

BOOTS

The Height of Fashion

March 5 – April 6, 2013

The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology



Boots: The Height of Fashion examines how boots emerged as a modern fashion phenomenon over the course of the last century and evolved to become a staple of the fashionable woman's wardrobe. As Valerie Steele writes: "In feudal societies . . . the man on horseback was also the aristocrat, the knight, literally the chevalier. Thus, the boot implicitly symbolized both power and high status." Boots have also been worn as part of military attire, and for labor, closely aligning them with masculine strength. While originally intended as protection for the foot and leg, today a woman's boot can express sexuality, make rebellious fashion statements, or symbolize wealth and status.

Beginning with a Jack Jacobus boot, circa 1900, the exhibition encompasses three themes—sex, rebellion, and status. The section entitled "Sex" displays five pairs of boots that highlight or enhance a woman's sexuality. "Rebellion" explores boots that challenge mainstream fashion. The "Status" section includes boots by Gucci and Manolo Blahnik, and examines how high-end footwear conveys the importance of designer and wearer alike. *Boots: The Height of Fashion* ends with a special section that reveals methods used by conservators to prepare objects for exhibition.

Boots: The Height of Fashion has been organized by graduate students in the Fashion Institute of Technology's MA program in Fashion and Textile Studies: History, Theory, Museum Practice.

Fatima Ahmed, Project Manager
Keren Ben-Horin, Exhibition Historian
Paula Bonanno, Public Relations
Julia Borden, Curator
Michelle Boyce, Conservation
Quinn Bradley, Research
Dara Douglas, Exhibition Designer
Patrice George, Media Manager
Inga Hansen, Conservation
Alexander Joseph, Education
Bomey Kim, Exhibition Designer
Janet Lee, Exhibition Designer
Landis Lee, Registrar
Marla Miles, Public Relations
FanYi Mok, Exhibition Historian/Conservation
Kathryn Squitieri, Research
Fiona Tedds, Education
Erica Travis, Research Curator
Cathleen Zaret, Conservation Curator

We would like to thank the many people who helped make this exhibition possible:

Dr. Joyce F. Brown, President, Fashion Institute of Technology

From the School of Graduate Studies: Dean Mary Davis, Adjunct Instructor Rebecca Shea, Professor Denyse Montegut, Professor Lourdes Font, Department/Industry Project Coordinator Ewa Garbos, and Technologist Anton Baptiste

From The Museum at FIT: Director and Chief Curator Dr. Valerie Steele, Deputy Director Patricia Mears, Associate Curator of Accessories Colleen Hill, and Publications Coordinator Julian Clark; Acting Senior Curator Fred Dennis; Senior Conservator Ann Coppinger and Marjorie Jonas and Nicole Bloomfield of the Conservation Department; Museum Photographer Eileen Costa; Sonia Dingilian and Jill Hemingway of the Museum Registrar's Office; Exhibition Manager Michael Goitia and Gabrielle Lauricella and Boris Chesakov of the Exhibitions Department; Lynn Sallaberry and Thomas Synnamon of the Costume Department; Curator of Education Tanya Melendez and Associate Curator of Education Melissa Marra; and Media Manager Tamsen Schwartzman

From the Gladys Marcus Library Department of Special Collections and FIT Archives: Karen Cannell

From Communications and External Relations: Cheri Fein, Carol Leven, and Smiljana Peros

Special thanks to: Ward Mintz and Kat Cappillino

Photograph © The Museum at FIT, New York



Seventh Avenue at 27th Street
New York, NY 10001-5992
fitnyc.edu/museum

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, noon-8 pm
Saturday, 10 am-5 pm
Closed Sunday, Monday, and legal holidays.
Admission is always free.
Museum information line: 212 217.4558