

# Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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## Phoenix Art Museum presents exhibition of historical and contemporary floral fashions

*The exhibition spanning four centuries explores the influence of flowers on fashion and includes designs by Prada, Marc Jacobs, Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent, Comme des Garçons, Charles James, Slava Zaitsev, and more*



**PHOENIX (February 14, 2019)** – From April 13 through August 18, 2019, Phoenix Art Museum will present *Flora* in the Kelly Ellman Fashion Design and Orme Lewis galleries. Spanning the 18th century through the present, the exhibition will feature more than 30 botanical-inspired ensembles and accessories for women, men, and children to trace the evolution of floral fashions throughout history. Drawing exclusively from the collection of Phoenix Art Museum, *Flora* will showcase historical garments alongside pieces by such designers as Prada, Marc Jacobs, Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent, Comme des Garçons, Charles James, and Slava Zaitsev. The exhibition will also highlight various textiles and embroidery and embellishment techniques used by designers to incorporate flower motifs, patterns, and silhouettes into their creations.

“We are delighted to present *Flora* to our Phoenix community,” said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum. “*Flora* will bring together many timeless pieces from the Museum’s fashion collection to showcase the breadth and depth of our holdings, and we look forward to sharing this flower-inspired exhibition with our audiences in Arizona.”

Presenting a wide range of historical and contemporary fashions drawn from the Museum’s collection, *Flora* will explore how designers across centuries have interpreted flowers and the botanical world through their work. Garments from the 18th and 19th centuries will showcase traditional, realistic representations of flowers, whereas modern pieces will feature bold, abstract floral prints and silhouettes inspired by organic shapes. Exhibition highlights include an embroidered leather

coat and boots by Marc Jacobs for Louis Vuitton; a 1951 petal dress by Charles James; and a skirt and jacket by Slava Zaitsev, known for his colorful, theatrical designs often adorned with floral patterns and inspired by Russian folk costumes.

*Flora* will also feature objects recently acquired by the Museum, including an ensemble from the Spring/Summer 2019 collection of Comme des Garçons, purchased with funds provided by Arizona Costume Institute, a support group of Phoenix Art Museum. The contemporary ensemble includes a slouchy, black tuxedo jacket paired with rose-print trousers, distinguished by their abstract, multidimensional silhouette suggesting a flower form.

“Flowers are a beloved, classical theme explored by fashion designers throughout history,” said Dennita Sewell, the Museum’s Jacquie Dorrance Curator of Fashion Design. “With its breadth of historical and contemporary garments and accessories, *Flora* will illustrate how the approach to representing flowers in fashion has evolved from realism and naturalism to abstraction, hyper-abstraction, and hyper-realism.”

In addition, the exhibition will highlight textiles and various embroidery and embellishment styles, illustrating the creative ways in which designers through the centuries have interpreted botanical forms in fashion. A linen suit by Prada from 2003 showcases raffia-embroidered rose buds on netting, the bohemian styling of a Givenchy couture dress from the 1960s is enhanced with a scattering of wildflowers, and a piece by Yves Saint Laurent features an all-over print of American Beauty Roses on silk crepe de chine.

“In an era when we view most things digitally, *Flora* will underscore the significance of materiality in fashion design,” Sewell said. “The exhibition will provide viewers with the opportunity to look closely at an object and examine its details to help build an understanding of how and why designers use specific materials and techniques to articulate their ideas and inspirations.”

Along with showcasing the richness of the Museum’s fashion collection, *Flora* will explore the enduring influence of flowers on fashion while demonstrating how inspiration drives design. With its range of material and deep insight into the creative process, the exhibition will encourage viewers to contemplate a well-known topic and discover the subtle, bold, and sometimes surprising ways in which fashion can reflect the natural world.

#### **About the Exhibition**

*Flora* will be on view from April 13 through August 18, 2019 in the Kelly Ellman Fashion Design and Orme Lewis galleries. The exhibition is organized by Phoenix Art Museum and made possible through the generosity of The Virginia M. Ullman Foundation, The Ellman Foundation, and Arizona Costume Institute. For more details about the exhibition, please visit [phxart.org/exhibition/flora](http://phxart.org/exhibition/flora).

Admission is free for Museum Members; veterans and active-duty military and their families; Maricopa Community College students, staff, and faculty (with ID); and youth aged 5 and younger. Entrance to the exhibition is included in general admission for the general public. During voluntary-donation times, the exhibition is offered to the general public with pay-what-you-wish admission. Voluntary-donation times include Wednesdays from 3 – 9 pm, the first Friday of each month from 6 – 10 pm, and the second Sunday of each month from noon – 5pm. For a full breakdown of general-admission prices and hours, see [bit.ly/VisitPhxArt](http://bit.ly/VisitPhxArt).

High-resolution photography can be downloaded [here](#). To request interviews, contact the Marketing and Communications Office of Phoenix Art Museum at 602.257.2105 or [margaree.bigler@phxart.org](mailto:margaree.bigler@phxart.org).

#### **Exhibition Programming**

##### **Discount Tire Free Family Sunday | April 14, noon – 5 pm**

Explore *Flora* during voluntary-donation times on the second Sunday of each month. Guests will also enjoy exciting activities, scavenger hunts, live performances, story time, free tours, and more. See [phxart.org/events/calendar](http://phxart.org/events/calendar) for updates as information becomes available.

##### **First Friday | May 3, 6 pm**

Join us on First Friday to experience *Flora* and in-gallery programs inspired by the exhibition. This event is open to the public with voluntary-donation admission. Please check [phxart.org/events/calendar](http://phxart.org/events/calendar) for updates.

### **About Phoenix Art Museum**

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for nearly 60 years and is the largest art museum in the southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum's permanent collection of more than 19,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances, and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain, and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum's landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit [phxart.org](http://phxart.org), or call 602.257.1880.

Images, left to right: George Halley, *Evening dress*, fall 1969. Satin, velvet, silk and organza. Collection of Phoenix Art Museum. Gift of Carol Schatt, from the Estate of Nina Pulliam. / Marc Jacobs, *Pair of boots*, 2002. Leather with silk floss embroidery. Collection of Phoenix Art Museum. Gift of Arizona Costume Institute and Ardie and Steve Evans. / Margaine-Lacroix, *Wide sash or girdle embroidered with multi-colored taffeta roses, chenille and wooden bead embroidery*, 1921. Taffeta, chenille, and beads with embroidery. Collection of Phoenix Art Museum. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Stone.

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