nicole LaBouff, Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, Melinda Kerstein, and Sophia Gan .

On December 4, 2010, CSA members will enjoy the curators’ presentation of the Fashioning Fashion exhibition. Please see the invitation enclosed with this issue and be sure to join us.



Detail of Dress (robe à l’anglaise)
France, 1785–90

Silk twill and silk plain-weave stripes

Purchased with funds provided by Suzanne A. Saperstein and Michael and Ellen Michelson, with additional funding from the Costume Council, the Edgerton Foundation, Gail and Gerald Oppenheimer, Maureen H. Shapiro, Grace Tsao, and Lenore and Richard Wayne

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Courtesy of Los Angeles County Museum of Art

CSA WESTERN REGION'S NEW PROGRAM - MEET-UPS!***Programs: When & Where You Want Them!*****By Heather A. Vaughan, President-Elect & Program Chair**

Firstly, I want to thank the Western Region board for appointing me to this position. I'm excited by the opportunities and responsibilities ahead. The diversity of interests that CSA represents – fashion design and history, costume design, living history, historical reproduction, Artwear, Fiberarts, etc. and the geographically spread out nature of our region, presents a unique challenge to the role of Program Chair. My philosophy is that the best way to get your particular interest represented is for you to participate.

To that end, I want to tell you about a new kind of program we're implementing. We are calling them "CSA Meet-Up's" and your participation is key. With these, we will be able to respond quickly to new opportunities and meet your interests more effectively. We are hoping that this kind of informal programs will add value to your CSA Membership. I want to thank those of you who participated in our programming survey a few months ago – we heard you loud and clear. So many of you want more time to socialize, more opportunities to connect with others, and I think we have found a way to do it!

So how will CSA Meet-Up's work? There will be no formal flyer, no registration and best of all.... it will be cheap! I'm envisioning that one of you (any Member of CSA Western) will hear about an event, or a museum exhibition and want to share it with other members. What's the next step? Contact me (heather.a.vaughan@gmail.com) with a date and time you'd like for the gathering. CSA Western will send a note out to the membership with information on the exhibit and your contact email for RSVPs. Then you and those who have RSVP'd show up and go to the exhibit/event together. All you'll have to do is individually pay any standard admissions cost. So far, there are plans for the *Automotivated* exhibit at the Peterson in Los Angeles, and the de Young's newly opened *To Dye For* exhibit. What's on near you?

Of course, this will not replace our regular or 'formal' programming with behind-the-scenes access, curators tours, workshops, etc. In fact, I'm working on some very exciting ideas for 2011. Stay tuned to find out more and always feel free to contact me with ideas, plans, thoughts, questions and critiques! I look forward to seeing you for our East Bay program in September or at the LACMA program in December.

Future Meet-Ups: (Watch your email for details in September):

October 9: Los Angeles: *Automotivated: Streamlined Fashion and Automobiles*

RSVP to: Kimberly Chrisman Campbell, kchrismancampbell@hotmail.com by October 1

October 9: Bellevue, WA: *Arline Fisch: Creatures from the Deep* (Knitted Wire Jewelry)
more information coming soon...

To contribute meet up ideas, please contact Heather Vaughan at heather.a.vaughan@gmail.com

CSA WESTERN REGION INVITES YOU TO ...

A Day in the East Bay: A Celebration of Design Saturday, September 25, 2010



History Gallery,
Oakland Museum of
California.

*Photograph courtesy
of Gordon Chun &
Oakland Museum of
California*

Join curator Inez Brooks-Myers for a very special full day program touring three unique East Bay collections:

- The Oakland Museum of California
- The African American Museum & Library in Oakland
- Lacis Museum of Lace and Textiles in Berkeley

Participants will celebrate the **re-opening of the Art and History galleries** at the Oakland Museum of California. Attendees will also be able to ask for timed tickets to the *PIXAR: 25 Years of Animation* and access to *The Marvelous Museum: A Project by Mark Dion* exhibits. There will be time for a no host lunch at the museum's new Blue Oak Café.

