

**To Register**

Website: [fitnyc.edu/museum](http://fitnyc.edu/museum)

Email: [museuminfo@fitnyc.edu](mailto:museuminfo@fitnyc.edu)

The symposium is free and open to the public. However, reservations are required. Seats are first come, first served with an RSVP. The Museum at FIT and the college reserve the right to cancel a program at any time. If you require accommodations due to a disability, please contact [museuminfo@fitnyc.edu](mailto:museuminfo@fitnyc.edu) to discuss your needs. Please provide enough advance notice so that it is possible to honor your request adequately.

The Katie Murphy Amphitheatre is in the Fred P. Pomerantz Art and Design Center on the northwest corner of Seventh Avenue and West 27th Street in New York City.

*Wondrous Objects* is made possible with the support of the Couture Council of The Museum at FIT. The Museum at FIT's programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

*couture council*



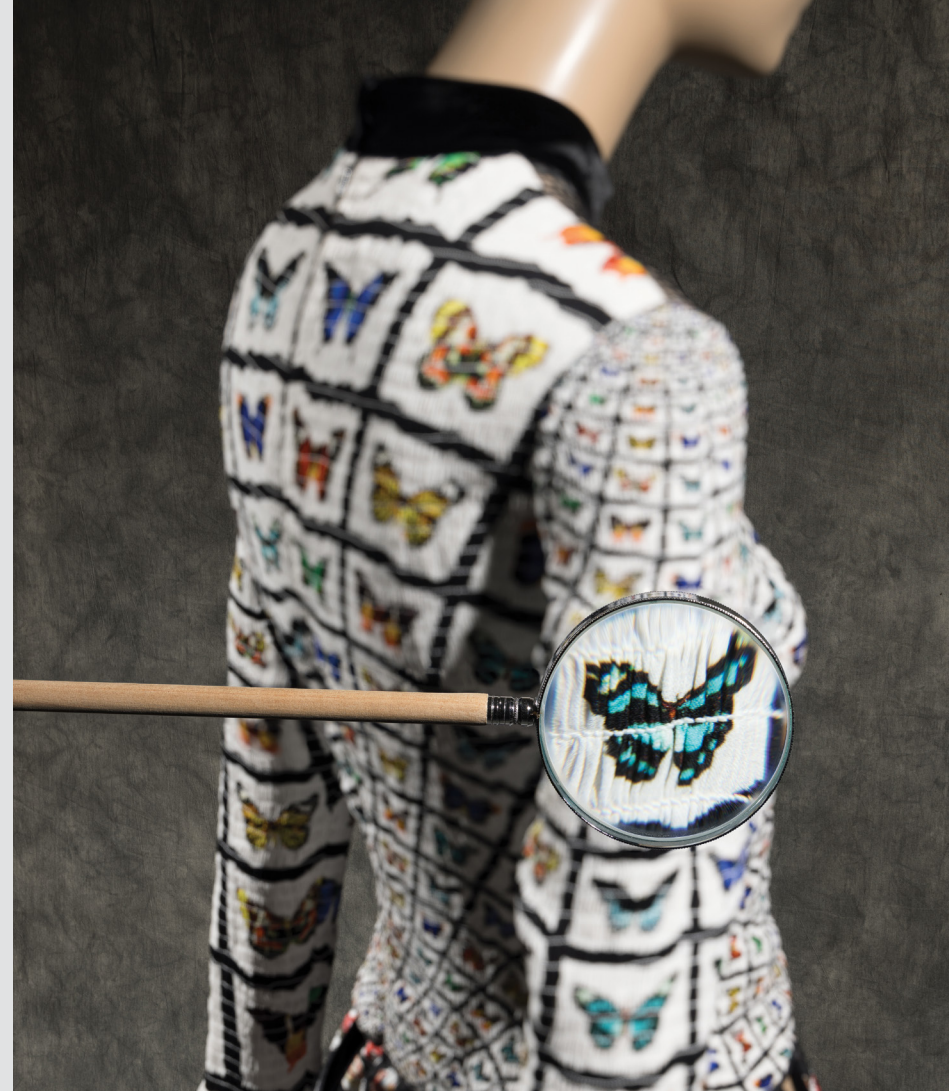
**About The Museum at FIT**

For information about visiting The Museum at FIT; its membership group, the Couture Council; and tours and donations, please go to [fitnyc.edu/museum](http://fitnyc.edu/museum).



