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## **LETTER FROM THE CHAIR**

Pat Sparrer

Moving into the Fall of 2015 has brought challenges to the Friends of Textiles & Costume Committee as it struggles to work within the Museum's new program strategies. The Committee is also working to fulfill its mandate to educate everyone to the Museum's rich world-wide collection of Textiles & Costume and support the Textiles & Costume Section through donations for unique purchases, interns or special projects, such as the Adopt-a-Journal program. Wherever possible, the FTC continues to build the Endowment Fund that is used to fund exhibitions in the Textiles & Costume Gallery.

At the same time, the number of FTC members is around 35, lower than the 164 members it had in 2012 and substantially lower than the number of members in 2008 and 2009. This decline has resulted in a significant fall in donations to the FTC that ultimately affects the FTC's ability to meet its goals. In the Spring 2015 newsletter, I reported that the Friends Groups were working with Museum administrators to establish procedures for the Groups to fit within the Museum's new program strategy. Discussions continued into the summer and I am pleased to report that procedures, beneficial to both parties, are being put in place. To demonstrate, an FTC sponsored program planned for January 14, 2016, is our first in over a year.

The revised strategy and procedures, the January program, and the success of current Viva Mexico exhibition in the Textiles & Costume Gallery,

has buoyed the spirit of the FTC Committee. In addition to identifying and planning future activities, the Committee is focussing on bringing more Friends into the FTC, with the end result of increasing support for the Textiles & Costume Section.

**“ Bringing more Friends into the FTC will increase support for the Textiles & Costume Section ”**

As Friends of the Textiles & Costume we take pride in our efforts and support of the ROM's textile and costume collection.

I look forward to seeing you at future FTC events or volunteering at the FTC's March Break Program.

**Friends of Textiles and Costume  
Annual General Meeting  
Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 3 pm.**

**Department of World Cultures, Textiles & Costume Section  
Outline of Annual Report April 2014- March 2015**

Friends of Textiles & Costume gathered on Tuesday October 13, in the TK Boardroom at the ROM. Dr. Alexandra Palmer presented the notable activities of the year including research initiatives and the introduction of new department associates. As well, lighting improvements in the showcases in the Patricia Harris Gallery were completed during 2014 -2015 year.

The new acquisitions, some of which were funded by the Louise Hawley Stone Strategic Acquisitions Fund included an important piece ,

– a **Madeleine Vionnet** beaded evening dress c 1923 (2014.60.1).

The Vionnet was funded by Lynda Latner and the Louise Hawley Stone Strategic Acquisitions Fund. Many generous donors offered other acquisitions that were carefully selected to add to the collection.

Dr. Palmer, Dr. Fee and the department associates also provided outreach and consultation for external clients. The curators also maintain each year, an impressive schedule of research, publishing significant articles as well as attending conferences and workshops around the world.

The knowledge and work associated with maintaining the impressive historical record of Textiles & Costume at the ROM, is a not to be missed yearly event of the Friends Annual General Meeting.

Executive Officers for the year 2015-2016 are:

**Chair- Pat Sparrer**

**Secretary - Betty Finnie-Hunt**

**Treasurer -Tom Lewis**

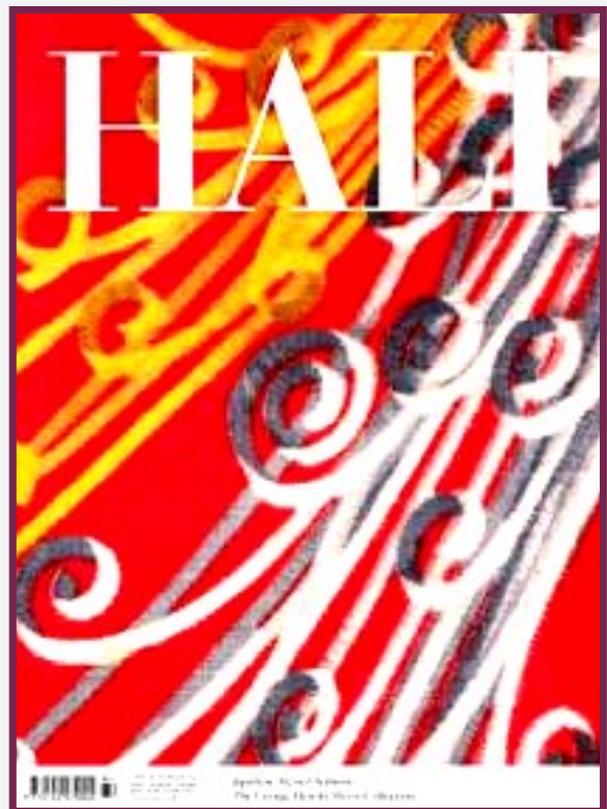
### **ADOPT- A- JOURNAL**

The Friends of Textiles & Costume (FTC) invites members of the Royal Ontario Museum to support the ROM Library and Archives through its 'adoption' program. The Library is a vital resource for ROM curators, students and university faculty from a number of institutions, and for the general public, who come to access the most up-to-date scholarship in their areas of interest. The ROM Library's textiles and costume holdings are the most frequently used in the Library, but this resource is remarkably expensive to maintain, and that is why it is a part of the FTC's mandate to raise funds in order to supplement the Library's budget. Donations are gratefully received and acknowledged by the ROM Library, and tax receipts will be issued for the full amounts given.

The Donor's name will be inscribed on the periodical display rack in the Sackler Reading Room. Periodicals for adoption can be found on the ROM website.

## **ADOPT-A-JOURNAL PROGRAM**

Sackler Reading Room



"We are pleased to announce that ***Hali: The International Magazine of Antique Carpet & Textile Art***, has been gifted to our department by Marshall and Marilyn Wolf, long time friends of Textiles and Costumes. Hopefully it will provide valuable reference tools for ROM curators, students and faculty from various institutions ."

Regards,  
Marshall Wolf

# POMPEII



*Girl fastening her peplos (Peplophoros). 1st century BC– 1st century AD, Bronze.*  
© The Superintendence for the Archeological Heritage of Naples (SAHN).

## Pompeii: Roman dress and fashion before the doom

By Dr. Sascha Priewe

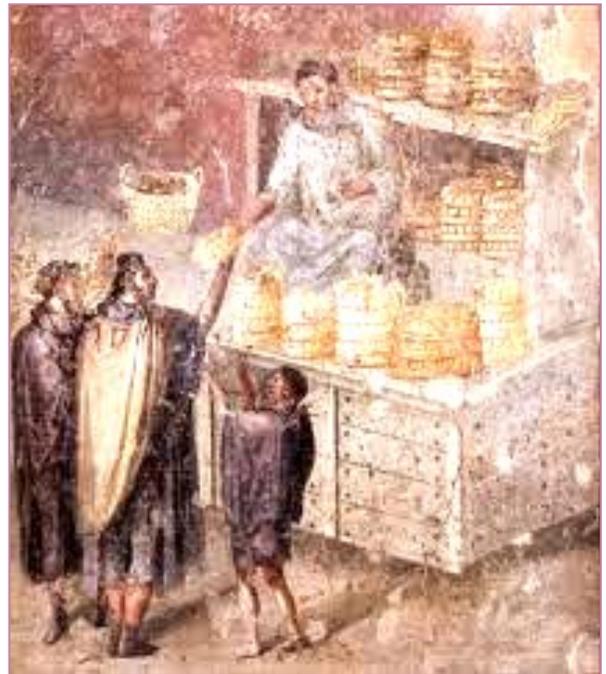
Volcanoes, games, gardens, food and gods are just some of the themes explored in the Royal Ontario Museum's exhibition entitled *Pompeii: In the Shadow of the Volcano*. But the exhibition truly is what you make of it, and it can easily become the perfect exhibition for fashion and textile lovers.

Though no actual textiles from Pompeii survive, they are amply represented in the sculptures, mosaics and murals scattered throughout the exhibition. Starting with the toga-clad youth and the wall painting of what is possibly a politician currying votes by giving out bread, one gets an idea of the dress of Pompeii's elite citizens.

Moving on, we are taken into the world of games and theatre: sparsely clad gladiators barely protected by bronze guards and helmets and statues of masked actors in full costume. Dress and fashion are also revealed in a section about public religion - the sculpture of the goddess Isis is a particular highlight.