We will then head to The African American Museum & Library at Oakland (AAMLO) together on BART to see *Extraordinary Person, Extraordinary Life*, an exhibit focused on the fashion and costume design career of Oakland designer Henry Delton Williams. His clothing has been worn by some of **Motown's biggest stars**, including Tina Turner, Marvin Gaye and Sherrie Payne of the Supremes.

We'll travel by BART to visit Lacis Museum of Lace and Textiles, which includes the adjacent shop in Berkeley. Here we'll have a unique opportunity to tour their exhibition *Embroidery: The Extraordinary of Needle and Spirit*. Then we'll head to a research/classroom to view privately special pieces from the Lacis Museum collection.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 21

The registration flyer may also be downloaded from our website at: www.costumesocietyamerica.com. Click on Region Sites, select Region V, and then Events.

Annual Meeting and Fashioning Fashion: *European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915*

Saturday, December 4, 2010

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Join the staff of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art for an in-depth look at the exhibition *Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915*. The exhibition tells the story of fashion's aesthetic and technical development from the Age of Enlightenment to World War I. Our special presentation will inform us about the exhibition and the major collection of European men's, women's and children's garments and accessories from which it is drawn. After the presentation, we will be free to view the exhibition. You may also want to see *Eye for the Sensual: Selections from the Resnick Collection*. This exhibition presents a selection of European paintings and sculptures from the collection of Stewart and Lynda Resnick. Their collection is famous for its important eighteenth-century French paintings.

Our annual meeting will be held in conjunction with this program. The meeting will be short, but such meetings are very important to our organization. It provides members with information about the running of the Region, and, more importantly, offers attendees the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions.

For more information about the Los Angeles County Museum of Art go to: www.lacma.org.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 24

The registration flyer is enclosed with the print copy of this newsletter, and appears as a separate attachment in the email version. It also may be downloaded from our website at: www.costumesocietyamerica.com. Click on Region Sites, select Region V, and then Events.

For more information on these programs
or to submit program ideas,
contact Heather Vaughan

at Heather.a.vaughan@gmail.com or
www.costumesocietyamerica.com.

Click on Region Sites and select Region V

EVENTS AROUND THE REGION:

The World Embellished-Lace! **Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art**

Bellvue, WA

May 22 - October 17, 2010

The exhibit combines exceptional examples of fine lace as it embellished people's and doll's clothing in the 18th thru 20th centuries as well as personal and household items of the period and lace just for lace's beautiful self.



Copyright 2010. The Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art.

The Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art is open seven days a week, Monday-Saturday 10AM-5PM and Sunday 1-5PM. Admission is charged. Closed major holidays. For more information, please visit: www.dollart.com

Call for Papers:

Material Culture, Craft & Community: Negotiating Objects Across Time & Place

University of Alberta, Canada

20-21 May 2011

This interdisciplinary conference to be held in our region will explore the varied expressions of craft – material, cultural, social – in past and present societies. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich of Harvard University will be the keynote speaker. Paper proposals and full panels are invited on topics ranging from the history to present practice of craft, issues of production, use, and trade of craft, and the construction and interpretation of the meanings of craft, in the context of personal interactions, local communities, national groups, modes of international circulation, and forms of cultural context. Proposals should be received by 30 November 2010. For further information go to: <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/materialculture>

The Fifth R.L. Shep Triennial Symposium on Textiles and Dress

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)

Saturday, January 15, 2011

In conjunction with *Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915*, LACMA will present a one-day symposium of lectures. Featured speakers will include Akiko Fukai, Director and Chief Curator, Kyoto Costume Institute and Andrew Bolton, Curator, The Costume Institute, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

For more information, please visit www.lacma.org.

Natacha Rambova: A Career in Design **Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Dumke Auditorium**

Thursday, October 7, 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Natacha Rambova changed careers nearly as often as she changed her name. Her work in ballet performance and design, early Hollywood film costume and art direction, as well as her brief fashion design career in New York were innovative for their day. A Salt Lake City native, this interesting and creative character eventually became an Egyptologist – donating much of her antique Egyptian artifacts collection to the Utah Museum of Fine Arts. This lecture will focus on her career in design and the arts, as well as her connection to Salt Lake City. Heather A. Vaughan is currently in the process of researching and writing a book on the subject, under consideration by Texas Tech University Press, tentatively titled *Of Her Own Design: Natacha Rambova's Film Costume & Fashion Design*. More information is available at www.fashionhistorian.net. Vaughan's lecture is free and open to the public. The program will be of particular interest to educators.

