JOIN THE FRIENDS
FOR 2015

If you join or renew your Friends membership by March 31, 2015, four lucky current members will be eligible for a drawing to receive the book The Lost Art of Dress: The Women Who Once Made America Stylish, signed by author Dr. Linda Przybyszewski.

Name: _______________________________________
Address: _____________________________________
City: ___________________State:____Zip:_________
Telephone: _________________________
Email: ______________________________________

- Student $15+
- Dual $65+
- Patron $100+
- Benefactor $500+
- Individual $35+
- Sustainer $75+
- Connoisseur $250+
- Grand Benefactor $1,000+

Make your check payable to FRHTG and mail to: P.O. Box 5832, Lincoln, NE 68505

Spring/Summer 2015
Uncommon Threads
Friends of the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery
P.O. Box 5832, Lincoln, NE 68505-5832
http://textilegallery.unl.edu
hillestadfriends@yahoo.com

Friends of the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery
and the Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design

Invite You to Join Us For a Very Special Week in April…

Modernism and Romanticism: An American Design Approach

The work of three American designers—Bill Blass, Geoffrey Beene, and Oscar de la Renta—will be the substance of this costume exhibition that will establish the mood of American fashion in the latter half of the 20th century. Beginning in the late 1960s, these designers emerged on the global fashion scene with fresh talent, energy and sophistication that marked women’s changing position in society. Extant costumes from the UNL collection along with pieces from Indiana University and Ohio State University will adorn the gallery and deliver a message about American ingenuity.

April 20  Modernism and Romanticism Gallery exhibit opens
April 20  Lecture by Dr. Linda Przybyszewski, author of The Lost Art of Dress: The Women Who Once Made America Stylish, UNL City Union, 5pm
April 21  TMFD Student Fashion Runway Show, Sheldon Museum of Art, 5:30pm
April 24  Modernism and Romanticism reception, preceded by speaker Gayle Strege, Historic Costume & Textile Collection Curator - Ohio State University, Home Economics building, East Campus, 5-8pm
May 22  Modernism and Romanticism Gallery exhibit closes

(Left) Geoffrey Beene dress donated by Marilyn Forke
(Top Right) Bill Blass jacket donated by Avery Woods
(Bottom Right) Oscar de la Renta dress donated by Marjorie Woods
From the Director ~

The majority of my art history lessons have come through virtual sources -- books, slides and the web. When I had the opportunity to stand in front of a Van Gogh cypress tree in New York for the first time, it was like I was seeing an entirely new Van Gogh. An usher Van Gogh. The 2-D image that I knew suddenly burst into 3-D technicolor. I had a similar experience when I saw Seurat’s La Grande Jatte in Chicago. I was struck by its size -- so much larger than I had imagined it to be. Art cannot be fully appreciated on a page or a screen. You miss its vitality. Calder mobiles do not twist. Van Goghs do not pop. They need to be seen in person.

We are so fortunate to have a space devoted entirely to the presentation of actual art objects, of handmade things that cast shadows. We have a beautiful space that allows us to get right up close, to see what the artist saw, and to put the work into spatial context.

We've had wonderful feedback from our last three shows in the Hillestad Gallery. The surface design students found inspiration from Weidang Gong’s printed panels. I heard from a couple of 4-H students that being chosen to display their work in the Celebration of Youth exhibition had been on their bucket lists. Camille Hawbaker’s show, Unraveling, received rave reviews, particularly from L. Kent Wolgamott on his Facebook page. Thanks to the efforts of Senior Director of Development for the UNL Foundation Jane Heany, her associates and many donors, our Fund has more than doubled in just a few months to $63,864. The guaranteed interest income from this amount will exceed $2,000 annually -- and continue to grow -- ensuring the future of the Gallery and Historic Collections. If you would like to donate to Fund #12998, please contact University of Nebraska Foundation, PO Box 82555, Lincoln, NE 68501-2555.

In February we will have the opportunity to enjoy the current work of one of our alumni, Dr. Kim Hahn, who, while on campus, will select the pieces to be presented in the following show, the Biennal Juried Student Exhibition, a celebration of the work of the design and merchandising students. Dr. Barbara Trout’s upcoming show, Modernism and Romanticism, will spotlight three major American fashion designers and bring pieces together from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Dr. Trout's show, Modernism, will be a celebration of the work of the design and merchandising students. The exposure of the textiles gallery on Facebook is impressive and important in relating the work of this jewel, the Hillestad Gallery, to the world.

Mary Eisenhart
President
Friends of the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery

Message from the President ~

What an incredible time we’ve had since our last Uncommon Threads publication. Friends of the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery Board has been working non-stop, raising funds to support the Gallery, the Historic Costume & Textile Collection, and our new UNL Endowment Fund. Each event helps to raise awareness of this unique, small-yet-mighty Gallery! We especially appreciate your continued support, which makes it possible for us in turn, to support this worthy cause!