As you enter the home of a rich Pompeian, one comes across the only part of the exhibition that directly addresses the fashion of the period. There are important examples of jewellery and hairstyles and the beautiful mural of a woman gazing at herself in the mirror shows her getting ready for the day. The highlight of this quick tour of Roman fashion in the Exhibition is the bronze sculpture of a young woman fastening her dress from the Villa dei Papyri in Herculaneum.

For further reading on Roman Fashion, *Roman Clothing and Fashion*, by Alexandra Croom is a good reference tool. This book is available through the University of Toronto's Robarts Library.



*Fresco showing Distribution of the Bread. Painted Plaster 69 x60cm. MANN 9071*

## ¡Viva México! - The ROM Celebrates the Mexican Days of the Dead

**C**hloë Sayer, a Research Associate in the Department of World Cultures at the ROM and guest-curator of the current exhibition *¡Viva México! Clothing & Culture* is returning to the ROM in October to provide background on the Mexican Days of the Dead.

In Mexico, death is seen as part of life. On All Saints' and All Souls' Days, celebrated on the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> of November, Mexicans honour the departed in homes and cemeteries with lavish offerings of flowers, incense, candles, food and drink. This is not a sombre occasion, but a time of feasting and reunion. Festivities are a focus for elaborate arts and crafts. Market stalls sell colourful sugar skulls, ingenious toys shaped like skulls and skeletons, and hand-cut paper banners with the delicacy of lace. Clay and papier mâché are used to caricature the activities of everyday life: bridal couples, revolutionaries and fire-eaters are shown in the guise of skeletons. Death is portrayed with respect, but also with affection and humour.

On Friday, October 30th, Chloe will be giving a lecture in the Eaton Theatre on the Days of the Dead. The lecture will be focussing on a festival that is central to the Mexican culture.

**The lecture is free, registration is required.**

**Please check ROM website for more details.**

<https://www.rom.on.ca/en/activities-programs/events-calendar/>

### Mexican Artists

In addition, Chloe has arranged for two Mexican guest artists who will be visiting



*Arturo Estrada & Rebozo (Women's Rectangular Shawl)*

Arturo Estrada is a master-dyer and master-weaver from Santa María del Río in the state of San Luis Potosí. He uses cochineal and other natural colourants to tie-dye the warp threads of his silk rebozos (women's rectangular shawls).

A magnificent example of his work, woven on the backstrap loom, shown in the picture and is included in the exhibition *¡Viva México! Clothing & Culture*.

## ¡Viva México! - The ROM Celebrates the Mexican Days of the Dead

In 2014, Arturo Estrada was a guest at the Fashion and Textile Museum in London (England) for the launch of its exhibition *Made in Mexico: The Rebozo in Art, Culture and Fashion*. In August this year, he was invited to give demonstrations at the celebrated Franz Mayer Museum in Mexico during their symposium on the Mexican rebozo. He has won numerous awards for his work.



### Sergio Hernández

Sergio Hernández is a paper artist. His delicate and colourful banners accompany the Tehuana costumes displayed in the entrance to *¡Viva México! Clothing & Culture*. Using series of specially made and extremely sharp chisels, he hammers through several layers of tissue paper to create his own designs. An exhibition of Sergio's work in a paper was recently mounted near Toluca at the Museum of Popular Culture for the State of Mexico. He has also made Day of the Dead altars in Switzerland.

While he is at the ROM, Sergio will decorate an altar for the souls of the departed in the Roloff Beny Gallery as part of the ROM's Day of the Dead events programme. This Gallery is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the ROM, next to the **Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume**.

