

Lace in Fashion

23 July 2010 – 23 January 2011

Opening 23 July, the National Gallery of Victoria will showcase a stunning selection of lace from the sixteenth through to the twentieth century in *Lace in Fashion*.

Including over 50 works from the NGV Collection along with several loans, this exhibition will explore two distinct types of lace: needle lace and bobbin lace.

Roger Leong, Curator, International Fashion and Textiles, NGV said that from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, lace was fundamental to the changing fashions of the day.

“Lace was a textile that signified all that was luxurious, highly desirable and new. Throughout the twentieth century, lace has been the subject of many revivals and interpretations, always creating a symbol of elegance and occasion.”

Originating in the sixteenth century in Europe, both needle and bobbin lace rely on fine handwork. Needle lace is made using variations of the buttonhole stitch, whilst bobbin lace takes its name from the spools of carved wood or ivory around which the lace maker plaits, weaves or twists threads.

Paola DiTrocchio, Assistant Curator, International Fashion and Textiles, NGV said: “For over three hundred years lace was made by hand. It wasn’t until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when machine-made laces began to dominate lace production, making lace affordable and ever present in women’s fashion.”

On display alongside the lace will be dresses by Parisian couture houses Balmain and Beer as well as garments and portraits representing how lace was used in fashionable dress.



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An outfit by contemporary Australian label MATERIALBYPRODUCT will be included in the exhibition highlighting the use of lace in modern fashion design. *Semi punchout top and skirt* 2008 features a stencil made from a 1950s synthetic lace curtain which is shown in contrast to Gustav Beer's *Dress* c.1912 with a machine lace bodice covered with sheer silk chiffon.

Frances Lindsay, NGV Deputy Director said: "This exhibition celebrates the enchanting age-old tradition of lace making. From the delicate pieces of the sixteenth century to the stencilled lace pattern used in MATERIALBYPRODUCT's work, this exhibition will introduce visitors to a fascinating component of the NGV Collection."

Lace in Fashion will be on display at NGV International, St Kilda Road from 23 July 2010 to 23 January 2011. NGV International is open 10am–5pm, closed Tuesdays. Admission is free.

For further information visit ngv.vic.gov.au

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Media enquiries:

Jemma Altmeier, Media & Public Affairs Officer 03 8620 2345 / 0417 575 088 / jemma.altmeier@ngv.vic.gov.au

Shakira Silvestri, Media & Public Affairs Administrator 03 8620 2411 / 0417 575 088 / Shakira.silvestri@ngv.vic.gov.au

Image caption: BALMAIN, Paris (couture house) est. 1945, Pierre BALMAIN (designer). France 1914–82 *Dress* c.1966, rayon, cotton (chemical lace), silk lining 110.5 cm (centre back), 43.0 cm (waist, flat) label: PIERRE BALMAIN
Collection of Sir Roderick Carnegie, Melbourne

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