

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

Final Project: Fashion Exhibition

Seaniah Mcleod

New York City College Of Technology

BUF 3310

Professor Bolton

10/8/2023

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

ART EXHIBITION

The Body-Positive is proud to announce its collaboration with Desires Seaniah in presenting the "Lacing Through Time: A Journey Through Corsetry"

SUN

DECEMBER,
1ST

6 PM



BROOKLYN MUSEUM

200 EASTERN PKWY, BROOKLYN NEW YORK
11238.

(917)809-4277
SEANIAHMCLEOD

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

Museum Selection

The museum I decided to go with is “ Brooklyn Museum ” located at 200 Pkwy Brooklyn, New York 11238. I chose this Museum because It's one of New York's greatest historical monuments. The Museum was built and established around 1855 and houses some of the greatest art pieces and exhibits. Exhibitions such as Pierre Cardin: Future Fashion, The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier, and African Fashion were all showcased in this museum. Adding My exhibit Lacing Through Time: A Journey Through Corsetry can help add to diversification and relevance to the museum. The exhibit will be a hotspot for fashion curators and people who are looking to expand their fashion palette. Where the museum is located it can help draw in diverse audiences and increase visibility. The Brooklyn Museum Is one of the second largest museums, At 560,000<square feet and holding more than 500,000 objects. It will be perfect for holding space for the paintings, Displays, and my gift shop section.

Figure 1

Picture of The Brooklyn Museum



Exhibition Title

Exhibition Title: LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

The title ties into the theme as it gives the exhibitor a peak of what the exhibit entails. Corsetry plays a major role in our past and present because it provides valuable insight into health, gender, fashion, and beauty standards. Corsets transitioned from a structured garment that prohibited women and kept them on a leash to liberating women's freedom and giving them a sense of empowerment. The history of corsetry shows how beauty standards have changed over time to what the "ideal" body is for a woman. Even though some elements of corsetry influence fashion in today's world women don't feel the dire need to wear a corset under a garment or over a garment for everyday wear. The term corset came from the French "corset" which meant a form of the lace bodice. The Exhibition will include 50 garments and accessories, separated into 6 themes. Designers I would like to put a spotlight on are Vivienne Westwood, Jean Paul Gaultier, Mr Pearl, Thierry Muglar, and Karl Lagerfeld. The exhibition will also have article clippings and books on corsetry. Books like "The Ladies' Guide to True Politeness and Perfect Manners" (1864) by Eliza Leslie and "The Queen's London: A Pictorial and Descriptive Record of the Streets, Buildings, Parks and Scenery of the Great Metropolis" (1896) by Ernest Rhys. Both books capture a point in time when it was proper etiquette for women to constantly wear corsets. The importance of wearing corsets was greatly stressed because it represented modesty and elegance.

Exhibition Theme

The theme for the exhibition is the timeline of Corsetry. Corsets are a major part of our history and have undergone many changes over the years. The first corset was created in the 1600s in Italy but gained its popularity in the 1700s by the Royalty Courts of Europe. The first corset was an inverted conical shape. The corset was created to insinuate the woman's waist to give her a cone-shaped torso. Corsets determined a woman's social status and ranking in beauty. Women who wore corsets were perceived as ladylike, dainty, and controllable. Wealthy women wore corsets that were made of elaborate details and luxurious fabric like silk, cotton, wool, detailed trim, baleen, and metal hooks. Poor women had less desirable corsets. Wealthy women's corsets were also tied to the back because they had servants to help dress them while poor women were tied to the front. As time went on men started to wear corsets in the 1800s. In the early 1920s, many women and young girls were liberated from the corset due to the “ Flapper era and the First World War. The American War Industries Board announced that women should stop buying corsets as steel was deeply needed for the war. Steel bone used to keep the structure of corsets firm was later switched out to whale boning. When corsets were introduced in the burlesque and pin-up culture. This created a big shift in women's wear. Corsets went from being in women's everyday wear to being a part of a nightlife scene. Women performers often wore corsets as a symbol of empowerment and sensuality. Most women didn't want to be seen wearing corsets as it became something overly sexualized. By the 1950s corsets lost their popularity and many women started wearing “ girdles”. Girdles were made from elastic and spandex. less restricted and focused on the woman's stomach and hips.

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

Over time, corsets regained their popularity when a new designer named Vivienne Westwood emerged on the fashion scene. Vivienne Westwood was the first designer to reconstruct and modernize the women's corset. Westwood corsets cinched in the waist and lifted the woman's bust. Her punk style added a punk edge to the corsets and symbolized empowerment. Vivienne West also used elastic and softer boning for a functional and comfortable feel. Jean-Paul Gaultier bridged the gap between fashion and pop culture when he created a corset during Madonna's 1990 world tour. He wanted to showcase women being strong yet sexy. The inspiration came from Jayne Mansfield and Marilyn Monroe who were famous for their bullet bras. The piece that sparked this idea was his 1984 “Cone Bra Corset dress”. The velvet dress with cone bust area was meant to sexualize the woman and hence her figure. The collection was inspired by “ethnic ratatouille of North African and Caribbean cultures. In Jean Paul Gaultier's newest collection, corsets are still incorporated. However the approach is more modern and revitalized.

