

THE PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON HOUSE
EXHIBITION AND GALA

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FASHIONING
POWER

FASHIONING
PEACE



MAY 2024

The President Woodrow Wilson House

On March 4, 1921, upon retiring from eight years in office, President Woodrow Wilson and his second wife, Edith, moved from the White House into their new home—just a mile and a half away—at 2340 S Street, NW in Washington, D.C.’s Kalorama neighborhood. The former president lived here until his death on February 3, 1924. Edith called it home until her passing on Woodrow Wilson’s birthday, December 28, 1961, at which time she bequeathed the house and its furnishings to the National Trust for Historic Preservation to serve as a monument to President Wilson. The timeless home of our 28th president, perfectly preserved from the 1920s, serves as an unforgettable backdrop for learning about our heritage as Americans.

The Trust opened the doors of the museum in 1963 for visitors to explore this significant site with over 8,400 one-of-a-kind historic artifacts.

We preserve and steward the house, collections, landscapes, and its full and dynamic history, and use them to provide forward-thinking and inclusive discussions, programs, and community activities that are relevant today.

We use the backdrop of a historic house museum in the heart of Washington, D.C. to serve as a community resource, a hub for conversation that explores current social, racial, political, and economic issues through the lens of history. We use this platform to examine our civil liberties and the ideals that unite us as Americans. We strive to be a trusted place to learn from the past. We are a catalyst of change by confronting our history.

We are accessible to all and serve our community through public and private tours, rentals, exhibitions, and educational programming.



THE PRESIDENT
WOODROW WILSON HOUSE



Welcome to the ***Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace*** exhibition and gala, an event to celebrate, explore, and enjoy this one-of-a-kind, first-of-its-kind, exhibition. As the Executive Director of the President Woodrow Wilson House, a Site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, it is my honor to share with you a celebration of fashion and its significant role on the global stage.

Our goal was to create a platform unlike any other, where designers from around the world could showcase how they dress their dignitaries and leaders, not for the red carpet, but for the world stage. Tonight, we bring you over 35 incredible fashions from across the globe, each piece telling its own story of power, identity, and peace-making.

We chose tonight, the first Monday in May, to coincide with the Met Gala in New York City. ***Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace*** stands as a testament to Washington's unique position as the intersection of world diplomacy. It is here in Washington, D.C., amidst the narratives of leadership and diplomacy, that we seek to showcase how fashion truly has the power to create peace, dialogue, and understanding across cultures.

In this inaugural year, we are honoring the late Ambassador Esther Coopersmith, an American diplomat, philanthropist and neighbor on S Street who truly understood and believed in the power of diplomacy through any means, including fashion. Ms. Ann Hand has personally designed a pin for the Wilson House honoree, modeled after the brooch Edith Wilson is wearing in her portrait hanging in the Wilson House Dining Room. In Ambassador Coopersmith's honor, the pin will be called the "Esther Pin."

The President Woodrow Wilson House provides a meaningful and symbolic venue that enriches the thematic essence of the exhibition and gala, inviting reflection on the historical, cultural, and diplomatic roles that fashion has played and continues to play on a global platform. Edith Wilson was the first First Lady to travel internationally during an American president's term in office, setting a standard for dressing for the international and diplomatic stage. She dressed the part, recognizing she was representing the United States among other world leaders. In her retirement from the White House, Edith hosted every living First Lady of her time at her home on S Street. Edith's iconic fashion sense and her hospitality are the inspiration for this exhibition and gala.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our co-chairs, the host committee members, the incredible designers, and to you, our distinguished guests, for embracing this vision and joining us tonight. Together, we celebrate the diverse and dynamic ways in which fashion contributes to the global dialogue around peace. This event was made possible in part by generous donations and ongoing support by Cary Fuller, Ed Gerber, Jim Dicke, II, Tony Atkiss, Nicole Alfandre Halbreiner, Henri and Chris Keller, Kelly and Joel Minton, and Dorothy and Ken Woodcock.

A special note of gratitude goes to my dear friend Indira Gumarova, President of *Diplomacy & Fashion*, whose inspiration and friendship have been pivotal to bringing ***Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace*** to life.

Thank you all for being a part of this extraordinary journey.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth".

Elizabeth A. Karcher
Executive Director, President Woodrow Wilson House

Welcome to our inaugural signature event, ***Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace Exhibition and Gala***, at the President Woodrow Wilson House!

As we celebrate this spectacular exhibition from around the world, we would like to honor the memory of Ambassador Esther Coopersmith who passed away on March 26, 2024. For over 70 years, Esther was an American diplomat, philanthropist, political lobbyist, and a champion for women’s rights in many arenas. She brought people together from different cultures, religions, and backgrounds, and we are proud to honor her posthumously at this year’s inaugural event. We will never forget her many accomplishments and her generosity as our neighbor on S Street NW.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the members of the host committee, our Executive Director Elizabeth Karcher, and the Wilson House staff who have worked tirelessly to make this evening possible. Additionally, we’d like to thank the 34 countries and territories and ambassadors who are participating in tonight’s exhibit by loaning us attire from their countries, including the stories and craftsmanship behind the attire of their world leaders. Last, but not least, we’d like to thank all our guests for attending and supporting this evening’s event. We greatly appreciate your support of our inaugural gala and the President Woodrow Wilson House, which opened its doors to the public in 1963, examining the impact of President Wilson’s consequential presidency and, more recently, taking an honest appraisal of his triumphs and shortcomings.

We hope you enjoy the evening!

Our sincere thanks,



Amanda Innes
Co-Chair,
Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace



Kelly Dinglasan Minton
Co-Chair,
Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace

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THIS YEAR'S HONOREE FOR
FASHIONING POWER, FASHIONING PEACE EXHIBITION AND GALA
IS THE LATE AMBASSADOR ESTHER COOPERSMITH.

