



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 27, 2014

***Ravishing* exhibition revisits fashion trends of the 1940s and 1950s**

(Vancouver, BC) — The Museum of Vancouver is excited to announce the opening of *From Rationing to Ravishing* on September 18, 2014. This exhibition will feature rare examples of haute couture and Vancouver-made clothing that reflect how WWII changed society.

From the collections of guest curators Ivan Sayers and Claus Jahnke—the team that created *Art Deco Chic*—and the vaults of the Museum of Vancouver, *From Rationing to Ravishing* will present more than 80 historic garments and accessories. Highlights include: wartime wedding dresses, Boeing Vancouver overalls, cocktail dresses, and fashions designed by renowned European couturiers, including Christian Dior, Cristóbal Balenciaga, and Elsa Schiaparelli.

The exhibition also includes a dress from Ceil Chapman, who produced high-quality, French-inspired garments. She was reportedly Marilyn Monroe's favourite designer and counted Elizabeth Taylor and Mamie Van Doren as famous clients. Lauren Bacall's shoes, Peruvian soprano Yma Sumac's dress suit and a suit from Miss Germany 1955 will also be on display.

"In *From Rationing to Ravishing*, we tried to bring together a collection of garments and accessories that illustrate a variety of historical references," stated Sayers, one of Canada's preeminent fashion historians. Jahnke elaborates, "We chose the artifacts for their relevance, their appearance, and their stories." This exhibition will demonstrate how historical events continue to shape our lives.

From Rationing to Ravishing is the second installment in a continuing series of fashion exhibitions with Sayers and Jahnke. Sayers—who thinks of his exhibitions as lessons in history—claims, "No era is better illustrated by an examination of its clothing than the period of World War II and the postwar years of recovery and rebuilding." During the war, fashion designers emphasized manliness; clothes were influenced by the need for practicality and economy. In peacetime, a womanly silhouette returned and then, in the 1950s, influenced by indulgence and amusement, designers made girliness the rage.

From Rationing to Ravishing will include participatory features that engage families, including an activity station for kids and adults alike, and the opportunity to digitally wear period garments. Over the exhibition's run, MOV will host a number of history-themed events, including two fashion shows that feature exceptional examples from Sayers' private collection and two "talk and tour" events, also led by Sayers.

Fashion history enthusiasts will get a sneak peek into the curators' collection at Oakridge Centre, where five glamorous garments will be on display from September 11th through the 21st. Susan Nicol, General Manager at Oakridge Centre explains their commitment to this exhibition: "As a fashion and style destination in Vancouver for over 55 years, Oakridge Centre has been a driver of the evolution of fashion in the lower mainland. We are excited to partner with the Museum of Vancouver to showcase some of the significant trends of the past and to help bring to the community a little of our shared history."

From Rationing to Ravishing: the Transformation of Women's Fashion in the 1940s and 1950s, opens to the public on September 18th; scheduled to close on March 8th, 2015. Additional exhibition and event information can be found at www.museumofvancouver.ca/ravishing

MOV Events:

Curator's Talk & Tour: *From Rationing to Ravishing*, with Ivan Sayers

- Thursday, October 2, 2014 at 7:00pm
- Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 7:00pm

- Additional members-only dates to be announced

Join Vancouver's preeminent fashion historian and *From Rationing to Ravishing* guest curator Ivan Sayers for an informative stroll amongst displays of historic clothing within the exhibition space. Follow Ivan as he describes the evolution of women's fashion from wartime utility to postwar extravagance.

Fashion Show: *From Rationing to Ravishing*, with Ivan Sayers

- Saturday, November 22, 2014 at 7:00pm
- Saturday, February 28, 2015 at 2:00pm

Fashion historian and guest curator Ivan Sayers will produce and narrate live fashion shows that complement *From Rationing to Ravishing*. These shows will feature exceptional examples from Ivan's own private collection and others.

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About the Museum of Vancouver

The Museum of Vancouver connects Vancouverites to each other and connects Vancouver to the world. The museum is a gathering place that encourages social engagement and inspires conversation about the future. MOV exhibitions and collections invite exploration of contemporary issues and stories from the past. MOV activities ignite a passion for Vancouver and its people. The museum, an enthusiastic advocate for the city, is an independent non-profit organization that depends on support from the community. The Museum of Vancouver is located in Vancouver at 1100 Chestnut Street (in Vanier Park).