### *Schedule for Artists*

October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, during ROM's Big Weekend, 11 am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm

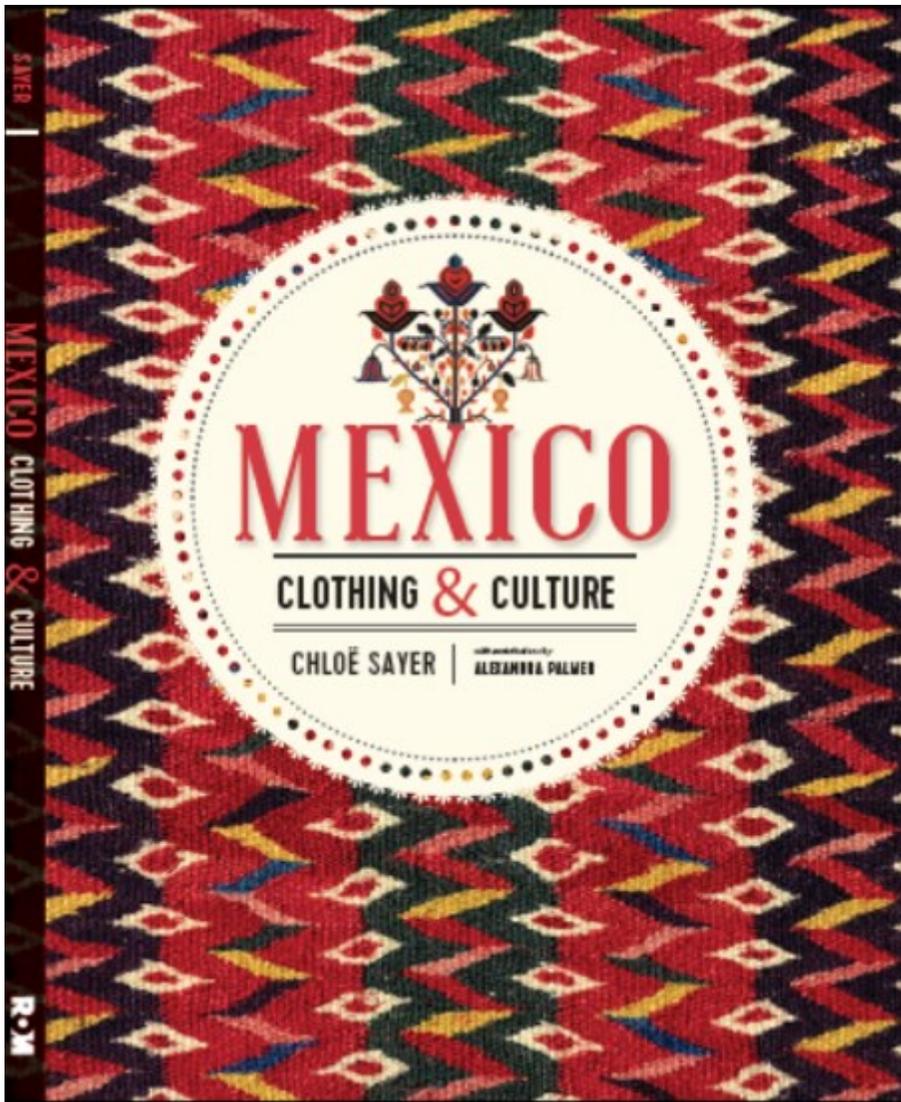
October 19<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, daily demonstrations between 11am and 1pm and 2pm and 4pm

October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, during Friday Night Live activities, 8pm to 10:30 pm

## Arturo Estrada & Sergio Hernandez (*from page 5*)

Both Arturo and Sergio will be working just inside the Roloff Beny Gallery, which is next to Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the ROM Crystal. As the All Saints' and All Souls' Days approach (November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>), Chloe and Sergio will start constructing and decorating the altar for the souls of the departed in the Gallery.

Please note: Neither gentleman speaks English but translators are available.



**C**hloë Sayer is an internationally-renowned authority on Mexican material culture. She brings to the study her 40 years of field research in Mexico, unique contextual photographs and extensive publication record. Her many books include *Costumes of Mexico* (1985); *Mexican Patterns: A Design Sourcebook* (1990); *Textiles from Mexico* (2002) and *Fiesta: Days of the Dead and other Mexican Festivals* (2009).

Chloë Sayer's book, *Mexico: Clothing and Culture*, accompanies the iViva México! Exhibit, should be finished printing October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The ROM's official launch and book signing will coincide with Chloë's October 30<sup>th</sup> lecture on the Mexican Days of the Dead.