Statement from President Biden on the Passing of Esther Coopersmith

MARCH 28, 2024

Esther Coopersmith shaped history. A skilled diplomat, committed advocate, and genuine bridge-builder, she helped forge a ground-breaking peace accord and energetically strengthened international organizations dedicated to human equality. She was a dedicated public servant and legendary hostess. And as Jill and I knew firsthand, she was a wonderful friend.

Growing up in Wisconsin and the child of immigrants, Esther's character was forged by the values of decency and hard work. She deeply understood the power of bringing people together for the common good; often, she did that literally around her dinner table. She dedicated her considerable diplomacy skills to the work of peace, supporting the Camp David Accords and working to foster dialogue and understanding between people of different cultures and faiths, especially in the Middle East. For that, she was the second woman to receive the United Nations Peace Prize.

Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, Esther worked tirelessly to advance women's rights, including as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations and as an advisor to the U.S. Commission to the United Nations Status of Women Commission. She remained committed to the cause of building peace and understanding until the very end, joining Jill this past summer in Paris to mark the United States' reentry into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

When Esther believed in something—or someone—she would often go to great lengths to show her support. I saw this up close as a 29-year-old candidate for Senate. Esther was one of my early boosters, and her belief in me meant the world. Over the years, our conversations inspired, challenged, delighted, and energized me.

Jill and I are keeping Esther's family—including her four children and eight grandchildren—close to our hearts. We will miss her dearly.



Why the Woodrow Wilson House

The Woodrow Wilson House serves as a fascinating historical site, offering an intimate glimpse into the life of the 28th President of the United States, reflecting on his significant contributions to national and international affairs during a pivotal era in American and world history.

Edith Wilson's pioneering role as the first First Lady to accompany her husband internationally, showcasing her understanding of the power of dressing for the world stage and her influence on diplomatic fashion, is the inspiration for the exhibition.



Transforming First Lady Edith Wilson's Brooch

The *Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace* logo is inspired by the emblematic Doves of Peace brooch crafted by René Lalique and presented to Edith Wilson at the Hotel de Ville (City Hall) in Paris, France in December 1918. This gift symbolizes a profound moment in history because it commemorates the Wilsons' visit to Paris after the Armistice of WWI, where they sought to realize President Wilson's vision for world peace during the negotiations of the Treaty of Versailles, embodying the spirit of peace and diplomacy that defines their legacy.



In a commissioned portrait by Seymour M. Stone, which hangs above the fireplace in the Wilson House Dining Room, Edith is wearing the brooch, affixed to her right hip.

The Esther Pin



The Esther Pin, designed by Ms. Ann Hand, is a splendid piece of jewelry with deep historical and cultural significance. It not only draws inspiration from René Lalique's original Peace Brooch, given to Edith Wilson during her 1918 visit to Paris, but also honors the legacy of a remarkable diplomat, the late Ambassador Esther Coopersmith. Named after Ambassador Coopersmith, the pin symbolizes her distinguished career and her exemplary contributions to diplomacy.

Ambassador Coopersmith, known for her efforts in fostering international dialogue and cooperation, is the first honoree of the *Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace Exhibition and Gala* at the President Woodrow Wilson House. This event celebrates the intersection of fashion and diplomacy, reflecting on how both can be powerful tools in international relations. The Esther Pin perfectly embodies this theme, merging artistic design with historical reverence. All future honorees of the *Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace Exhibition and Gala* will receive an Esther Pin.

Like its biblical namesake, Queen Esther, who used wisdom and courage to save her people, the Esther Pin is designed to evoke the qualities of leadership and grace. Ms. Hand's reimagining of Lalique's original brooch incorporates modern design elements

while maintaining the spirit of its historical inspiration. The pin features motifs of doves, laurels, and olive branches, universal symbols of peace, and is crafted to resonate with both historical enthusiasts and contemporary audiences.

The Esther Pin is a piece of wearable art that carries the legacy of its original inspiration forward, and it is a tribute to a diplomat who exemplified the virtues of peace and diplomacy. Future honorees of *Fashioning Power, Fashioning Peace* and recipients of the Esther Pin will carry with them a piece of history and a symbol of the enduring impact that thoughtful, committed diplomacy and the grace of fashion and dressing for an international stage can have on the world. This connection between past and present, art and history, is what makes the Esther Pin a significant and meaningful piece in the realm of diplomatic and cultural memorabilia.

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON HOUSE

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COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES REPRESENTED IN
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EXHIBITION 2024:

ALBANIA	MEXICO
AZERBAIJAN	MOLDOVA
BAHRAIN	MOROCCO
BRAZIL	MOZAMBIQUE
BULGARIA	NIGERIA
BURUNDI	PAKISTAN
CAMEROON	PARAGUAY
CHINA	PHILIPPINES
CZECH REPUBLIC	POLAND
ECUADOR	PUERTO RICO
ESTONIA	ROMANIA
FRANCE	SAUDI ARABIA
GUATEMALA	SINGAPORE
INDONESIA	THAILAND
KAZAKHSTAN	UKRAINE
LITHUANIA	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
LUXEMBOURG	VIETNAM
MALDIVES	

ALBANIA



CREDIT: ARKA EKELMENDIT

DESIGNER:
Arka e Kelmendit

DESIGNED FOR:
Collectible Item

MATERIALS USED:
Wool, delicate metal
thread, and beads

The “Xhubleta,” a timeless traditional handcrafted garment dating back 4,000 years, was worn by Albanian women in their daily lives across the communities of Northern Albania, Northern Macedonia, Kosovo, and Montenegro. Characterized by its undulating bell form, it is predominantly black with colorful embroidered motifs. The crafting process entails preparing the shajak (woven felt), cutting, sewing, and embroidering symbolic figures.

Today, the Xhubleta is worn to embody honor, dignity, independence, and individuality, serving as a powerful symbol with immense cultural significance and representing woman empowerment.