To Dye For: A World Saturated in Color **de Young Textiles Galleries, San Francisco, CA** through January 9, 2011

For centuries, artisans have employed the technique of resist dyeing to embellish their textiles. This exhibition, drawn from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco's permanent collection from key private Bay Area collections, explores the use of the resist-dye method from a broad range of cultures and historic periods, with a more in-depth look at practices in India, Japan, Indonesia, and Africa where dyeing techniques predominate in their textile traditions. Examples of resist-dye methods include tie-dye, stitch-resist, ikat, batik, stencil-resist, and mordant-resist dyeing.

Artisans have passed their knowledge down from generation to generation, and the roots of ancient practices can still be found in the artistry of their distant descendants. Techniques proliferated through migration and ancient trade routes, and new techniques developed as the artisans continued to experiment. Today, contemporary artists continue to experiment with both new materials and age-old methods, and through their work these ancient techniques survive.

WORKSHOP REPORT: TAKING PATTERNS FROM HISTORIC GARMENTS

by **Laurie Kurutz, Assistant Professor**
Department of Performing Arts, Theatre
Southern Oregon University

Shelly Foote, President of CSA Western Region, gave a highly technical and very fun workshop exploring a pattern-making method using entomological pins and magnifying glasses. Shelly has used these methods extensively in her own career as a garment historian, which has included thirty-four years in the Division of Social History at the Smithsonian Institution.

This exciting workshop, “Taking Patterns from Historic Garments,” held at the beautiful Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art in Bellevue, Washington, was filled to capacity with enthusiastic members from across the western United States. Shelly designed this workshop to be suitable for all those attending, who included educational members, museum workers, collectors, theatre costume designers and technicians, and serious hobbyists. Each participant brought a garment from which to take a pattern during the course of the day.

Participants learned the method of taking a pattern from an existing, historical garment. Using a magnifying glass to clearly see the grain lines woven into the fabric, and plotting those grain lines



Vanessa Casad (standing), Susan Torntore, Shelly, and Elaine Perderson. *Photograph courtesy of Laurie Kurutz.*



Sandy Allen (standing), Shelly, and Judi Dawaints. *Photograph courtesy of Laurie Kurutz.*

and garment shapes with thin entomological pins, participants were able to discover and document the shape of the pattern pieces within each historical garment. Garment historians use the entomological pins because they are so fine that they do not disturb the garment’s fragile fabric.

I brought a finely printed cotton summer dress from 1912 to document. I discovered that, instead of the straight seams that I assumed were there, the shapes were far more curved. This is why the garment is so graceful and lovely! In paying such close attention to the shape of the pieces in this dress, I felt like I was honoring the work of our ancestors, of our sister-costume/clothing builders of the past. They took such care to create by hand these precious garments: precious in the cost of materials and precious in the amount of time they took to create by hand. I felt a true connection that reached back in time to 1912.

I was not alone in my feelings. Excitement rippled through the workroom as participants, feeling like Sherlock Holmes, revealed the hidden secrets of construction, pattern and shape of their historic garments. All who attended Shelly’s excellent workshop shared the joys of discovery and learning. Everyone agreed that learning this method of pattern making took their understandings of historical garments to whole new levels.

PROGRAM REPORT: SOUTHEAST ASIAN TEXTILES AT THE FOWLER MUSEUM

By Carol Gil

On Saturday, August 21, CSA Western region members experienced various aspects of the lives and textile artwork of Southeast Asian women at the Fowler Museum at UCLA. Fowler senior curator Roy W. Hamilton led the group in a tour of three installations: *Nini Towok's Spinning Wheel: Cloth and the Cycle of Life in Kerek, Java*; *Weavers' Stories from Island Southeast Asia*; and *Country and Urban Batiks from Java*. Though the latter exhibit is due to close on September 5th, the first two will continue to be on display until December 5, 2010. The displays contain batik and ikat textiles used to construct the draped and wrapped garments common to many of the islands of Indonesia such as Timor and Java as well the Philippines.