**¡Viva México! - The ROM Celebrates the Mexican Days of the Dead**

***¡Viva México! Clothing and Culture*, presented by Mexico Tourism Board opened in the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume on May 9, 2015.**

Chloë is a freelance specialist in Mexican art and culture. In 2010 and 2012 she was the Veronika Gervers Research Fellow in Textiles and Costume History at the ROM and now she is a Research Associate with the Textiles section of the ROM's Department of World Cultures. She has made ethnographic collections for the British Museum, and has worked on television documentaries for the UK's Channel 4 and the BBC. Her many books include *Arts and Crafts of Mexico (1990)*, *Textiles from Mexico (2002)*, and *Fiesta: Days of the Dead and Other Mexican Festivals (2009)*. She has also written *Mexico: Clothing & Culture* to accompany the current exhibition.



*Chloë Sayer*

## **ROM Textiles & Costume Summer Intern—Stephanie Kean**



*Karen Donaldson (left) & Stephanie Kean (right)*

**T**he Friends of Textiles 2015 Summer Internship was awarded to Stephanie Kean. Stephanie worked with Alexandra Palmer and the Textile & Costume team

to document the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century fashions from the ROM textile and costume collection

The aim of the project was for Alexandra to see the costumes individually, out of the drawers and close up, so she could inspect them for condition, design, workmanship and dressmakers labels that were not recorded. One of the many benefits was to see and assess the wedding dresses of this period as few had ever been photographed. Late 19th century costume is made up of many parts, a bodice, skirt and overskirt and sometimes an additional bodice or sleeves so allowing the time to physically go through the collection was incredibly valuable and - though it may seem odd - curators do not have enough time in the day to spend with the collection. Too because textiles and costumes have no solid form it makes looking at objects in high storage drawers difficult and time consuming. Setting aside weeks with staff help, space and time was an all too rare and invaluable project.

The aim was to see as many pieces as possible and to get a documentary shot of each piece as the first visual record that would be added to the database.

This ambitious project involved going through the collection, drawer by drawer, retrieving the garments and laying the out in our workroom on three large tables. We checked the inventories and location records, photographed, measured and re-

## Summer Intern, *continued*



*Left :Before. Right : After . 1969.125.1.A*

*Bodice of two-piece dress. Machine-made cream cotton net trimmed with machine embroidery. Circa 1908-1910. French.*

housed each costume. During the 7 week Internship 182 textile storage drawers were retrieved and inventoried, 714 objects, averaging 34 objects per day were photographed, measured and re-housed. An astounding 4,439 new images were added to the Image Bank.

The project was achieved by a team of five, lots of space and time. Karla and Kristiina were responsible for overall organisation; retrieving the costumes and updating the inventories, then returning the costumes to storage. Karen Donaldson worked with Stephanie, handling the garments, photographing, measuring with Alexandra who made notes on construction, labels, and condition. Then the costumes were re-housed. This labour intensive work was done with precision and careful hands by Stephanie and the team.

Following up on this work Alanna McKnight has joined our team this summer as a volunteer in the Textile and Costume Section. Alanna is a PhD candidate at Ryerson University ,

who is working on a socio-cultural history of late 19th century corsetieres in Toronto.

She is assisting Alexandra with history of the costumes we examined. In particular she is checking provenance of the designs, and particularly the wedding dress collection with genealogical research on the bride and groom as well as dressmakers in order to corrects and verify the histories of these garments so that we can have a more accurate understanding of the collection.

Through the Friends of Textiles Summer Internship program Stephanie has made an outstanding contribution to the Textile and Costume Section. We wish her very well with her new contract position as Conservation Intern at the McMichael Gallery in Kleinberg, Ontario. Thank you to the Friends of Textiles from this team as your funds allowed us to do this fun and incredible project. There are many more drawers to do but this is an excellent start at documenting the ROM's important costume collection. ❀

## Donations to the Friends of Textiles & Costume

As mentioned in the Spring 2015 FTC Newsletter, the treatment of donations to the Friends of Textiles & Costume was to change slightly. Tax receipts for amounts donated will still be issued by the Board of Governors. All donations will be used solely to fill the philanthropic aspects of the FTC's mandate.

