CFDA announces 'Fashioning America: Grit to Glamour' exhibition

By Jennifer Braun - July 8, 2022

The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) announced on Thursday the launch of its inaugural fashion exhibit Fashioning America: Grit to Glamour.

The exhibit will run from September 10 through January 30, 2023 at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. It will feature over 90 designers and iconic American labels such as pieces on loan from Vogue magazine’s global editor at large, Hamish Bowles, plus other private collections and household names such as Ralph Lauren, Nike, Vera Wang, and Levi Strauss alongside statement-making styles by designers Virgil Abloh, Carolina Herrera, Patricia Michaels, Virgil Ortiz, Anna Sui, and Isabel Toledo.

It aims to explore and celebrate the diversity of the country’s fashion heritage and spirit of invention. Along the way, it spotlights the untold stories of underrecognized and underrepresented designers, important contemporary movements shaping the industry, and American fashion’s resonance in global trends and visual culture.

“American fashion reflects the complexity of America writ large, weaving together stories of innovation, immigration, independence, self-invention, and creativity. The sweeping story of American fashion encompasses designers from all walks of life — from the rural to the urban, from the regional to the global — who embody history past and present and represent issues related to inclusion and exclusion,” said the exhibition’s curator, Michelle Tolini Finamore.

“I am honored and excited to have the opportunity to champion work that has too often been overlooked by convention and hope that the exhibition captures the role fashion plays in reflecting the American spirit to the rest of the world.”

In particular, the expanse of American fashion is explored through seven themed sections from denim jeans to bathing suits, sneakers to cowboy boots, zoot suits to leisure suits, sportswear to underwear, and Hollywood glamour to street style.
The exhibition also emphasizes the work of Black and Native American designers and features geographical representation of fashion designers and histories from across the country.

The introduction of the exhibit was made alongside the announcement of a new partnership with Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. As part of the partnership, a new scholarship is also being introduced called the CFDA x Crystal Bridges Heartland Scholars Award, which will foster design talent in students based, studying or raised in the American Heartland.

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