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"FASHIONING KIMONO: ART DECO AND MODERNISM IN JAPAN"

November 3, 2010 - January 9, 2011
Reception: Wednesday, November 3, 6-8 pm

(New Orleans, LA) The Newcomb Art Gallery at Tulane University is pleased to announce ***Fashioning Kimono: Art Deco and Modernism in Japan***, which will be on view **November 3, 2010 - January 9, 2011**. Organized by Art Services International, the exhibition highlights 75 kimono of the late 19th and early 20th centuries including formal, semi-formal, and casual kimono, haori jackets, and undergarments worn by men, women, and children. The kimono are drawn from the renowned Montgomery Collection in Lugano, Switzerland, and are featured along with a selection of period photographs on loan from the International Hokusai Research Centre in Milan.

The kimono portray two important facets: they represent one of the most dynamic periods in the history of Japan's national costume, and they also depict the last historical era of the "living kimono"—when kimono were being worn by the majority of the populace. But the kimono never lost its appeal; it remained the dominant dress from the early 20th century until the 1940s, as it gradually took on a more formal meaning.



Woman's formal, long-sleeved kimono (furisode), Taishō period, 1920s, The Montgomery Collection, Lugano

The exhibition is organized into four sections: Traditional/Transitional Kimono, Men's Garments, Children's Garments, and Women's Kimono. Selected by Guest Curator Annie Van Assche, the textiles will be accompanied by a select group of vintage photographs that place the kimono in vivid context.

Prior to the Meiji period, silk kimono were affordable only to the members of the upper class in Japan, and governmental restrictions further limited the scope of who was allowed to wear silk



Man's formal jacket (haori), detail, Early Shōwa period, 1930s-1940s, The Montgomery Collection, Lugano

kimono. Instead, simple, striped kimono made of cotton or bast fibers—handspun and hand woven at home—were worn by the large majority of people in Japan.

All of this changed in the Meiji period when the feudal system was abolished. At the same time, the government revamped the silk industry with new technologies and machinery imported from the West. Silk soon became Japan's main export product and the major driving force behind its industrial revolution. These improvements to Japan's silk industry had a strong impact on the domestic demand for silk fabric, as it became more affordable to the average person. By the early 1900s, several of the traditional textile centers located just outside of Tokyo—Japan's new capital and largest urban center—were supplying the new consumer with fashionable silk fabrics in the latest colors and patterns and distributing them through the new, large department stores located in the fashionable districts of Tokyo and Osaka.

With the increasing demand and sophisticated tastes of the new consumer came the need for good designers. The department stores responded by establishing their own design sections and hiring new graduates from the best of Tokyo's art schools. Soon their chic, modern "zuan-zukuri" (design-made) products, advertised in newspapers and on posters, became the rage. Well aware of the exotic appeal that Western fashion had on the Japanese at the time, designers created exciting, bold motifs that would appeal to their main customer, the "new woman." Western designs often were juxtaposed against traditional Japanese textile patterns, thus transforming the kimono into a fashionable, modern garment.

COLLECTION

The Montgomery Collection of Japanese art comprises over 1200 objects. Approximately three hundred of these objects are textiles, the majority of which belong to the *mingei* (Japanese folk art) genre. While these *mingei* textiles have been published widely in various publications and exhibited around the globe (i.e., "*MINGEI: Japanese Folk Art from the Montgomery Collection*," organized and circulated by Art Services International in 1995; "*Wrapped up in Myth: Fabrics and Costumes from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century from the Montgomery Collection*," Geneva, 1995; and "*Fabrics of the Floating World: Traditional Textiles in Japanese Woodblock Prints*," Milan, 2003), the outstanding garments in this

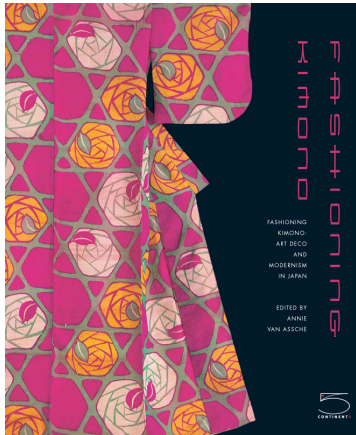


Infant boy's formal kimono and jacket (haori) ensemble, Taishō period, 1913-1926, The Montgomery Collection, Lugano

exhibition have never been seen in North America (their only previous presentation was a brief 2005 installation at London's Victoria & Albert Museum). The collection of vintage and modern photographs, selected by Curator, Rossella Menegazzo, is on loan from the JCII Photo Salon of Tokyo, the International Hokusai Research Centre in Milan, Prof. Gian Carlo Calza, Director.

CATALOGUE

Accompanying the exhibition is *"FASHIONING KIMONO: Art Deco and Modernism in Japan,"* a



Catalogue cover

new edition of the full-color catalogue produced for the *"FASHIONING KIMONO: Dress and Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan"* presentation at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Published by 5 Continents Publishers, it contains essays by Guest Curator Annie M. Van Assche, a respected Japanese art historian and textile scholar; Reiko Brandon (former Curator of Textiles at the Honolulu Academy of Arts); Anna Jackson (Deputy Keeper of the Asian Department, Victoria & Albert Museum); Akiko Fukai (Chief Curator and Director of the Kyoto Costume Institute in Kyoto); and Elise Kurashige Tipton (Associate Professor and Chair of Japanese and Korean Studies at the University of Sydney, Australia; along with

updated details of the U.S. tour.

SUPPORT

This exhibition is organized and circulated by Art Services International, Alexandria, Virginia. Support for the national tour and catalogue has been provided by The E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation. His Excellency, Ichiro Fujisaki, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the United States of America is Honorary Patron of the exhibition.

Additional support comes from The Japan Foundation – New York, the Consulate-General of Japan in Nashville, Tulane University Asian Studies Program, Julie McCollam, Susan Brennan, The Georges Lurcy Educational and Charitable Trust, Carol Downes Cudd and Robert C. Cudd III, The Jane Whipple Green Art Fund, the John F. Clemmer Fund, and the Carol Wiener Sandfield Art Fund.

ABOUT THE GALLERY

The Newcomb Art Gallery is dedicated to enriching the cultural and intellectual life of the Tulane University and New Orleans communities and to sustaining the creative spirit of Newcomb. Free and open to public, the gallery is located in the Woldenberg Art Center on the Tulane University uptown campus. For more information about the gallery, please call Teresa Parker Farris at 504-314-2406 or visit www.newcombartgallery.tulane.edu.

ABOUT ART SERVICES INTERNATIONAL

Art Services International is a nonprofit educational institution that organizes touring art exhibitions of the highest quality for museums worldwide, accompanied by scholarly all-color catalogues. These exhibitions include paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, sculpture, and decorative arts that range from the art of the ancient world to works of the Old Masters, and continue through to the contemporary period. ASI exhibitions are drawn from museums and private collections, internationally, and are hosted by museums throughout the United States and Europe. ASI shares with the hosting museums a commitment to enhancing the appreciation of art. For further information, call 703-548-4554 or visit www.ASIexhibitions.org.

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