Images of some of the standout garments and the curators, can be downloaded from this Dropbox:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zp6mzocarzwba25/AABx9h_Zl_ghInH3f5bMPc2Ia?dl=0



Photo caption: The transformation of women's clothing through the 1940s and 1950s will be on display in the Museum of Vancouver's newest fashion exhibition - *From Rationing to Ravishing* - featuring day and evening wear from the likes of Christian Dior, Cristóbal Balenciaga, and Elsa Schiaparelli.



Photo caption: *From Rationing to Ravishing* co-curators Claus Jahnke and Ivan Sayers prepare the Museum of Vancouver's newest fashion exhibition with this silk taffeta cocktail dress by Ceil Chapman.

For additional information, images, or to arrange interviews, please contact:

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Catalogue Photos by: Tanya Goehring | Post Photography

	<p>Cocktail ensemble: Staebe-Seger was one of the most important Berlin fashion houses after World War II. The company created ready-to-wear fashions at the highest level. This outfit features collet-set rhinestone crystals and a deep collar of fox fur. It was originally in the wardrobe of Charlotte Mueller of Berlin, who wore it to the Berlin Press Ball in 1955. File: RR-048</p>		<p>Christian Dior Evening Dress: Dior's evening dresses were masterpieces of design and engineering. The bodice is draped on a heavily boned corselette of net, and the bodice and skirt are two separate pieces. The belt hides the junction between bodice and skirt and cinches the waistline tightly. Eaton's of Canada sold this dress. File: RR-086</p>
	<p>Balenciaga Evening Dress: Balenciaga's designs are often very sculptural, with attention given to the side or back views rather than the front. Balenciaga referred to the shape of the skirt in this dress as the peacock line. File: RR-117</p>		<p>Nan Taylor Day Dress: By 1943, day dresses displayed a practical form. Shoulders were usually padded and square. Skirts were short, modest, and full enough for ease of movement. This dress, designed by Nan Taylor, was advertised in Mayfair magazine in September 1943. It sold for \$40 in major cities across Canada. File: RR-120</p>
	<p>Boeing Overalls: As the male workforce diminished, women took on many jobs in heavy industry. Serviceable, washable clothes were essential. Between June 1942 and September 1945, Sheila Moffatt wore these overalls at the Boeing Airplane Factory #3, Sea Island, Richmond, B.C. File: RR-197</p>		<p>1944 Evening Dress: Exoticism added drama to wartime fashions. In this dress, the side drapery on the hips was meant to create a peg-top look and give the dress overtones of the Persian harem. The high neckline and the long sleeves were practical for wear at wartime functions, since in Europe, venues were not always heated, due to wartime shortages. The skirt is so slim that the hem is slit at the centre front to accommodate walking. File: RR-242</p>
	<p>Ceil Chapman Cocktail Dress: Ceil Chapman, born in New York City in 1912, founded her own business in the postwar 1940s. She worked with good-quality fabric and was known for draped, feminine designs. Lesser designers in the United States often copied Chapman's French-inspired fashion. She produced high-quality garments at affordable prices. This dress appeared in American Vogue in 1950. File: RR-270</p>		<p>Norell Cocktail Dress: This dress and stole were meant to catch the eye. The flamboyant colour and the volume of the skirt, weighted with rows of curled ostrich feather tips at the hem, would have displayed well on the dance floor. This style of dress developed into one of the popular performance garments now used in competitive ballroom dance. File: RR-300</p>
	<p>Hat U.S.A., c. 1943 Straw Labels: Sanjé, New York-Paris Elite Hat Shop, Vancouver File: RR-371</p>		<p>Marie Latz Day Suit: Even though 1950s styles were conspicuously feminine, they were sometimes quite stark and foreshadowed the boxiness of the 1960s. Designer Marie Latz was one of the few couturiers in Berlin able to successfully re-establish herself after the war. This smartly tailored suit belonged to the famous Peruvian diva, Yma Sumac, who in the 1950s and 1960s enjoyed international popularity as a singer with a remarkable five-octave range. File: RR-079</p>