Highlights include:
- Textiles Sale - Net proceeds of $8,692 donated to our new Endowment Fund
- Celebration of Youth annual show in the Gallery – We awarded $25 to each 4-H exhibitor, and served Valentine’s pizza dinner to exhibitors and their families
- Downton Abbey Early Christmas Party event - Net proceeds exceeded $10,000 which will benefit the Gallery, Historic Collection, and Endowed Fund
- Membership Proceeds Annual Donation - $6,620 gift to the Gallery
- We launched our Friends of the Robert Hillestad Gallery Endowment Fund with $25,000

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Focus on Founding Friends Joan & Tom Hruza...

Being an “appreciator” is my outstanding quality honed by UNL homemaking training plus lifelong varied interests in learning new skills, knowledge of fabrics and techniques. I am truly amazed and impressed by the creative work of renowned visiting and local artists and the students and faculty shown at the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery. The skills and innovative ideas there excite and stimulate imagination. Without the gallery one might not be aware of many of these outstanding and interesting techniques. Visiting the textiles gallery is always recommended when we have guests from outside of Lincoln.

I appreciate Uncommon Threads and the postcard reminding us of the latest wonderful happenings. Tom and I have been awed by Dr. Hillestad’s amazing and beautiful creations and look forward to seeing another show featuring his work. We are fortunate to have an artist of his caliber and national and international prominence at UNL. His early work in broadening the scope of his students’ understanding of international designer techniques by exposing them to foreign fashion houses plus his continued dedication in promoting and teaching new skills is exemplary. His imaginative creations are brilliant.

In addition to the excellent faculty and facility, the gallery is also important to the UNL fashion students through inspiration, education and show of their work. Recent donation of many valuable famous designer garments by the Woods family for study is priceless. The runway show of student designs is polished and professional, further enhanced by the merging of many University departments. As we enjoyed this wonderful event, we were proud to be UNL alumnae.

The gallery’s show of prize-winning, impressive 4-H projects, plus Friends monetary awards, provide encouragement and promote future study at UNL and careers in the textiles and fashion industry. My decision to study home-making at UNL was fostered by scholarships and awards on my wool gabardine suit, coat, and accessories. Textiles sales held by FRHTG have provided sources for many creations in our home—from drapery and upholstery, pillows, tablecloths and napkins to fashion fabrics, quilting, needlework, and gift items. There are many treasures in the marvelous variety of donations.

The spirit of the textiles gallery board and members is admirable. We have been awed by their dedication, ambition, and ability to promote. It has been a privilege to acquaint ourselves with their tireless, unselfish work as we hosted two fund-raisers in our home: The Little Black Dress and The Early Christmas Downton Abbey Party. The ambience created was warm and welcoming. Their excitement in promoting is contagious.

The exposure of the textiles gallery on Facebook is impressive and important in relating the work of this jewel, the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery, to the world.

~ Joan Hruza
Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery
Calendar 2015

March 16 – April 10, 2015
Textiles, Merchandising & Fashion Design Biennial Juried Student Exhibition

Kim Hahn, Guest Juror, Associate Professor and Associate Director, The Fashion School, Kent State University

Hahn selects work created by TMFD undergraduate and graduate students in design and merchandising.

June 1 – September 4, 2015
Jan Myers-Newbury: A Touch of Kismet – Quilts, Color, Pattern, Chance

Pittsburgh-based artist Jan Myers-Newbury has inventively and systematically explored quilt surface design for over 35 years, establishing herself as one of the leaders of the art quilt movement. Recently she has focused intensively on shibori dyeing techniques, configuring the results into richly hued and emotionally charged fields of pattern and texture. This exhibition provides an overview of some of these rich and resonant textile explorations.
The Department of Textiles, Merchandising & Fashion Design’s educational and research missions are strengthened and supported by the programs associated with the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery and by the resources that our historic collections embody. The support of both by the Friends has allowed us to constantly improve and expand the reach and the impact that the gallery and the collections have within the department and across the various communities of which we are a part.

A member of the Friends might reasonably ask “How are our support funds spent?” Every gallery exhibition brings in expenses that are consistent: announcement cards and associated printing and postage costs per exhibition. When exhibiting guest artists mount solo shows in the gallery, their speakers fees and travel costs are usually underwritten at least in part by gallery funding, along with shipping charges for their work. The artist Sarah Wagner, for example, required two trips to UNL, the first to install the show and the second to de-install and conduct a full-day workshop for students. These costs were shared by a gift from a private foundation along with funds from the TMFD Hillestad Gallery account.

We used gallery funds for refreshments for several gallery events whose receptions weren’t underwritten directly by the FRHTG, and we purchased a new nine-drawer rolling tool cabinet for the gallery’s storeroom. Incidentally such as gallery lighting bulb replacements, the recent installation of a recessed light fixture above the guest book podium at the gallery’s entrance, and exhibition signage and other didactic materials, are typically assigned to the gallery account.

