“That’s a feather in your cap!” Consider the fascination humans have long had for adding feathers to apparel. Flights of Fancy explores the historical and contemporary use of feathers in western fashion. It details the origin of feathers commonly used in clothing, the international feather trade, activism for the protection of endangered bird populations, and the psychological appeal and sartorial meaning of wearing feathers. In addition to utilizing the Goldstein’s collection, bird study skins, mounts, and prints from the Bell Museum of Natural History will be featured in the exhibit.

Feathers in fashion are used as an opulent display to garner attention from others. This use parallels the purpose of feathers in nature, namely to attract attention to intimidate and for courting/mating rituals. As feathers became cheaper and more prevalent, a shift occurred in the social class of those who wore feathers. The popularity of feather adornment at the turn of the last century led to the endangerment of several bird populations and in extreme cases, extinction. This incited activism against the use of feathers in fashion, which ultimately resulted in legislation prohibiting use of certain types of birds’ feathers.

Two main types of feathers are utilized in fashion: contour/quill and down. Contour feathers are stiff, crisp, and structurally rigid, while down is soft and pliable. The tactile differences in these feathers are reflected in the differences in the sartorial meanings each convey.

Visitors will gain an understanding of feather structure and the types of birds that have been hunted for feathers. Visitors will be invited to examine the history of feather use in dress and the environmental activism it sparked. They will also be presented with information on the social connotations associated with feathers in historical and contemporary dress.

In conjunction with the Bell Museum of Natural History and The Raptor Center, co-curators Jean McElvain (GMD Assistant Curator) and Angelina R. Jones (GMD Research Assistant) utilized their knowledge of the Goldstein Museum of Design apparel collection to illustrate the aspects of feathers critical/crucial to their use in fashion. Special joint programs will accompany the exhibit.

Exhibition and programs partially sponsored by the University of Minnesota Summer Session, Summer Cultural Programs.

To receive this newsletter electronically, send your name and e-mail address to gmd@umn.edu.
WE GROW BY OUR DREAMS
—Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States 1856–1924

New Growth
It’s been a long winter and a tough year. Warm weather is welcome after the chill. The longer days signal new growth in our yards and gardens and inspire dreams of new challenges. As the end of the school year approaches, many students transition from regular classes into the excitement of graduation, summer job, or travel. It also signals the end of the GMD’s fiscal year on June 30th.

This year, we are working with the University Foundation on a new fiscal-year-end campaign that will create support for GMD’s important educational experiences that benefit over 15,000 students, guests, and scholars that annually visit our galleries and research center. Please watch for this mailing and help us grow these experiences for more students and for you.

As an example, consider what these investments in GMD’s important educational mission can do:
- $1,500—enables the purchase of a new mannequin with a plaque in honor of your gift
- $1,000—makes GMD greatest need possible (help us select what that might be)
- $500—subsidizes a community program that includes collection objects
- $100—finances preservation cleaning of delicate collection objects
- $50—supports the purchase of archival boxes for fragile textiles
- $25—funds staff time to assist a student study collection objects

In this newsletter, look for additional news of the growth of GMD’s important educational experiences that benefit over 15,000 students, guests, and scholars that annually visit our galleries and research center. Please watch for this mailing and help us grow these experiences for more students and for you.

UPCOMING EXHIBITION
MAO TO NOW: CHINESE FASHION FROM 1949 TO THE PRESENT
October 2, 2010—January 17, 2011
Curators: Dr. Juquan Wu, Assistant Professor, College of Design, University of Minnesota
Dr. Marilyn DeLong, Professor and Associate Dean for Research & Outreach, College of Design, University of Minnesota
Mingxin Bao, Professor, Fashion, Art & Design Institute, Donghua University

Sweeping changes occurred in Chinese culture and society between 1949 and the present which are clearly reflected in the evolution of Chinese fashion. This exhibit examines the dramatic transformation of women’s fashion in China during this tumultuous 60–year period. Divided into two time periods, visitors will explore the peasant suit of the Mao era (1949–1977) and the world influences brought by the opening up of China in the post–Mao era (1978 to present) when Chinese fashion increasingly exhibited a unique melding of Chinese and Western design expression. Today, cutting-edge Chinese fashion designers’ creations are as dramatic as European haute couture, but with a unique Chinese aesthetic. The work of four top Chinese fashion designers will be included in the exhibit. Photography will illustrate the dramatically different characteristics of fashion in the two periods.