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN



DESIGNER:

Konul Valibayli, Baku National Dress House, Azerbaijan

DESIGNED FOR:

Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan

MATERIALS USED:

Zarkhara, silk, velvet, and rose velvet

This dress pays homage to the first female diplomat of the Muslim East, Sara Khatun. She came to have great political influence during the reign of her son Uzun Hassan (1457-1478) the mighty ruler of the Azerbaijani state of Agh Goyunlu. She was a skillful diplomatic mediator and led efforts to resolve disputed issues and bring peace. Sara Khatun was well-respected in the West, and her missions to the Mamluks, Timurids, and Venice are well-noted in history. Foreign ambassadors frequently came to her to intervene with her son on their behalf.

This dress recalls the powerful history of female Azerbaijani diplomats.



KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN



DESIGNER:

Kingdom of Bahrain
Manufacturer; Handstitched by
Bahraini Craftsman Mohamed
Saleh AlZari

DESIGNED FOR:

Women to wear to weddings,
engagements, and official
celebrations

MATERIALS USED:

Silk, chiffon, golden embroidery

The Bahraini “Thob Al Nashel” was chosen for its embodiment of tradition, elegance, and cultural significance. Specifically, the pattern known as “Daqat AlNeera,” symbolizes women of power in society, revered for their active roles and esteemed status within the community. Crafted from luxurious silk and chiffon fabrics adorned with golden trimmings, it represents not just fashion excellence, but also the empowerment of women.

Worn during prestigious occasions, it serves as a testament to the strength and influence of Bahraini women, showcasing that women can embody both beauty and power, symbolizing a harmonious balance within society.

BRAZIL



DESIGNER:
Miguelina Gambaccini

DESIGNED FOR:
Luxury travelers and
global nomads

MATERIALS USED:
Filé: 100% cotton thread

Artisan cooperatives and individual contractors work to keep the filé embroidery technique thriving in Brazil. Each piece is designed by Miguelina Gambaccini and then handmade by a single artisan, with the net base alone taking up to 12 days of work. The name "filé" has its origin from the French word "filet," meaning "net" because it is an embroidery made over a net of threads. The threads above threads process is complicated to execute and refine.

These methods have improved over a long historical period, empowering women from generation to generation to preserve their own cultural heritage.



CREDIT: SARA MARTINEZ

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



DESIGNER:
Nevena Couture

DESIGNED FOR:
Part of Nevena Couture's
signature pieces

MATERIALS USED:
Finest French Couture lace and
Couture tulle with metallic threads,
wavy organza, double-sided silk
taffeta, and soft invisible tulle

Each lovingly-made piece is drawing from the superb skill of Bulgaria's craftspeople. The designer's dedication to quality and her unique artistry unites everyone around the ultimate sense of peace and harmony and sends a strong message of the power of beauty.

Inclusive of everyone's religion, life choices and beliefs, and supporting diversity, Nevena's creations speak solely one language—the one of kindness and humanity, peace and harmony, understood by everyone and empowering everybody.

Transcending temporary trends and fleeting fashion narratives, all pieces of the Bulgarian designer are a testament to a meaningful sustainability and a deeply dedicated commitment to the power of fashion beyond borders.

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI



DESIGNER:
Ucoco Clothing Brand

DESIGNED FOR:
Traditional Burundi
ceremonial occasions

MATERIALS USED:
Lightweight textile and
beaded necklaces

This "Imvutano" dress is a symbol of pride and status in Burundi, symbolizing a fresh take on a classic Burundian style. This dress combines the traditional three pieces into one with an average of 3 meters of lightweight fabric. The long skirt and underskirt flows to the floor, with prominent gathers at the sides of the upper hip. The top resembles a Sari, draping over one shoulder, across the bodice, and leaving the other shoulder bare, but maintaining the essence of the original style. Matching earrings and necklaces complement the outfit.

This design is commonly worn during special events, including traditional weddings.



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON



DESIGNER:

Jeanne (Jenny)
Nguekam Dewuiwo

DESIGNED FOR:

Traditional outfit of the
Chief of Dschang Village

MATERIALS USED:

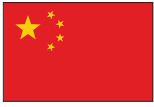
Natural Raffia fibers tree,
snail shells, and wood

This design represents the uniform of a traditional chief "Mieh Fooh" of the Dschang Village. The garment exudes authority that encourages efficient dominion over the village.

The raffia fibers represent the natural powers of the chief, his crown represents sovereignty, the wooden accessories represent nature's riches, and the snail shells that cover the outfit represent peace, collaboration, and attachments to ancestral culture. With the help of his broom, he drives away evil spirits from the community. He places the broom on the back of his visitors as a sign of blessings.

His dress makes him
supreme in his village.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



DESIGNER:

Guo Pei (designer), Rose Studio
Couture Co., Ltd (Manufacturer)

DESIGNED FOR:

Museum exhibitions

MATERIALS USED:

Silk, polyester, Swarovski
crystals, rhinestones

Guo Pei's "Crown of Life" is a testament to the harmony of nature, blending its beauty with the elegance of fashion. The design, inspired by trees, captures the resilience and vitality of life, with intricate details highlighting nature's wonders.

This masterpiece embodies the designer's and the Chinese people's awe for the power of nature, appreciation for life's tenacity, as well as their deep respect for fashion as an art form.



CREDIT: MINGHUA LI

CZECH REPUBLIC



DESIGNER:

Petra Graffe, M.A./TRADICE

MATERIALS USED:

Combination of brocade (woven by the Czech company Hedva), blueprint (produced by the ARIMO blue print workshop/traditions included in UNESCO's intangible heritage) and hand-embroidery

The attire draws inspiration from the rich tradition of folk clothing in South Moravia, influenced by its historical roots in the late 19th century. Shaped by diverse factors including the industrial revolution, imports from Vienna, urbanization, wartime impacts, economic shifts, and challenges in textile sourcing, the costume reflects a tapestry of influences. Evolving within folk communities, it manifests in various forms, serving practical, daily, and celebratory purposes. In crafting this garment, the designer drew inspiration from ornate festive attire, employing special materials that harmonize with intricate embroidery.