The change in the donation process is the role that a Friend of Textiles & Costume will take in the decision process for the distribution of these donations. Early in each calendar year, staff in the Textiles & Fashion Section will request items or an intern to assist in its day-to-day operation. By the end of the fiscal year, these requests will be presented to the Friends of Textiles & Costume, not just the Committee, for approval. Alternatively, a recommendation can be made to transfer the donations to Burnham Brett Textiles and Costume Endowment Fund to support future exhibitions in the Textiles & Costume Gallery.

Donations can be made to the Friends of Textiles & Costume at any time either electronically or by mail.

### Electronically:

1. During your ROM membership renewal, locate the Optional Donation portion of the page, select the amount of donation you wish to make and select Friends of Textiles & Costume from the drop down menu for "My gift is in support of:".
2. At any other time, locate the "Support Us" button on the ROM website and select "Donate Now". Under the drop down menu for "My gift is towards" select Friends of Textiles & Costume.

### By mail:

1. If you are receiving the newsletter by mail, use the enclosed form for a donation and return it in the enclosed envelop.

### Becoming a Friend of Textiles & Costume

To become a Friend of FTC, thereby taking a more active role in supporting the ROM's textiles and costume collection, an annual donation of \$50 (suggested minimum) is requested. Donations can be made in the manner outlined above and a tax receipt will be issued.

### Run for the ROM, Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge



The Friends of Textiles & Costume are joining ROM curators, staff and friends in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge. Donations made to the ROM may be directed to the FTC will be included in the funds distributed to Textiles & Fashion Section.

To donate to the FTC through this Challenge, please log on to <https://goo.gl/Knq9vz> and follow the instructions. If you wish to mail in a donation please contact Pat Sparrer through the DMV office and instructions will be provided.

Donations will be accepted until October 30, 2015.

If you have any questions regarding about donating to the FTC, please contact the Department of Museum Volunteers Reception at 416-586-8097 and leave a message for Pat Sparrer.

## CURATOR'S ACTIVITIES

DR. ALEXANDRA PALMER

### ICOM (International Council of Museums)

Since the Spring, staff of the Department of Textiles and Fashion have been busy preparing for the ICOM conference that was held in Toronto the week of September 8th to September 13th.

ICOM, the International Council of Museums, is a Public Interest Organization with a unique network of more than 32,000 members and museum professionals who represent the global museum community.

ICOM's Costume Committee, a group of international dress historians and museum professionals from all over the world – Israel, China, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, UK, Greece, Thailand, Netherlands, Japan and naturally US and Canada – met at the University of Toronto for presentations on textile and fashion issues related to museums such as:

- ◇ History of the ROM's costume collection
- ◇ Fixed fans, feathers, birds and insects: reflecting on exotic ornaments made in Brazil in the eighteenth century
- ◇ Tracing the Threads of Life: Biographical Clues in Dress
- ◇ The Paramour's Dresses - The Residence Gallery in the North Oratory Salzburg
- ◇ Sea-silk – rediscovering a precious ancient textile material
- ◇ Displaying and Interpreting Dress: an Exhibition of Shanghai Modern
- ◇ Dress Codes: Revealing the Jewish Wardrobe: New Approaches to the Costume collection of the Israel Museum

The Conference's ROM day, was Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>.

Participants viewed unique collection pieces in the Textile & Costume lab, storage facilities on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor and pieces in the Conservation Lab awaiting conservation evaluation or work. This was followed by a reception in C5 and a tour of *Viva México! Clothing & Culture* in the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume.

Docent, FTC and Textiles student volunteers provided behind-the-scenes tours, gallery tours and support at the reception. Comments from participants indicate that their visit to the ROM was one of the highlights of the conference. Of note were the extra tours of the ROM's various gallery collections and the *Viva Mexico!* exhibit. Supporting conferences such as this goes a long way to highlight the ROM's important textile and costume collection.

Participants also had the opportunity to visit the following sites for related displays:

- ◇ *Faster. Smarter. Tougher* exhibition by the Design Exchange (DX) in the Distillery District (part of the PanAm/ParaPan activities)
- ◇ Bata Shoe Museum galleries and storage
- ◇ Canadian Opera Company Wardrobe
- ◇ Toronto Reference Library collection

### The Collecting Genius of Charles Currelly

BY SARAH FEE

*Charles Trick Currelly* was a man of the cloth in many ways. Few people today, however, remember that Currelly was also an avid collector of textiles and dress; before 1940, he brought in 7000 pieces to the ROM, thereby founding the world-class collection we enjoy today.

