Exhibitionism: 50 Years of The Museum at FIT celebrates the 50th anniversary of what Michael Kors has called “the fashion insider’s fashion museum.” Founded in 1969 as the Design Laboratory and Galleries at FIT, The Museum at FIT is a specialized fashion museum best known for its innovative and award-winning exhibitions. Over the 50 years of its existence, the museum has presented approximately 200 fashion exhibitions. For this retrospective, we have chosen to focus on 33 of the most interesting and influential, such as Fashion and Surrealism (1987), a groundbreaking show that explored the relationship between art and fashion; The Corset: Fashioning the Body (2000), a compelling exploration of the most controversial garment in fashion history; and Fairy Tale Fashion (2016), a magical look at such enchanted and emblematic items as the glass slipper and the red riding hood.

EXHIBITIONISM: 50 YEARS OF THE MUSEUM AT FIT
February 8–April 20, 2019
Seventh Avenue at 27th Street, New York City

Hours:
Tuesday–Friday, noon–8 pm
Saturday, 10 am–5 pm
Closed Sunday, Monday, and legal holidays
Admission is free.

fitnyc.edu/museum
Museum information line: (212) 217-4558

#50YearsofMFIT #MuseumatFIT exhibitions.fitnyc.edu/exhibitionism

couture council
Exhibitionism: 50 Years of The Museum at FIT has been made possible thanks to the generosity of the Couture Council of The Museum at FIT.

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums
Cover: Poster Dress by Harry Gordon, paper dress, England, 1968. All photographs © MFIT.
Robert Riley was the founding director of the Design Laboratory at FIT. He worked to build a great collection, and when a dedicated building was constructed, Riley started organizing major exhibitions, such as Paul Poiret: The King of Fashion (1976). Richard Martin, Laura Sinderbrand, and Harold Koda put the Design Laboratory and Galleries at FIT on the map in the 1980s and early 1990s, with exhibitions like Halston: Absolute Modernism (1992). In 1994, Dorothy Twining Globus was appointed director of what was renamed The Museum at FIT.

In 1997, Dr. Valerie Steele joined as chief curator, becoming director in 2003. Today, the museum’s professional staff organizes four exhibitions per year. Whether monographic, chronological, or thematic, MFIT’s exhibitions contextualize fashion and underscore its connections to history, culture, and society. Ambitious exhibitions are accompanied by both a publication and an international symposium. MFIT’s collection consists of more than 50,000 garments and accessories from the eighteenth century to the present. The museum’s mission is to educate and inspire diverse audiences with innovative exhibitions and programs that advance knowledge of fashion.

MFIT’s 50th anniversary offers an ideal opportunity to document and celebrate the museum’s past and prepare for its future. By conducting thorough research into MFIT’s past, Exhibitionism will contribute to a growing body of scholarship on the topic of fashion collections and exhibitions. The history of the museum is also an integral part of the history of FIT, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year.

Valerie Steele and Colleen Hill, co-curators