The result not only epitomizes wearable elegance, but also embodies the ethos of sustainable fashion.

ECUADOR



DESIGNER:

Roberto de Villacis for
Glamour Saves the World

DESIGNED FOR:

Countess Von Schenk

MATERIALS USED:

Ikat fabric created by the Jimenez artisan family, nanotechnology silver made in Japan, virgin cotton from the Andes, Toquilla straw for the hat, gold for the jewelry along with crystal beads

The designer's mission is to preserve traditional knowledge while creating modern classics based on haute-couture aesthetics from his Parisian "savoir-faire." The Safari jacket in a mineral-dyed Ikat fabric is hand-loomed and woven by Andean artisans and lined in silver nanotechnology fabric. It is paired with a virgin cotton "babydoll" dress based on the traditional pleated skirt of the indigenous Ecuadorian people. A modern pectoral necklace alludes to Incan culture and is paired with the traditional straw hat known as the "Panama Hat," which was originally created in Ecuador.

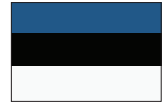
The designer's aesthetic is one of being in harmony with nature while looking towards peaceful adventures.

On loan from private collection



CREDIT: ROBERTO HENRICHSEN

ESTONIA



DESIGNER:
Iris Janvier Fashion House

DESIGNED FOR:
Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas

MATERIALS USED:
Sustainable Italian wool and cruelty-free, chrome-free tanned leather details

Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas has been described as Europe's new "Iron Lady" and one of the strongest advocates in the EU and NATO for an uncompromising response to end Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Representing her strong message, Kaja Kallas's dress by the Iris Janvier Fashion House is the epitome of impeccable design with bold accents, exquisite detailing, and impressive comfort. This particular dress, crafted in neutral tones of sustainable Italian wool with luxurious details, is a slight reference to the gentleman's power dressing that allows the wearer to show understanding, patience, and humanity without being perceived as too compromising.

Designed and manufactured in Tallinn, Estonia

FRANCE



CREDIT: MRS. JOAN CARL

DESIGNER:
Christian Lacroix

MATERIALS USED:
56% cotton, 44% viscose

The Christian Lacroix dress has subtle reminders of the beautiful Sakura blossoms of D.C., and it also evokes the French roses celebrated by poet Ronsard in the 16th century. The material itself is sober and rich with the embroidery ton-sur-ton, with the statuesque drapé at the shoulders. It definitely says: French diplomacy with class, chic, and efficiency. Mrs. Joan Carl purchased The Lacroix specifically for an event at the French Ambassador's Residence, "A Night at the Opera Ball" in June 1999.

On loan by Mrs. Joan Carl



DESIGNER:
Christian Dior

MATERIALS USED:
Silk

This elegant black cocktail dress by Christian Dior epitomizes the power of understated luxury and the transformative nature of classic design. Inspired by a time when fashion was rediscovering femininity and grace post-World War II, this dress exemplifies Dior's revolutionary "New Look" which debuted in 1947. With its cinched waist, flowing skirt, and refined silhouette, the dress not only reshaped women's fashion, but also symbolized a new era of hope and renewal. Its enduring appeal reflects the peace and stability that timeless fashion can offer amid changing times.

On loan by Mrs. Nina Pillsbury

GUATEMALA



DESIGNER:

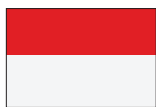
Costume from Nebaj

MATERIALS USED:

Cotton thread with natural dyes

This garment is representative of traditional daily wear in Nebaj, a town in the Department of Quiché in Guatemala. This region is where the Ixil Community is located. The garment displayed is a collector's item from the 1950's and is made of cotton thread with natural dyes. It consists of several colorful pieces: a shirt, skirt, shawl, and headpiece. This historical garment was woven on a hip loom and symbolizes the Guatemalan people's deep ties with their indigenous artisans.

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA



DESIGNER:

Coreta Louise Batik

DESIGNED FOR:

To represent the country in
New York Fashion Week

MATERIALS USED:

Batik, entitled "Sea Reflection,"
inspired by Bunaken waves and
fish; silk, cotton, and sequins

Indonesian Batik is recognized by
UNESCO as a part of Indonesia's
oral and intangible cultural heritage.

Coreta Louise Batik's collections
showcase the rich heritage of
Indonesian textiles, with a special
emphasis on Batik. Her Batik
designs effortlessly blend vibrant
colors, elegant motifs, contemporary
flair, and modern silhouettes.
Her dedication to preserving and
promoting Indonesian textiles has
solidified her position as a leading
figure in the fashion industry,
inspiring both aspiring designers
and fashion enthusiasts alike. She
has become a symbol of cultural
pride and artistic expression,
representing the beauty and
diversity of Indonesian heritage.

Batik is worn at official functions
and state events. Its use as a
diplomatic tool promotes mutual
understanding and respect between
different cultures and countries.



CREDIT: GETTY IMAGE

REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN



DESIGNER:

Bakonya

DESIGNED FOR:

Active and creative women

MATERIALS USED:

Velvet, silk, cotton

Designer Bakonya embodies the essence of fashion, power, and peace in Kazakhstan by blending traditional clothing with contemporary art. Through her designs, Bakonya celebrates Kazakhstani cultural heritage while embracing modernity, symbolizing the nation's unity. By incorporating elements of its rich traditions into stylish creations, Bakonya not only showcases Kazakhstani identity, but also empowers individuals, conveying a sense of pride.

