

Pacita Abad Archives - University of Fashion Blog

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11–14 minutes



Looks from The Met's *Women Dressing Women Exhibit*. (Photo Credit: The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

In a world that's constantly on the move, where trends come and go in the blink of an eye, there's something undeniably magical about stepping into a fashion exhibit. It's not just about admiring exquisite garments or marveling at the ingenuity of designers – it's an immersive journey into the heart of creativity, a celebration of beauty, history, and culture.

In this week's UOF blog, we are highlighting a few fashion exhibits that are currently on display and where you will find tons of great inspiration.

EXPLORING THE ESSENCE OF STYLE IN THE CITY BY THE BAY



Rodarte's gold evening dress from the Spring 2011 Collection. (Photo Credit; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco)

San Francisco, the city that birthed the Beat Generation, fostered the Summer of Love, and continues to be a hotbed of creativity and innovation, has always been a bastion of style. Now, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF) celebrates this rich sartorial heritage with its latest exhibit, "*Fashioning San Francisco: Celebrating the Style of a City*" the exhibit is now open and will run through August 11, 2024.

This immersive exhibition is a love letter to the unique fashion sense that has defined the City by the Bay for generations. Curated from one of America's largest collections of fashion, the exhibit presents a carefully curated selection of garments and accessories that collectively tell the story of San Francisco's evolving style identity.

As visitors step into the exhibit, they are transported through time, beginning with the Gold Rush era when San Francisco was a bustling frontier town. Here, they encounter opulent Victorian dresses adorned with lace and intricate beadwork, reminiscent of the city's affluent elite who sought to flaunt their newfound wealth.

Moving forward in time, the exhibit captures the bohemian spirit of the 1960s, a period that forever altered the city's cultural landscape. Vibrant tie-dye shirts, bell-bottom jeans, and psychedelic prints evoke memories of the Summer of Love, when Haight-Ashbury became ground zero for the counterculture movement.

But "*Fashioning San Francisco*" is not merely a nostalgic journey through the past; it also highlights the city's ongoing influence on contemporary fashion. A section dedicated to the tech boom of the late 20th and early 21st centuries showcase sleek, minimalist designs favored by Silicon Valley's elite. Visitors marvel at innovative garments crafted from cutting-edge materials, reflective of San Francisco's position at the forefront of technological innovation.

What sets this exhibit apart is its immersive approach to storytelling. Visitors are not passive observers but active participants in the narrative. Interactive displays invite them to try on replica garments from different eras, allowing them to experience firsthand the evolution of San Francisco style. Additionally, multimedia installations featuring archival footage and interviews with fashion designers offer deeper insights into the city's fashion landscape.

"*Fashioning San Francisco*" not only celebrates the past, but also serves as a reminder of the city's enduring spirit of creativity, individuality, and innovation. In a world where trends come and go, San Francisco's style remains timeless.

EXPLORING THE VIBRANT WORLD OF PACITA ABAD



Pacita Abad with her trapunto painting *Ati-Atihan*, 1983, wearing garments and jewelry collected on her travels. (Photo Credit: Pacita Abad Art Estate)

Sadly the exhibit ended on Jan. 28th, but the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) featured the kaleidoscopic universe of Pacita Abad. The exhibit offered a vibrant tribute to one of the Philippines' most celebrated artist, whose work transcends boundaries of culture, geography, and medium.

Walking through the doors of SFMOMA, visitors were greeted by a riot of color that spills across the gallery walls. This is the world of Pacita Abad – a world where every stroke of the brush, every splash of pigment, tells a story of joy, resilience, and the unbreakable human spirit.

Curated with a keen eye for detail, the exhibit traces Abad's artistic journey from her early explorations of social realism to her later experiments with abstract expressionism. Here, visitors are treated to a visual feast of paintings, textiles, and mixed-media installations that showcase Abad's boundless creativity and relentless pursuit of beauty in all its forms.

One of the exhibit's most striking features is its emphasis on Abad's use of everyday materials to create art. From traditional canvas and paint to repurposed fabrics, found objects, and even whole cars, Abad's work defies convention and challenges viewers to reconsider their preconceptions of what constitutes art.

But perhaps what sets Abad apart is her unwavering commitment to social justice and human rights. Throughout her career, Abad used her art as a platform to raise awareness of issues such as poverty, environmental degradation, and political oppression. Her iconic "Trapunto" series, which features large-scale textile paintings adorned with stitched motifs and embellishments, served as a poignant reminder of the struggles faced by marginalized communities around the world.

As visitors delved deeper into the exhibit, they were struck by the sheer diversity of Abad's oeuvre. From her colorful "Sail" series, inspired by her travels to remote corners of the globe, to her haunting "Portraits of Exile" series, which captured the faces of refugees fleeing war and persecution, Abad's work transcends the boundaries of culture and language to speak to the universal human experience.

Interactive displays invited visitors to engage with Abad's work on a deeper level, prompting them to reflect on their own experiences of migration, displacement, and belonging. From interactive storytelling sessions to hands-on art workshops, the exhibit offers something for everyone, regardless of age, background, or artistic ability.

In a world that often seems bleak and divided, the art of Pacita Abad offered a ray of hope – a reminder that beauty can be found in the most unexpected places, and that art has the power to heal, inspire, and unite us all.

UNsung Women: The Met Celebrates Women Dressing Women



Looks from The Met's *Women Dressing Women* Exhibit. (Photo Credit: The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

In the heart of Manhattan, where the pulse of fashion beats strongest, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) unveils its latest exhibit, "*Women Dressing Women*" which will run until March 10, 2024. It's a celebration of femininity, creativity, and the transformative power of fashion. Stepping into the hallowed halls of the MET, visitors are transported into a world where women are not just the wearers of fashion but also its creators, visionaries, and muses.

Curated with meticulous care, "*Women Dressing Women*" showcases the work of female designers who have shaped the landscape of fashion throughout history. From Coco Chanel's revolutionary designs that liberated women from the confines of corsets, to the boundary-pushing creations of contemporary designers like Rei Kawakubo and Phoebe Philo, the exhibit offers a panoramic view of women's influence on style.

"*Women Dressing Women*" is not just a retrospective; it's a celebration of diversity, inclusivity, and empowerment. Throughout the exhibit, visitors are introduced to designers from diverse backgrounds and cultures whose work challenges traditional notions of beauty