

ChicagoHistoryMuseum

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Costume Digital Collection

World's Second Largest Fashion Collection Goes Digital

CHICAGO (July 10, 2012) – The Chicago History Museum announces the launch of the online Digital Collection which currently features 1,382 digital images representing nearly 400 costumes, accessories, and fashion drawings including all costume materials exhibited in the museum's *Charles James*, *Dior*, *Bertha Palmer*, *Chic Chicago*, and *I Do* exhibitions. The official launch of the Digital Collection is on July 10, and will be accessible from the Chicago History Museum website. The Digital Collection is made possible by a generous donation from the Costume Council of the Chicago History Museum.

Garments by **Gianni Versace**, **Christian Dior**, **Charles James** and **Cristóbal Balenciaga** headline the content on the Digital Collection. In addition to hundreds of garment and accessory images, the website also features videos of CT scans of garments constructed by designer Charles James and 103 sketches by James' illustrator Antonio Lopez. Images are offered at extremely high resolution with zooming tools allowing users to examine artifacts stitch by stitch.

"The digital collections portal offers researchers, students, scholars, designers, and fashion aficionados a significant fashion resource and a rich source of historical information," said Chief Collection Manager, Alison Eisendrath. "The factor that makes this digital collection such a unique and valuable resource is that the artifacts are represented not only by the vibrant digital images, but they are also accompanied by their full catalog record, including detailed information on who wore it, who designed it, and its relationship to fashion history and Chicago history."

With over 50,000 costumes and textile artifacts from the mid-18th century to the present, the Chicago History Museum's Costume Collection is the second largest in the world and one of the nation's most complete fashion repositories.

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“The digital resources currently available through the site only begin to hint at the richness of the content we hope to add over the coming months and years,” said Eisendrath. “Although the Digital Collection website has launched featuring selected highlights from the costume collection, the Museum will continue to add images from its treasure trove of paintings, sculptures, decorative arts, and historic artifacts, along with images of additional costume materials.”

The Digital Collection is made possible by the Costume Council of the Chicago History Museum. Founded by Mrs. Phillip K. Wrigley in April 1974, the purpose of the Costume Council is to support the Chicago History Museum as a leader in the documentation and interpretation of the history and the art of costume. Through the Costume Council’s efforts, the Museum has been able to maintain and grow a thriving collection.

The Digital Collection can be found by visiting digitalcollection.chicagohistory.org and all of Chicago History Museum exhibitions, events and projects can be found by visiting chicagohistory.org or by calling 312-642-4600.

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The Chicago History Museum, a major museum and research center for Chicago and American history, is located at 1601 N. Clark Street. The Museum can be reached by CTA buses 11, 22, 36, 72, 73, 151, and 156. Parking is conveniently located one block north of the Museum at Clark and LaSalle Streets (enter on Stockton Drive). Admission to the Museum is \$14 adults with audio tour, \$12 seniors/students with audio tour, free for children 12 years and younger. Please call 312.642.4600 or visit us at www.chicagohistory.org. The Chicago History Museum is affiliated with the Chicago Historical Society and acknowledges the Chicago Park District’s generous support of all the Museum’s activities.