Her fashion promotes peace by fostering understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, highlighting the transformative role of art in bridging communities and promoting harmony. Bakonya's work exemplifies the beauty of tradition and the potential of fashion to unite and inspire.

REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA



DESIGNER:

Ramunė Piekautaitė

DESIGNED FOR:

Ambassador Audra Plepytė

JACKET MATERIALS USED:

Cotton/polyester

Wearing this jacket, Ambassador Audra Plepytė presented her credentials to the King of Spain Juan Carlos I on March 19, 2010.

SCARF MATERIALS USED: 100%

Silk, handmade

The scarf was designed as a gift during the time that Lithuania held the presidency of the Council of the European Union during the second half of 2013 (July-December). The scarf incorporates a combination of the color blue and a traditional Lithuanian motif, the “Garden,” symbolizing harmony.



GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG



DESIGNER:

Tour de France and Olympic Bicycling Jerseys

DESIGNED FOR:

Andy Schleck

MATERIALS USED:

Synthetic material

Sports are an intrinsic part of diplomacy, rallying people all over the globe around a common passion, celebrating sportsmanship and achievement.

Andy Schleck embodies Luxembourg's spirit for sports in general and biking in particular. His personal achievements—2010 Tour de France winner (yellow jersey) and 4th place in the Beijing Olympics in 2008 (white jersey)—serve as an inspiration for what perseverance and endurance can achieve. Andy is a formidable advocate for sports diplomacy rallying people all over the world around healthy life styles, respect for the environment, compassion, and understanding.

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES



DESIGNER:

Traditional costume

DESIGNED FOR:

Traditional ceremonies and weddings

MATERIALS USED:

Cotton fabric, with the neckline intricately embroidered using gold, silver, green, metallic threads, and silk

The “Kasabu Libaas,” the traditional attire of Maldivian women, encapsulates the essence of Maldivian heritage, culture, and fashion. The word “libaas” translates to dress in the Maldivian language, Dhivehi. The dress typically features shades of red, green, and blue, reflecting the vibrant colors often associated with Maldivian culture and aesthetics.

Though now primarily worn during ceremonies and weddings, the “Kasabu Libaas” remains a cherished symbol of Maldivian cultural heritage, immortalized even on Maldivian currency notes and passports. Other integral accessories of the attire are the “Fattaru bai” (a gold necklace) and a “ruma falhi” (small kerchief) that is used in a hair bun. The attire connects the wearer to Maldivian customs through its intricate artisanship of the embroidery and is synonymous with Maldives culture.



MEXICO



DESIGNER:
Erica Flores

DESIGNED FOR:
Fashioning Power,
Fashioning Peace Exhibition

MATERIALS USED:
Colored threads, translucent
tulle, and natural fibers

This dress embodies a deep connection with Mexico's rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and artistic spectrum. Every detail has been conceived to reflect the essence of Mexico. Erica Flores aims to highlight the diversity and beauty of Mexican artisanal techniques, which have been passed down through generations. Intricate embroideries, traditional weavings, and meticulously crafted adornments converge in this dress, testifying to the ingenuity of Mexican artisans. This dress is not only a manifestation of Mexican creativity, but also a symbol of harmony.

Fashion can be a bridge to peace, uniting people from diverse cultures to collaborate and come to a mutual understanding.

Represented by the Mexican
Cultural Institute



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



DESIGNER:

Traditional folk costume from northern Moldova

DESIGNED FOR:

Made at home by young married women for personal use

MATERIALS USED:

Homemade linen, natural fiber thread, beads, home-loomed wool, and sheepskin

This 1930s folk costume serves as a poignant symbol of national identity, reflecting centuries-old traditions and the ingenuity of regional creativity. It encapsulates not only the aesthetic essence of the culture, but also embodies a profound connection to heritage, unity, and the enduring spirit of the Moldovan people.

Recently, the folk blouse adorned with "altiță" (a unique and specific shoulder embroidery) found in both the Republic of Moldova and Romania was added to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List.

Private collection of Bogdan Banu



KINGDOM OF MOROCCO



DESIGNER:

Mr. Larbi

DESIGNED FOR:

His Excellency Youssef Amrani
Ambassador of His Majesty
the King to Washington for
presentation of his letters of
credence to the United States
President Joseph Biden.

MATERIALS USED:

Handmade in silk and wool in
a technique called 'bzioui'

Since the American Revolutionary War, Morocco has been one of the United States' oldest and closest allies in the Middle East. The "Jabador" is a traditional Moroccan garment that embodies the rich history and culture of Morocco. Historically, it was exclusively worn by Moroccan kings and ambassadors during formal and religious ceremonies. Its legacy dates back to the 17th century when it was worn by Sultan Moulay Ismail Al Alaoui (1672-1727).

Evolving over time in terms of style, materials, and weaving techniques, it's often crafted from premium fabrics such as silk, cotton, or wool, finely embroidered and adorned. Today, it is a symbol of elegance, worn on special occasions like religious festivities, weddings, and official ceremonies.

REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE



DESIGNER:

Ms. Wessi from Matola City/
Maputo Province, Mozambique

DESIGNED FOR:

Personal collection

MATERIALS USED:

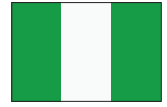
Cotton

The “capulana” is a cotton fabric primarily used during important ceremonies and celebrations such as weddings, burials, anniversaries. It has also been given to honor beloved women such as mothers and sisters. Traditionally, it is used under the waist as a skirt, as a sachet, or on top of clothes. When used on top of clothing, it is for covering women when they are cold or as a sign of respect.

Recently, the “capulana” is used for different types of clothing, such as dresses and shirts, as a way of promoting the Mozambican culture and identity.



