

# ChicagoHistoryMuseum

## Chic Chicago Fact Sheet

**Exhibition Description:** *Chic Chicago: Couture Treasures from the Chicago History Museum* presents a rare opportunity to see more than 50 of the greatest couture treasures from the Museum's collection. The exhibition will feature Gilded Age gowns by Worth and Pingat to modern masterpieces by Chanel and Versace. The exhibition is a testimony to Chicago women of style who supported innovative fashion designers in the hope of claiming Chicago as chic. Fashion, they believed, was the most dramatic way to re-imagine Chicago as a sophisticated and cultured city. The exhibition displays some of the most significant pieces that helped shape fashion history from 1861 – 2008.

**Exhibition Dates:** **September 27, 2008 – July 26, 2009**

**Location:** Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago.

**Admission:** The exhibition is included with Museum admission of \$14 adults/ \$12 seniors and students; free for Children 12 years of age and younger and on Mondays.

### **Tidbits about Chic Chicago: Couture Treasures from the Chicago History Museum:**

- This exhibition features pieces ranging from court presentation gowns and evening gowns to embroidered coats and suits worn by Chicago women.
- There has never before been a comparable exhibition that showcases such a broad range of couture masterpieces from the Museum's collection.
- The Charles James "Butterfly" dress, featured in the exhibition, is made of 25 yards of material and weighs 17 pounds. Trained in architecture, James is considered the architect of fashion for his use of rigid understructures to create volume and shape.
- The exhibition will include photographs of women wearing the couture pieces.
- The first American to open his own couture house in Paris, Mainbocher, was born in Chicago and studied at the University of Chicago and the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts. It was said that one of his suits "cost as much as a half-year's tuition and board at Harvard." Two pieces from Mainbocher are featured in this exhibition.

### **The Museum's Collection:**

- The Chicago History Museum has the second largest costume collection in the United States, and one of the largest in the world.
- The collection contains over 50,000 pieces and accessories from the 1750s to the present.
- The Museum's emphasis on provenance provides historical background information on the pieces that is not often presented in other museum exhibitions or collections.

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