As one would expect from any assembly of CSA members, there were many questions for Roy, who co-curated the exhibits with Rens Heringa and other staff. These ranged from how the textiles and costumes were mounted for exhibition to detailed questions on batik and ikat processes and life experiences of the artists themselves. In the *Weavers' Stories* display there was a continuous loop video installation showing subtitled interviews with the 8 women whose works were on display in the adjoining rooms. As Roy explained, the goal of the exhibits was not only to show these painstakingly decorated and often hand woven textiles but to explore the social and cultural milieu of the artists themselves. A catalog of the Nini Towok display is currently available in the Fowler's gift shop (it's number 9 in the Fowler Museum Textile Series) as well as commercially printed batiks and some stunning hand woven and hand waxed batiks for sale.



Top and bottom photos, courtesy of Carol Gil. Center photo, courtesy of Heather Vaughan

EXHIBITION REVIEW: AMERICAN WOMAN

American Woman in New York

By Inez Brooks-Myers

American Woman was the theme that carried through two exhibitions and a two day symposium held in New York in May, 2010.

On May 21, at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Jan Glier Reeder, Consulting Curator for the Brooklyn Museum of Art Costume Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, explained to the audience what she and her team had been doing the past few years at Brooklyn. The Brooklyn Museum's costume collection is being merged with that of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

This project necessitated the careful reexamination of each item in Brooklyn's costume collection. Everything was looked at, re-documented and imaged. Costume Society of America members will be familiar with the strong contributions to the collection made by Robert Riley and Elizabeth Ann Coleman when each of them headed the collection at Brooklyn. Reeder singled out Coleman for the stunning work she had done in exhibitions, showing works by Worth and her landmark exhibition on Charles James.

This long examination process resulted in an exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, *American High Style: Fashioning a National Collection*, May 7 – August 1, 2010; a complimentary exhibition (across the bridge) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art was named "*American Woman: Fashioning a National Identity*, May 5 – August 14, 2010.

In Brooklyn, Reeder conducted a walkthrough of the exhibition, lovingly pointing out features of various garments. She stopped at the fancy dress costume by Worth, c. 1870, acquired by Brooklyn in 1983, and pointed out the Turkish pants that are part of the lavishly embroidered outfit. She moved on to a section featuring the work of Elsa Schiaparelli. A dress, c. 1939-41, made of a blue fabric with seed packet appliqués, had been given to the museum by Millicent Rogers in 1951. A startling feature of the dress is a large zipper running all the way down the back. Several Charles James evening dresses were beautifully mounted in the exhibition—garments such as Four Leaf Clover, 1953, a ball gown

with a large and structured skirt. (<http://www.youtube.com/user/metmuseum#p/u/13/FkjCHgvToWo>)

The next morning, the symposium re-convened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Harold Koda, Curator in Charge of the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art introduced Andrew Bolton, Curator of Costume at the Met who spoke on "American Woman: Fashioning a National Identity." His pictorial "walkthrough" took us through various galleries showing sportswear, early 20th century politically active women "Mr. President, How Long Must Women Wait for Liberty," and the glamour of Hollywood, including Anna May Wong's Dragon dress, 1934. The exhibition culminates with a pictorial gallery set to the music of "American Woman" featuring images of American women—Michelle Obama, Jackie Kennedy, Amelia Earhart, to name only a few. (<http://www.youtube.com/user/metmuseum#p/u/14/eAAc4i8SFbE>)

Koda introduced Dilys Blum, Senior Curator of Costume and Textiles at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Blum was the moderator for the morning panel of speakers for "On Collection Development." After Blum, Inez Brooks-Myers of the Oakland Museum of California, Gillion Carrara of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Joanne Dolan Ingersoll of the Museum of Art at the Rhode Island School of Design, Phyllis Magidson of the Museum of the City of New York and Pamela of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts each spoke about the collections at their respective institutions. (http://www.youtube.com/user/metmuseum#p/u/12/oCN_bKMUKkg)

After a lunch break Bolton introduced the afternoon panel "On Exhibition Interpretation": Shelley Fox of the Parson's School of Design, Timothy Long of the Chicago History Museum, Dennita Sewell of the Phoenix Art Museum, Sharon Takeda of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Kohle Yohannan, a cultural historian and independent curator. (<http://www.youtube.com/user/metmuseum#p/u/11/2wPjFxbtsHI>)

The symposium was very interesting because it showed the cooperation between two major museums, and offered possibilities for future strategies to be copied by others. It was also exciting to be able to visit two large costume exhibitions, linked with a single focal point.