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA



DESIGNER:
Queen Ahneva Ahneva

DESIGNED FOR:
Formal wear for women

MATERIALS USED:
Aso Oke

“Nigerian Majesty” is a mesmerizing masterpiece of traditional “Aso Oke” from southwest Nigeria that captures the essence of unique identity and craftsmanship. The attire, which exceeds being just a textile, is a tapestry of artistry which represents bravery and royalty that embodies the cultural pride of the Nigerian people. The headgear is part of the regalia favored in the eastern part of Nigeria by princesses and queens.

Nigerian-inspired clothing is a unified peace statement which transcends continents and makes a global impact in its quest to further boost cultural representation while promoting elegance and harmony.

CREDIT: QUEEN AHNEVA AHNEVA

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN



DESIGNER:

Ms. Farwa Hassan of Haute Couture

DESIGNED FOR:

Ceremonial occasions

MATERIALS USED:

Handmade white on white formal Peshwas embellished made on pure chickankari fabric with pearls, dapka, Kora, micro beaded embellishments, and scalloped design on the dupatta

In Pakistan, the color white holds profound cultural significance, symbolizing purity, peace, and unity. White is primary color of the country's traditional attire, particularly during national celebrations and religious ceremonies. The elegant white of the Pakistani flag is an ode to Pakistan's minorities and embodies the nation's quest for harmony amongst all the different nationalities inhabiting the country.

From the majestic white marble domes of the iconic Badshahi Mosque in Lahore to the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, white resonates with the rich tapestry of Pakistan's landscapes and heritage, reflecting its timeless beauty and resilience.



PARAGUAY



DESIGNER:

Sonia Garbarino

DESIGNED FOR:

Fashioning Power,
Fashioning Peace Exhibition

MATERIALS USED:

White cotton or silk

“Nanduti” (traditional
Latin American intangible
cultural heritage textile)

Ñandutí is a traditional embroidered lace from Paraguay, usually made from threads of cotton or silk. Its characteristics include a matrix of squares, rectangles, or circles that fan out to create a radiating warp. The lace is worked onto fabric that has been stretched around a frame and the design is then drawn onto the fabric. The lacemakers work along the pattern lines or stitch directly through the fabric to create the Ñandutí. When finished, the motifs are removed by cutting away the backing fabric.

The white gown has been made especially for this exhibit to showcase how traditional textiles can be used in a modern way for women of Latin America.

REPUBLIC OF PHILIPPINES



DESIGNER:
Bessie Besana

DESIGNED FOR:
Fashioning Power,
Fashioning Peace Exhibition

MATERIALS USED:
Pineapple fabric from Aklan
and the treatment is Calado
completed in Laguna, Philippines.
The buttons are fresh water
pearls from Palawan.

The Barong Tagalog, made from
piña or jusi fabric, symbolizes
Filipino independence and
resistance to colonization.

The male garment reflects
Philippine history, tradition, and
national identity, worn by people
of all backgrounds as a unifying
symbol and reinforcing a sense
of shared heritage and identity.



CREDIT: PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

REPUBLIC OF POLAND



DESIGNER:

Dorota Goldpoint

DESIGNED FOR:

First Lady of the Republic of Poland, Agata Kornhauser—Duda, on the occasion of one of the state ceremonies—the New Year’s meeting of the Polish Presidential Couple with the diplomatic corps.

MATERIALS USED:

Crepe, which combines wool, silk and viscose

The dress symbolizes the intersection of elegance and authority. The piece stands out for its minimalist design, with the sole prominent feature being the golden arrow, which contributes to its monumental allure.

Designed in a black-gold color scheme it epitomizes the strength and power of female leadership. The nature of the dress reflects the First Lady’s contribution to building world peace, especially her efforts to build peace in Poland’s neighboring country—Ukraine, where a full-scale war caused by Russia is currently taking place.

PUERTO RICO



DESIGNER:

Guayaberas from Puerto Rico

DESIGNED FOR:

Dignitary and ceremonial occasions

MATERIALS USED:

Linen and cotton

In Puerto Rico, the Guayabera dress for women symbolizes power and peace through its unique cultural and historical significance. Traditionally, the Guayabera, a linen or cotton shirt with detailed embroidery, four pockets, and pleats, was worn by men, embodying practicality and elegance. As women adopted this style, the garment evolved into a dress that retained these quintessential elements.

This adaptation not only represents a shift towards gender inclusivity and empowerment, but also honors Puerto Rico's heritage. Wearing the Guayabera dress, women display both a connection to their roots and a statement of their strength and unity, embodying a peaceful embrace of cultural identity.

On loan from private collection



ROMANIA



DESIGNER:

Folk costume from the Region of Oltenia, in southwestern Romania

DESIGNED FOR:

Worn in church or at important community events

MATERIALS USED:

Handwoven linen

This costume reflects centuries-old folk traditions from the Oltenia region in southern Romania. It is hand-embroidered with patterns and adorned with delicate lace on handwoven linen. The costume consists of two pieces: a traditional embroidered blouse and a skirt. The fascinating embroidery on the aprons, "catrințe," is made with multicolored silk. The two aprons have delicate hand-crocheted lace on the edges and fringes at the base.

Completing the costume is a belt in matching colors that closes in the front with clasps called "pafale," one of the few metal ornaments found in traditional Romanian folk costume and only found in this particular region in Romania.

Private collection of Bogdan Banu

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



DESIGNER:

Saudi Arabian tradition

DESIGNED FOR:

Leaders, high ranking officials.
Today, it is worn in joyous celebrations and formal ceremonies

MATERIALS USED:

Breathable wool and golden silk trims

The Saudi Bisht holds a revered status as more than just a garment. It symbolizes the power and diplomacy deeply ingrained in Saudi culture. Worn by leaders and scholars for centuries, its regal appearance exudes authority and prestige. Adorned with intricate designs and often featuring rich colors, the Bisht is more than a mere piece of clothing—it embodies the dignity and heritage of Saudi Arabia.

Its significance extends beyond fashion, serving as a symbol of diplomatic prowess and cultural identity on the global stage, making it a timeless emblem of power and diplomacy.



REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE



DESIGNER:

Raymond Wong from Rumah Kim Choo, Singapore

DESIGNED FOR:

Commissioned by an Embassy employee, Ms. Adelene Lim, for her wedding, which embraced both her and her spouse's Peranakan heritage

MATERIALS USED:

Swiss voile, the embroidery is of cotton threads. The batik sarong is made of cotton. Shoes are embroidered with beads (about 1.5mm in diameter)

In Singapore, the kebaya is worn by women from various communities. It continues to be a central aspect in the representation and display of cultural heritage and identity for many communities in Singapore and expressive of Singapore's heritage as a port city.

Within the Peranakan community, it is worn by younger Nyonyas (Peranakan women), while the older ones would wear the Baju Panjang (long robe). Kebaya designs commonly demonstrate a blending of cultures—it may feature traditional Javanese motifs and batik patterns, or motifs from Malay, Chinese, Indian, and European cultures, which is reflective of Singapore as a multi-cultural nation.

KINGDOM OF THAILAND



DESIGNED FOR:

Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Chuliepote
Isarankura Na Ayudhaya

MATERIALS USED:

Thai silk

This evening dress was inspired by the outfit of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, The Queen Mother, who works to preserve and promote Thai textiles and traditional crafts. Her Majesty commissioned French and Thai couturiers to tailor royal outfits from traditional Thai village textiles for royal visits abroad and at home.

Through fashion diplomacy, Her Majesty has presented the taste and skill of Thai craftspeople to the world and has inspired local craftspeople to safeguard and develop the traditional crafts. CDA Chuliepote wore this dress at the ASEAN Culture Day 2023, an event to showcase ASEAN culture and fashion at the Department of State.

The kebaya is commonly worn during festive occasions such as Hari Raya Puasa, Chinese New Year, Deepavali, at important rites of passage such as weddings, formal events, parties and even non-formal occasions. Additionally, the kebaya has been adapted and continues to be the attire for the national carrier, Singapore Airlines.



UKRAINE



CREDIT: RASSI BORNEO, TIMELINE MEDIA

DESIGNER:
Nazar Khitsyak

DESIGNED FOR:
Competitive ballroom dancers

MATERIALS USED:
Lycra stretch fabric, ostrich feathers, Swarovski crystals, twisted glass bugle beads, and flat round beads

On 24 February 2022, Russia's escalation of war ushered in a harsh reality for Ukrainians. Ballroom dress designer, Nazar Khitsyak, and his seamstresses are determined to maintain business operations. They design and construct ballroom dance competition attire in shelters with the sound of bombs exploding overhead.

Khitsyak is partnering with Encore Ballroom Couture to market his dresses to the US ballroom dance industry—enabling the flow of desperately needed income for his staff and community, especially while Ukrainian competitive dancing has halted. Even in the darkness, Ukrainian ballroom dancers continue to clap and sing to the rhythm of hope.

On loan from Encore Ballroom Couture

T-SHIRT

DESIGNED FOR: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

MATERIALS USED: Cotton

This T-shirt has the Trident Tryzub with Sword in Army green on the chest and shoulder. The trident is the symbol of Ukrainian identity and the sword represents the strength and readiness to defend the country. It also includes the national motto "Freedom or Death" (Volya abo smert) written on the tryzub.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



DESIGNER:

Thai Silk Festival

DESIGNED FOR:

Ambassador Esther
Coopersmith

MATERIALS USED:

Thai silk

Ambassador Esther Coopersmith had a longstanding diplomatic relationship with Thailand, bringing Senate spouses to meet with the Queen, bringing the Queen to the United States to meet with the Administration, and supporting commerce and trade between the U.S. and Thailand.

Ambassador Coopersmith attended the Queen Sirikit's Thai silk festival annually, purchasing yards of many different silks for her dressmaker to create gorgeous one-of-kind suits that display this important Thai handicraft.

Esther remained a close friend of the Queen's (now Queen Mother) until her death in 2024.

On loan from private collection



SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM



CREDIT: KIENG CAN

DESIGNER:

Le Thanh Hoa

DESIGNED FOR:

Runway

MATERIALS USED:

Tulle, lace, organza, stones, beads, crystal

This design embodies the spirit of contemporary fashion, ingeniously weaving together cultural elements, national identity, and the majestic natural scenery of Vietnam. It employs a variety of artisanal techniques such as beading, hand embroidery, and fabric painting to bring the vibrant motifs to life.

With its carefully selected valuable details, this design is not only aesthetically pleasing, but it also conveys a message about Vietnam through the language of fashion: a country on the path of development that remains profoundly hospitable and peace-loving.

MILITARY (FRANCE)



DESIGNER:
S.P.C La Calaisienne

DESIGNED FOR:
Chasseur Alpin troops

MATERIALS USED:
Polyester and wool

This is the “Chasseur Alpin” ceremonial uniform. The Duc d’Orléans, creator of the “chasseurs à pieds,” wanted to make these fighters into an exceptional corps by lightening their load and making them an elite corps, differentiating them from the rest with a dark, severe yet elegant uniform. What makes the hunters’ uniform original and traditionally important are its unique details: the daffodil piping, soutache embroidery, wool braid, the black cravat, and the corps de chasse adorning the dark blue uniform.

It was this outfit that earned them the nickname “Blue Devils” from the Germans during WWI.



CREDIT: VALÉRIE COULLOUMME-LABARTHE

MILITARY (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)



DESIGNER:
USA Government issued

DESIGNED FOR:
World War I uniform belonging to CPL Joseph F. John

MATERIALS USED:
Olive “foliage” green wool

This World War I United States Army uniform belonged to Corporal Joseph F. John, an enlisted army man who served with distinction during WWI. The shoulder sleeve insignia signifies WWI 27th Infantry Division, most likely from the Liberty Loan program conducted during WWI; the chevron patches denote his rank.