Similarly, costs associated with conserving and protecting the historic costume and textiles collections are often covered by Hillestad Gallery funding. Regularly re-stocked items include cotton gloves, stockinette, and archival storage boxes. We purchased a rolling rack for use in object preparation and handling in the collections storage facility, and an original Oscar de la Renta outfit from an area vintage clothing dealer for our spring exhibit.

We hired temporary help last fall to advance data input into the collections database and to help train a graduate student for this ongoing documentation project. We’ve committed funds to pay this graduate student for the months of June and July 2015 to continue this important cataloguing work.

Looking ahead, we plan to use this account to partially underwrite costs associated with our purchase and installation of a gallery projector system that will offer unique and exciting opportunities for exhibition enhancement and for innovative didactics. This project is “in the pipeline” and we are presently waiting on final estimates and a timeline.

The costs of bringing Dr. Linda Przybyszewski, author of The Lost Art of Dress, to campus in April 2015 will be partially underwritten with gallery funds. Dr. Przybyszewski’s talk on April 20 is being presented in conjunction with the Hillestad Gallery opening of Dr. Barbara Trout’s curatorial effort, Modernism and Romanticism: an American Design Approach featuring the work of fashion designers Bill Blass, Geoffrey Beene and Oscar de la Renta.

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In sum, we feel very fortunate to have these financial resources that make possible the quality and range of the gallery’s offerings. Without the support of the FRHTG we would be hard pressed to maintain the level of excellence for which the gallery is justly known, and the research and teaching value that the collections represent. Thank you all for your efforts on behalf of the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery and the TMFD Historic Collections.

Michael James
Chair, Department of TMFD

Save the Dates:

- Feb 6-Apr 25: FIBER collective exhibition at Kaneko studios, Omaha
- March 6: Optical Meshing closing exhibit reception 5-7pm
- March 16: TMFD Biennial Juried Student Exhibition opens
- March 31: Cut-off date for joining or renewing FRHTG membership to be eligible for drawing
- April 10: TMFD Biennial Juried Student awards & closing exhibit reception 5-7pm
- April 20: Modernism and Romanticism: an American Design Approach exhibit opens; Lecture by Dr. Linda Przybyszewski, UNL City Union, 5pm
- April 21: TMFD Student Fashion Runway Show, Sheldon Museum of Art, 5:30pm
- April 24: Modernism and Romanticism reception, preceded by speaker Gayle Strege, Historic Costume & Textile Collection curator - Ohio State University, Home Economics building, East Campus, 5-8pm
- May 28: Give to Lincoln Day – support your favorite nonprofit organization
- June 1: Jan Myers-Newbury: A Touch of Kimet Quilts, Color, Pattern, Chance exhibit opens
- June 7: Friends Annual Meeting, 2pm, Home Economics building, East Campus, followed by guest speaker Jan Myers-Newbury and reception

Dress Doctor Author Offers Prescription for Fashion Ills

On Monday April 20, 2015 the Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design (TMFD) will host a free public lecture and book signing by Dr. Linda Przybyszewski, author of The Lost Art of Dress: The Women Who Once Made America Stylish, at 5:00 p.m. in the auditorium in Nebraska Union on UNL’s city campus. Her talk is being presented in conjunction with the exhibit Modernism and Romanticism: an American Design Approach featuring the work of fashion designers Bill Blass, Geoffrey Beene and Oscar de la Renta, opening on April 20 in the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery on east campus.

The garments are part of TMFD’s Historic Costume Collection.

Dr. Przybyszewski is Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame, where she teaches courses on legal and cultural history, including crime, the gap between popular and academic history, the era of the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction, and the history of fashion and dress. Her book explains how Americans learned—and forgot—how to dress in the modern age. A skilled dressmaker from a long line of sewing women, Przybyszewski recreated garments from the past century, including the One-Hour dress that swept the nation in the 1920s, and the Dishitowel dress, a “bad idea from the 1970s.” She chronicles the work of the Dress Doctors, a group of women, for the most part academics, who over the course of the first half of the twentieth century taught Americans what to wear. She tested the Dress Doctors’ prescription for thrift with variety by creating a many-way dress with several changes of collars and cuffs. Would anyone realize she had been wearing it for a month? The answer may surprise you. The Dress Doctors felt women were embarking on a new era of civic and social engagement and needed to learn how to look the part. Now, in a time of fast fashion where price and novelty rule, the lessons of the Dress Doctors have largely been forgotten. Linda Przybyszewski has set out to resurrect their teachings in The Lost Art of Dress.

In the New York Times Book Review of May 2014, Alexandra Jacobs quotes Przybyszewski on the demise of personal style and good taste. “Living in an age when the only standard of female attractiveness is hotness, and when every detail of life is offered up on Facebook, young women find it normal that the whole world, not just their sweetheart, their gynecologist and their mother, should know the exact shape of their bodies.”

In addition to her public lecture at Nebraska Union, Linda Przybyszewski will meet with TMFD and Department of History students and faculty. Support for this show includes funding from FRHTG, Dean’s Office of the College of Education and Human Sciences, UNL Faculty Senate Convocations Committee, Department of History, and Women and Gender Studies Programs.