Mark Erskine- Pullin who is known by the name Mr Paul has created some of the most detailed corset work for designers like Thierry Muglar, Jean Paul Gaultier, John Galliano, and Alexander McQueen. When on the topic of corsetry it's important to know Mr Paul's work as he is the mastermind of corset construction. He often gets overlooked because he isn't on the front lines.

Paintings and Displays



Figure 2: *1775 corset consisting of Baleen, wool, silk and wood*



Figure 3: *Madonna's corset created by Jean Paul Gaultier in 1990.*

Figure 4: *1950s picture of Jaynes Mansfield in Bullet Bra.*

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY



Figure 5: *A cutting wind or fatal effects of tight-lacing. Woman getting her corset tightened by maid, husband and servant.*

Figure 6: *Tight Lacing, or Fashion before Ease.*



(Figure 8) *A long sleeve corset from Vivienne Westwood's Fall/Winter 1990-91 Portrait collection (L)*



(Figure 9) *A shawl from Vivienne Westwood's Fall/Winter 1990-91 Portrait collection (R)*

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY



(Figure) *Jean Paul Gaultier: Fall 1984 collection*

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY



(**Figure**)Jean Paul Gaultier: Fall 2021 collection



(**Figure**)Jean Paul Gaultier: Fall 2021 collection

BluePrint

The image shows a blueprint for an exhibition layout, presented as a torn piece of paper on a textured background. The blueprint consists of two identical floor plans, each labeled with a large number '5'. Each floor plan is divided into six numbered sections (1-6) and includes labels for 'SOUTH STAIRS / ELEVATOR' and 'NORTH STAIRS'. A legend on the left side of the blueprint lists the content for each section: 1 (1600s-1700s), 2 (1800s-1950s), 3 (Vivienne Westwood & Jean Paul Gaultier 1980s), 4 (Mr. Paul & Thierry Mugler), 5 (Versace & Dolce and Gabbana), and 6 (Christian Siriano for Burberry & John Paul Gaultier 2023-2024). A photograph of a corset is included in the legend, with the caption 'Vivienne Westwood 1990 Punkish Corset'. To the right of the blueprint, the title 'Exhibition Layout' is written in a large, bold, serif font. Below the title, three paragraphs describe the content of the sections: 'Section 1 and 2 will have displays and historical paintings.', 'Section 3 and 4 consist of displays with mannequins and photographs', and 'Section 5 and 6 consist of mannequins and accessories'.

5

5

Exhibition Layout

Section 1 and 2 will have displays and historical paintings.

Section 3 and 4 consist of displays with mannequins and photographs

Section 5 and 6 consist of mannequins and accessories

① 1600s-1700s
② 1800s-1950s
③ Vivienne Westwood & Jean Paul Gaultier 1980s
④ Mr. Paul & Thierry Mugler
⑤ Versace & Dolce and Gabbana
⑥ Christian Siriano for Burberry & John Paul Gaultier 2023-2024

Vivienne Westwood
1990 Punkish Corset

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

Press Release:

[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE]

Contact: SeaniahMcLeod@gmail.com

10/16/2023 Phone: 484447-9765

For more information about the exhibition, please visit the

Media Contact: Ashley Sawyer

Monica Mo

Seaniah McLeod

Body-positive Therapy Nyc Coordinator

(917)809-4277 <https://www.bodypositivenyc.com/>

Business Partners:

Items sold during the end of the exhibition would be the candles in the shape of a woman's body, table books, coasters, mugs and postcards. This part of the gift shop will be sponsored by Taschan. The first day of the launch of the exhibition celebrities will be invited. We also can collaborate with G-III Apparel Group, to offer some of Karl Lagerfeld ready to wear pieces from his line sold Marshalls.



LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

Reference

Dazed. (2016, April 15). *Meeting mr pearl, the corset-maker who walked for McQueen*.

<https://www.dazeddigital.com/fashion/article/30768/1/meeting-mr-pearl-fashion-s-most-notorious-corset-maker>

Photos from stars wearing Thierry Mugler. E! Online. (2022, January 24).

<https://www.eonline.com/photos/33841/stars-wearing-thierry-mugler>

Socha, M. (2016, April 25). *Karl Lagerfeld to display 200 photos in Havana*. WWD.

<https://wwd.com/feature/karl-lagerfeld-chanel-display-200-photos-havana-cube-10411215/>

<https://www.artsy.net/artwork/jean-paul-gaultier-corset-style-body-suit-with-garters-worn-by-madonna-du-ring-the-metropolis-express-yourself-sequence-of-the-blond-ambition-world-tour>

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY

1920s satirical cartoon, originally captioned: "A cutting wind, or the fatal effects of tight-lacing". **Photo Credit:**

- Figure 6 J. C. (1777). [Tight Lacing, or Fashion before Ease]. Museum The British Museum , https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1935-0522-1-227
- Figure 10 Nast, C. (n.d.). *Jean Paul Gaultier Fall 2021 Couture Fashion Show*. Vogue. <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2021-couture/jean-paul-gaultier/slideshow/collection#1>

-

LACING THROUGH TIME: A JOURNEY THROUGH CORSETRY