REPORT FROM THE CSA NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, KANSAS CITY

2010 CSA National Symposium Features Research Findings of many Western Region Members

By Jo Ann C. Stabb

Midwestern hospitality combined with valuable learning experiences to create a memorable 36th Annual Meeting and Symposium held in Kansas City, Missouri. In addition to an insightful and candidly autobiographical presentation by Keynote Speaker Designer Michael Vollbracht, the CSA Western Region was well represented by members who presented their latest research findings in juried papers and presentations.

Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, spoke on “From Caterpillar to Butterfly and Back: A Gilet of the French Revolution.”

Clarissa Esguerra, also of LACMA, analyzed of one of the garments that will be included in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s highly anticipated exhibition “Fashioning Fashion” that Western Region members will visit on December 4th, in her paper entitled “Refashioning Fashion: Dressmaking Techniques of a mid-1830s English Day Dress Remade for the mid-1840s.”

Shelly Foote, President of the Western Region and formerly with the Smithsonian Institution, presented the evolution of “The Duster: Roads and Rails.”

Elizabeth Galindo, PhD. candidate University of California, Davis, whose paper entitled “Headaches, Heartaches, and Euphoria in Creating Historical Costumes for a 21st-Century Hollywood Film,” shared insights from some of her interviews with contemporary film costume designers.

Naomi Spinak, Independent Scholar from Bainbridge Island, Washington, presented her



Jacket designed by Keynote Speaker, Michael Vollbracht.
Photograph by Louise Coffey-Webb

research on “Big Belly Couture: Maternity Clothing Comes of Age in the 21st Century,” and Eileen Trestain of Fort Vancouver Washington, presented a Professional Development workshop on “Costuming and Administrating a Re-Enactment Program.”

In between meetings, attendees had the opportunity to visit many unique local sites, including the National World War I Museum with its state-of-the-art installations, the sophisticated Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art featuring fashion photographs by Edward Steichen, the Kansas City Historic Garment District, the home of Hallmark cards, as well as the fascinating Arabia Steamboat Museum exhibition of trade goods and treasures discovered aboard a ship that had sunk in the Missouri River in 1856.

As the Symposium came to a close, local Memorial Day celebrations were in full swing at the World War I Museum right next door to our Westin Crown Center Hotel with authentic canons firing during the Kansas City Symphony’s outdoor concert rendition of the 1812 Overture. Quite a dramatic finale to CSA’s very successful 2010 Symposium!



*Newsletter of the Western Region of the
Costume Society of America*

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Oakland, CA 94610

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It's starting to feel a bit like Fall here in the Bay Area, but only just. Last weekend I attended the Scottish Highlands Festival out in Pleasanton, CA and the temperature was bordering on 90 degrees. In spite of the heat, the crowd was sporting lots of tartan, including woolen scarves, socks and the requisite kilts. It was wonderful to see a love for costume and pageantry embraced on such a personal level by thousands of attendees, undaunted by the hot weather. And the music was spectacular, whether fiddle or bagpipe, classic or contemporary.



Thanks again to all the members who contributed to this issue. As a local, I am particularly excited about the East Bay event this month. Inez has done a wonderful job putting it together, and I am really proud of the work the Art and History Departments have done bringing the new galleries to life at the Oakland Museum of California. AAMLO always puts on a great show, and Lacis (sigh) is forever enchanting, both in their exhibits and their wonderful store. Hope to see you all there, and keep the great articles and photos coming! The deadline for the Spring Newsletter is February 15, 2011.

Best regards,

Allyson Hollingsworth
Newsletter Editor
CSA Western Region