A symposium follows the exhibition opening. Visiting Chinese professors and designers will give presentations. The symposium will include a series of public lectures and can be taken for course credit.

Medieval chain mail and delicate ladies’ handbags
What do medieval chain mail and an early 20th century metal mesh handbag have in common? They were made with the same time-consuming hand process of shaping and soldering metal rings together. In the Goldstein Museum of Design’s collection of over 700 women’s handbags, there are 24 metal mesh handbags. Three of these handbags illustrate specific characteristics that contributed to their popularity.

Mesh handbags became fashionable in the late 1800s and remained popular into the 1930s. The bags usually had a chain strap or handle, a frame with a clasp, and were originally hand made of precious metals such as gold and silver. These early mesh purses were very costly because of the valuable raw materials and labor intensive production process.

In 1912, the Whiting and Davis Company acquired the patent for a fine mesh producing machine, which enabled the company to mass produce mesh handbags for the first time. With lower labor costs and the ability to use less costly materials, the handbags became accessible to the growing middle class.

With the growing popularity of mesh metal handbags, Whiting and Davis developed new handbag designs with special features. These features often reflected the art style and social practices of the time. Such features are seen in the highlighted bags: the frames with fossil and free flowing Arts and Craft filigree and modernist Art Deco design, and an adjustable strap to secure around the wrist while dancing.

In 1927, Whiting and Davis introduced the painted or enamelled mesh ring bag, which was called “Dresden mesh”. The exceptionally fine paisley patterned bag is an example of this technique. The texture of the ring mesh gives the bags an impressionistic water color appearance. These bags were more expensive than flat ring mesh bags and did not wear as well. Consequently, there are fewer of this type in good condition and even fewer are housed in collections.

GMD would like to thank Deborah DeBrown, Felice Wender, and Zelia Goldberg who donated these mesh bags. Donations such as these that enable GMD to develop a comprehensive collection for the study of innovative design.
DEAR FRIENDS—HAPPY SPRING!

I’m so pleased with the progress the Friends of the Goldstein have made during my first term as your President. When I met with the board of directors for the first time in August 2009, I shared my vision for the coming year. It was simply stated, however quite challenging. I asked that the board work with me on two things: 1) raising $25,000 for the Goldstein to help cover the shortfall due to the University’s budget cuts and 2) increase membership to 400 based on a current membership of 208. The $25,000 revenue would come from profits of Friends events, partner events, and fundraising. The targeted increase for membership would come from membership drives and the EastCliff membership reception. To date, I can say that we have been successful. Our income from events, fundraisers, and community partners has more than surpassed $25,000, and you know what? It wasn’t that challenging. I THANK YOU for your continuous support of our events and programming!

In regard to membership, I want to thank the Friends Membership Committee for leading two very successful membership drives. The first was in February with associates of fellow member, Joy Teken. Over 45 individuals came to McNeal Hall and attended an evening of fashion with Jean McElvain presenting the stories of textile and design with the garments as well as tour the storage for the Goldstein collection. Guests were able to get up close and personal with the garments as well as tour the storage for the Goldstein collection. The meeting will start at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, May 12 in Room 274. Watch for your invitation and pray in the mail.

