

Short Subjects

Mannequins: A Rich History In Fashion

Britex Febrics owner discovers a hidden mannequin factory in New York City.

Sharman Spector, the owner of San Francisco's [Britex Fabrics](#) recently stumbled upon one of the oldest and best mannequin factories, located in downtown New York City. In a recent [blog post](#) on the company's website, Spector reported on his visit to the factory and shared some information about this often overlooked art form.

Ralph Pucci International was a family mannequin manufacturing business that has expanded to include a gallery and showroom. The company collaborates with fashion designers as well as with illustrators and even super-models. Their avant-garde mannequins are used internationally by high-end boutiques and department stores.

According to the blog post, mannequins in the early 1900s became an essential part of the "window shopping" experience. They had a more natural appearance than today's models, but they were of fragile carved wood and wax construction and often weighted 300lbs (130kg).

Mannequins changed over the years to reflect the times, from the straight bodied,



Mannequins at Ralph Pucci International, one of the oldest and best factories, located in New York City,

flat-chested models of the 1920s, to ones after New York socialites in the 1930s and 1940s and movie stars like Marilyn Monroe in the 1950s and 1960s, to the more abstract and often faceless versions today.

Sharman Spector's blog post on the Britex website also discusses the issue of body shape and proportion of mannequins compared to those of real women at the time. His article offers a fascinating glimpse into history and business of little-known but important aspect of the costume and fashion world, with many historical and contemporary photos.

Shoes in World Culture at SFO International Terminal

New airport exhibition features 19th and 20th century shoes from around the world

A new exhibition by the San Francisco Airport museum shows of the incredible diversity among footwear in world cultures. The exhibition was created by Nicole Mullen, Curator of Exhibitions at the SFO Museum

Mullen said that, in the most utilitarian sense, shoes and sandals simply protect feet; hence, practical concerns have long driven shoe design. Indian padukas, or toe-knob sandals, elevate feet above the sun-scorched



Clogs (sabats), early 20th C., Valley of Bethmale, France. Walnut leather and copper.

ground while offering protection from debris. Other shoes were fabricated for specific purposes; for instance, during the 1870s, athletic footwear began to be offered for sports and leisure activities, such as tennis. The invention of vulcanized rubber in the nineteenth century made these new, rubber-soled sneakers possible.

One of the more interesting parts of the exhibition is the selection of elevated and platform shoes. For centuries, elevated shoes with platforms, stilts, or heels served to keep one's feet and clothing protected from unfavorable conditions. At the same time, elevated heel heights associated the wearer with wealth and prestige. Japanese geisha wore finely made, lacquered wood, high-platform geta, which required slow, short steps.

The exhibition also shows off the decorative ornamentation that appears on even the most pragmatic footwear. Elaborate embroidery, appliqué, and beading are some of the many techniques employed. Each of these embellishments accents a variety of Native American moccasins. As with shoe height, such adornment might signify a person's prominent position in society.

In many cases, decorative elements also serve symbolic purposes. Tigers, the most quintessential motif embroidered on young, Chinese boys' shoes, are meant to frighten evil spirits and help children grow to be strong and fearless. Some decorative shoes are intended for festive occasions,

such as weddings, when historically many Dutch and French villagers wore their most colorful, painted wooden clogs.

Western wedding shoes, early basketball sneakers, beaded moccasins, European clogs, Chinese children's shoes, and Japanese geta are a few of the many shoes featured in this exhibition.

The exhibition "Stepping Out: Shoes in World Cultures" is located pre-security in the San Francisco Airport International Terminal Main Hall Departures Lobby. It is on view to all airport visitors from April 1, 2017, to November 12, 2017.

An online version of the exhibition is viewable on the [SFO Museum website](#).

Glamour and Mischief!

New book takes lighthearted look at dressing stars of Hollywood's Golden Age.

The Golden Age of Hollywood was a showcase for costume designers, some of whom—like Michael Woulfe—were lesser-known but made distinctive contributions to the glamour of this illustrious period.

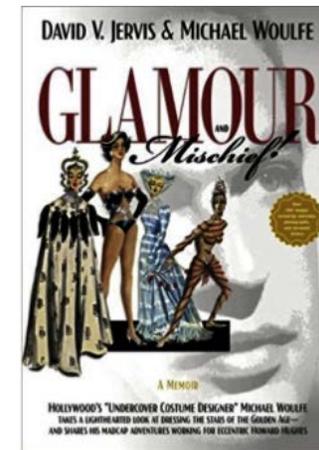
A recently published book by Woulfe entitled *Glamour and Mischief!* chronicles his journey from a starstruck Brooklyn boy to a Hollywood costume designer who learns that Judy Garland has personally requested him to design her gowns for the gala film premiere of *A Star Is Born*. The journey is filled with ups and downs, from Woulfe's first film assignment dressing Sylvia Sidney in *Blood on the Sun*, his encounters with

nastiness that lies under the surface of Hollywood, and the madness of working under the personal direction of Howard Hughes at RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.

Woulfe had an out-of-the-ordinary career. At the age of twenty-seven, he was one of the youngest costume designers in history to receive screen credit as Gown Designer. As head designer on more than sixty films, he created glamorous wardrobes and gowns for Hollywood stars and legends

Woulfe had a good memory and the ability to narrate stories in an engaging way. Co-author David V. Jervis unearthed a treasure trove of memorabilia and an unpublished memoir. He offers his special perspective as Michael's close friend and confidante.

Glamour and Mischief! comes with



over 200 images including color sketches, photographs, newspaper clippings, and personal letters that offer a fresh and insightful look into the career of a Hollywood costume designer

Glamour and Mischief! by David V. Jervis and Michael Wolf. ISBN-13: 978-0997854817. Paper back, 434 pages.

Students Recreate 2001 Stewardess Costume

Costume is for exhibit at new Museum of Science Fiction in Washington DC..

[Graduate costume production](#) students at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill partnered with the new [Museum of Science Fiction](#) in Washington D.C. to recreate the stewardess uniform seen in the Stanley Kubrick movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

The Museum was in its early developmental stages when subcommittee chair Steve Dreyer was tasked with finding precise costume replicas from famous science-fiction feature films and television



Graduate student Denise Chukhina adjusts jacket. Image: UNC Department of Dramatic Arts

shows. Dreyer and the museum found what they needed at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Graduate student Denise Chukhina handcrafted the replica costume with guidance from department instructors. According to Chukhina, the costume required about a hundred hours of work. The stewardess uniform went on display with other sci-fi artifacts and recreations in a pop-up exhibit at Reagan National Airport in Arlington Virginia. Late last year.

Chukhina's process included mock-ups, cutting and stitching the actual fabric, and creating shoes from scratch. She also worked with the Makerspace 3-D printing lab at the UNC's Kenan Science Library to recreate the Pan-Am medallion on the turban. It would have taken hours of tedious labor. But with the help of librarians at Makerspace, 3-D printers turned out the piece in a matter of minutes.

An [article](#) on the UNC Department of Dramatic Arts website and a [YouTube video](#) describes the project in more detail.



Logo color test for grip shoes on white leather. Image: UNC Department of Dramatic Arts



Above: Pan Am jacket logo was custom embroidered. Below: Hat with custom 3D printed Pan Am medallion. Images: UNC Department of Dramatic Arts