(Excerpted from ROM Magazine of the ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM, Summer 2015. Currelly: A Man of the Cloth. Page 33. Sarah Fee)

## CURATOR'S ACTIVITIES , *continued*

DR. SARAH FEE

Starting July 1, 2015 Dr. Fee is on a one-year sabbatical to advance two research projects and dedicate time to documenting the results.

The first project is SSHRC-funded research on hand weaving in the western Indian Ocean World. This will entail:

- ◇ archival research in Paris, London and Manchester,
- ◇ study visits to museums in Germany, France and Chicago, and
- ◇ continued field research with weavers in Gujarat, India.

The second project is to complete a first draft of a monograph on the textile arts of Madagascar, a work for which Dr. Fee has been gathering data on for over twenty years. She will continue to

present conference papers at international gatherings, which included the recently completed CIETA conference in Berlin, Germany.

We look forward to Dr. Fee sharing her findings in the Fall of 2016.



## FTC PROGRAMS

### ROM DAYTIME LECTURE

**THURSDAY , JANUARY 14, 2016**

### **Preparation and Installation of Exhibitions in the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles and Costume**

The ROM has a collection of 50,000 fragile and sensitive textile and fashion artifacts. By rotating exhibits of weaving, needlework, printed and archaeological textiles, and silks, the collection is promoted through stories that interweave cultures and societies and record intimate histories, politics and ingenious innovation.

But how are decisions made as to what part of the collection is to be highlighted at any given time, what is the story to be told about a collection, and how artifacts are conserved and presented to ensure that the stories can be told over and over or re-invented.

The FTC is sponsoring a lecture on Thursday, January 14, 2016 during which ROM staff from the Textiles and Fashion and World Cultures Department will present the many steps undertaken from the initial proposal of an exhibit to the final installation of the textile and fashion artifacts in the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume.

**Watch for an e-news blast from the ROM or check the ROM website closer to this date for more details.**

**<https://www.rom.on.ca/en/activities-programs/events-calendar/>**

*Exploring the ROM's unique collection of Textiles from Madagascar  
Middle East / South Asia Special Exhibit case,  
3rd Floor Lee-Chin Crystal.*



Image by George Whiteside

Dr. Alexandra Palmer

## A “Fitting” End to Fashion Follows Form

*Fashion Follows Form: Designs for Sitting*, curated by Alexandra Palmer (June 21, 2014 to January 25, 2015) in the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume, ROM, received this year’s Richard Martin Exhibition Award.

The award is given by the Costume Society of America in recognition of an outstanding costume exhibition that demonstrates excellence and innovation in the interpretation and presentation of costume and provides a transforming experience to both students of costume and the public.



June 21, 2014 to January 25, 2015

Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume, Level 4

*Fashion Follows Form: Designs for Sitting*

*Fashion Follows Form* focused on clothing designed for a seated body, and featured the IZAdaptive line specifically for people who use wheelchairs designed by Canadian, Izzy Camilleri, that as shown alongside 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century also made for an L-shape frame. The jurors reviewed all submissions from on-line application materials comprised of text, images, plans, videos and installation photos and video. Their decision was, unusually, unanimous with observations such as:

“truly original concept”

“beautifully written text that was respectful of the audience like the designer is respectful of her clients”

“the theme was one of social justice and human rights”

“it checks off so many boxes of what a museum exhibition should be about broadening people’s perspective, about inclusion, and it shows why creating identity through clothing is so important in peoples’ lives”.

**CENTRE : ROM TEXTILES & FASHIONS**

**DEPARTMENT :WORLD CULTURES**

**SECTION : TEXTILES & COSTUME**



### Editor’s Note

We are excited to present a new format for easier reading online with our Fall 2015 edition! The changes include two columns per page and the formatting ability to present more news and information for you .Copies of Friends of Textiles & Costume newsletter can also be mailed if requested. We hope you enjoy the new format.

Patricia Boulden

FTC Newsletter Editor