The Friends Annual Garden Party and Fundraiser is Thursday, May 20 in the HGA Gallery at Rapson Hall from 5:30–9:00 pm. At this year’s party, we will have salon-style modeling of Jonyville and Russell Bournier collections as well as gardening and landscaping tips from Bobby Jansen, of GROW with KARE-11. We will have a reception, silent auction and entertainment by the Porisoba Hot Club. Please send in your reservations by May 13. If you want to sponsor the event or need additional information, call 612.624.7434.

As I close this message, I want to thank all of the volunteers, the board of directors, and YOU for everything you did to make this year so successful. Together, we have made a difference. Imagine the possibilities for next year!

Until next time…….

Linda Hersom
President, Friends of GMD

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McNeal–St. Paul Campus
The Goldstein Museum’s gallery is in 241 McNeal Hall and the Research Center is in 333 McNeal, 1985 Buford Avenue.

HOURS
The gallery is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 10 am–4 pm, Thursday 10 am–8 pm, and weekends 10 am–8 pm.

ADMISSION AND PARKING
Admission is free. Parking is available at the nearby Gortner Ramp located at 1595 Gortner Avenue.

The Jerome Joss Internship is awarded annually to a graduate student in a College of Design graduate program.

Alix Nettnay announces award of two internships

The Jerome Joss Internship was awarded annually to a graduate student in a College of Design graduate program. The Jerome Joss Internship, funded by the Estate of Mabel Jerome Joss, is awarded to a College of Design graduate student to develop a public program based on the Goldstein Museum of Design’s collection.

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GMD GALLERY, MCNEAL HALL

FLIGHTS OF FANCY: A HISTORY OF FEATHERS IN FASHION
June 12–September 12, 2010
Opening: Friday, June 11, 6–8 pm
Presentation: 6:30 pm
Curators: Jean McElvan, PhD., Angelina R. Jones

A proliferation of contemporary trend-setters. The exhibition traces the evolution of feathers into a symbol of status, wealth, and power throughout human history.

Related Event:
Talk: Wednesday, September 8, 2010, 5 PM
Amy D. Scarborough is a recent graduate of the Department of Design and Human Environment at Oregon State University. She will present research from her doctoral dissertation entitled “Fashion, Media, and the Legitimacy of Design”.

HGA GALLERY, RAPSON HALL

MARCH AND MLA THESIS AND CAPSTONE PROJECTS
May 5–September 5, 2010

Display of Masters of Architecture graduate theses and Masters of Landscape Architecture graduate capstone projects.

ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LIBRARY, RAPSON HALL

OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD: HAT HABITATS
June 4–September 3, 2010
Opening: Friday, June 4, 5:30–7:00 pm

The exhibition will feature the work of artists Cynthia Rapacz and Ryan Haro. The show exhibits a mélange of artistry including photography, design, fashion, and architecture that become fanciful vignettes of the life of the hat.

SPECIAL EVENTS

DIG DESIGN: THE ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY FUNDRAISER
Thursday, May 20, 5:30 pm Wine, Hors D’oeuvres and Silent Auction
7:00 pm Program
HGA Gallery, Rapsion Hall, East Bank Campus

With emcee and presenter Bobby Jensen of GROW with KARE segment, Salon-style presentation of Jaynelye and Russel Bourneima collections, and music by the Parasite Hot Club.

Related Event:
Symposium: October 2–3, 2010
A two day symposium in McNeal Hall follows the exhibition opening on October 1, where noted Chinese fashion critics, scholars, and designers will give presentations.

GMD DONORS—MAY 1–AUGUST 31, 2009

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Designer Wang Yiyang, owner of fashion brands ZUCZUG and CHANGANG
Design Liu Canming, owner of fashion brands ZGE, CM - Loose, Lordship, & LIB MAX
Dr. Hatsi Clark, Dean of the School of Art and Design History and Theory at Parsons The New School for Design.
A HISTORY OF FEATHERS IN FASHION

June 12 – September 12, 2010

Curators: Jean McElvain, Ph. D, Assistant Curator; Angelina R. Jones, GMD Graduate Assistant

GOLDSTEIN MUSEUM OF DESIGN