**The Museum at FIT**

Mary Katrantzou, printed, embroidered, and beaded dress with net overlay, spring 2019. Museum purchase.



# Wondrous Objects Symposium

Friday, March 28, 2025  
Katie Murphy Amphitheatre

The Museum at **FIT**

# Schedule

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10 am	Welcoming remarks, <b>Dr. Joyce F. Brown</b> , president of FIT
10:05 am	Introduction, <b>Dr. Valerie Steele</b> , director and chief curator of The Museum at FIT
10:15 am	<b>Dr. Colleen Hill</b> , “Fashioning Wonder: A Cabinet of Curiosities”
10:45 am	<b>Hilary Davidson</b> , “Shoes of Wonder: The Legacy of the Ruby Slippers”
11:15 am	Q&A with the audience
10 min. break	
11:30 am	<b>Mei Mei Rado</b> , “The Lady’s Fan: Accessorizing Modern Femininity in Republican China”
Noon	<b>Colleen Hill</b> in conversation with <b>Niio Perkins</b> and <b>Ted Muehling</b>
12:30 pm	Q&A with the audience
<b>12:45–2:15 pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
2:15 pm	<b>Jason Cyrus</b> , “Draping Innovation: Cristóbal Balenciaga and the Sari”
2:45 pm	<b>Petra Slinkard</b> , “When Fashion and Design Are Your Life: the Stylings of Iris Apfel”
3:15 pm	Q&A with the audience
10 min. break	
3:30 pm	<b>Evan Michelson</b> , “Ephemeral Beauties: Wax Women and the Dawn of Consumer Culture”
4:00 pm	<b>Mark Dion</b> , “Wonder Rooms”
4:30 pm	Q&A with the audience

# Speaker Bios

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**Jason Cyrus** is a fashion curator exploring questions of creativity, identity, and agency. He is also an associate lecturer in cultural and historical studies at the London College of Fashion and a PhD candidate at the University of Warwick.

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**Hilary Davidson** is associate professor and chair of FIT’s MA program in Fashion and Textile Studies: History, Theory, Museum Practice. A fashion historian and curator, she originally trained as a shoemaker. Her most recent book is *Jane Austen’s Wardrobe* (Yale, 2023).

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**Mark Dion** is a visual artist whose work explores the environment, the history of natural history, and the cultures of museums. The artist’s spectacular and often fantastical curiosity cabinets, modeled on Wunderkammern of the 16th and 17th centuries, exalt atypical orderings of objects and specimens.

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**Dr. Colleen Hill** is senior curator of costume at The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (MFIT). She received her PhD from the University of the Arts London. Since joining MFIT in 2006, she has curated eighteen exhibitions and has authored or co-authored eight books.

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**Evan Michelson** is an antiques dealer and collector who specializes in esoteric objects. She was co-owner of the legendary East Village shop *Obscura Antiques and Oddities*. She is currently the owner of *Obscura West* located in Lambertville, New Jersey.

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**Ted Muehling** has been designing jewelry and decorative objects inspired by organic forms found in nature since 1976. He produces multiples as well as unique pieces using a variety of materials including precious and semiprecious stones, metals, pearls, plastic, horn, and wood.

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**Niio Perkins**, Kanien’kehá:ka Bear Clan, is an award-winning artist whose modern aesthetic fuses traditional symbols with organic shapes and vibrant colorways, creating unique pieces inspired by the beauty of her Haudenosaunee culture. Niio Perkins has been a strong presence in Indigenous art, fashion, and media for over a decade through heirloom jewelry creations and traditional and contemporary clothing.

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**Mei Mei Rado** is assistant professor at Bard Graduate Center, where she teaches history of textiles, dress, and decorative arts. Her research focuses on fashion and textiles in the trans-cultural context from the 18th to the early 20th century.

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**Petra Slinkard** is director of curatorial affairs and the Nancy B. Putnam Curator of Fashion and Textiles at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. She leads an award-winning exhibition program, oversees a robust global fashion and textiles collection, and curates experiences on dress history and identity. Previously, she stewarded collections at the Chicago History Museum and at Newfields in Indianapolis.