The Army Combat Unit (ACU) Patches are embroidered patches used by major formations of the U.S. Army. Each formation has its own patch and the U.S. Army is unique among the Armed Services in that all soldiers are required to wear the patch of their headquarters as part of their military uniform.

Corporal John's uniform honors his service and serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by millions and the enduring impact of World War I.

Woodrow Wilson House permanent collection



DESIGNER:
USA Government issued

DESIGNED FOR:
Woman's Navy Yeomanette 3rd class uniform, made in USA between 1918 and 1920

MATERIALS USED:
Navy blue wool with blue cotton lining

The Yeomanettes, officially known as Yeoman (F), were the first women to serve in the United States Navy in non-nursing capacities. This initiative started during World War I, under the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. The rectangular shoulder sleeve insignia consisting of an embroidered perched white spread-eagle above crossed quill pens above a red chevron, pointing down, all on navy blue background indicate the Yeomanette's division and rank.

The Yeomanette uniform represents one of the earliest instances of women partaking in non-medical roles in the U.S. military. Fashion—through uniforms—served as a means of empowerment and a milestone in the evolution of gender roles. This uniform functioned as a tool for women to gain respect and authority in a male-dominated sphere.

Woodrow Wilson House permanent collection

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The President Woodrow Wilson House Receives Highest National Recognition

Awarded Re-Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums

Washington, D.C. (March 18, 2024) – The President Woodrow Wilson House has again achieved accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums, the highest national recognition afforded to the nation’s museums. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, to governments, funders, outside agencies, and to the museum-going public. The Woodrow Wilson House has been accredited since 2006. All museums must undergo a reaccreditation review at least every 10 years to maintain accredited status.

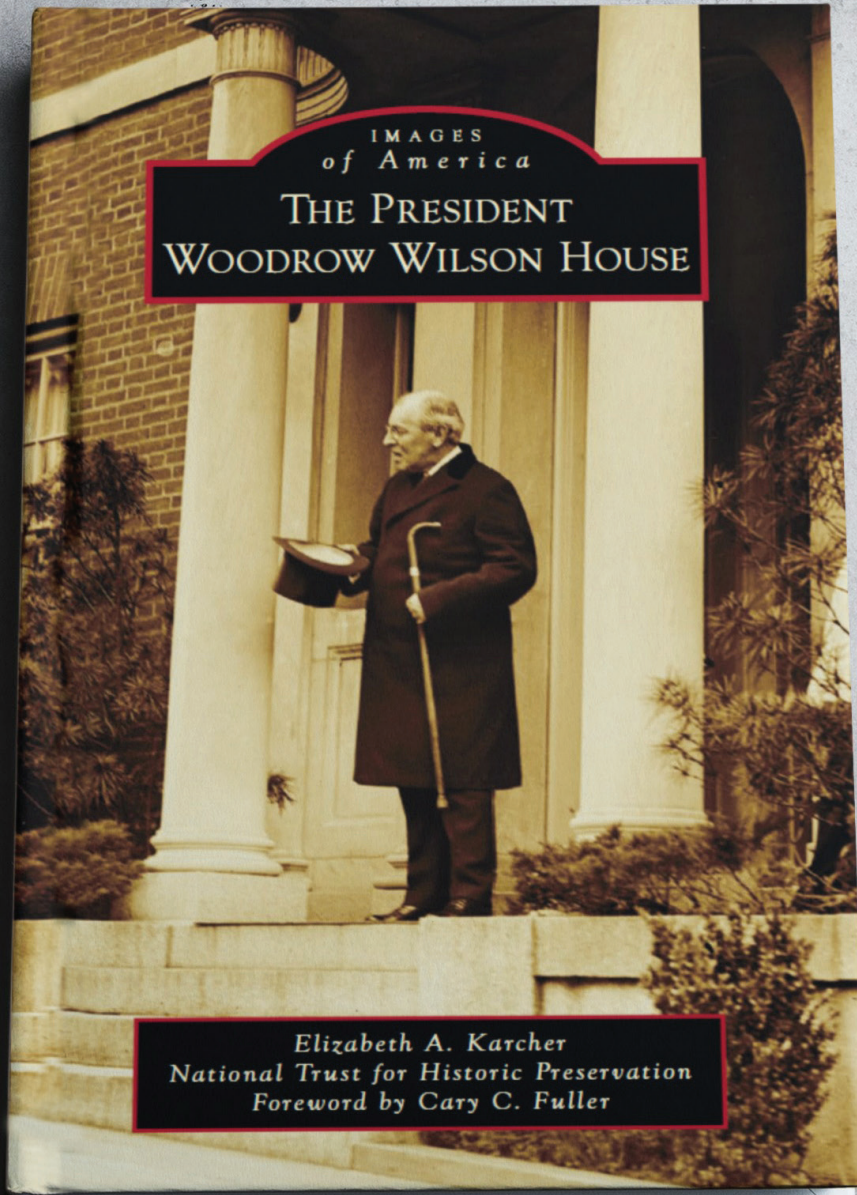
Alliance Accreditation brings national recognition to a museum for its commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards and continued institutional improvement. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for over fifty years, the Alliance’s museum accreditation program is the field’s primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. It strengthens the museum profession by promoting practices that enable leaders to make informed decisions, allocate resources wisely, and remain financially and ethically accountable to provide the best possible service to the public.



About the American Alliance of Museums

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) is the only organization representing the entire museum field, from art and history museums to science centers and zoos. Since 1906, we have been championing museums through advocacy and providing museum professionals with the resources, knowledge, inspiration, and connections they need to move the field forward. For more information, visit aam-us.org.

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to all the exhibitors, designers, embassy employees, facilitators, corporate sponsors, donors, guests, volunteers, and staff who transformed this exhibition from a vision into a reality.

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