

SOTHEBY'S HAS PASSION FOR FASHION

Auction will Celebrate Fashion Trends of 20th Century

A SALE entitled Passion for Fashion at Sotheby's in London on Wednesday, November 25, 1998 will celebrate a century of style, from vivacious Versace to quirky Quant at prices to suit the pockets of fashion victims everywhere.

All aspects of fashion and its eccentricities will feature in the sale from classic Haute Couture to Street Style and present day glamour, together with an array of top-to-toe fashion accessories to complement all styles and occasions for men and women.

As well as Versace and Quant, other fashion designers such as Schiaparelli, Dior, Balenciaga, Chanel and Pucci will be represented in the sale. Fashion ephemera, from original designs of the 1940s and 1950s to French hairstyle illustrations and magazine archives from Vogue, Queen and Harpers will also be sold, with estimates starting at £150.

Kerry Taylor, Head of Sotheby's Fashion and Costume department said: "You don't have to be a millionaire to shop at Sotheby's and this sale proves it! Although many of the outfits in this sale originally cost a small fortune, the auction estimates from £150-5,000 represent amazing value for money.

"The earliest dress in the sale is a tunic gown by Paul Poiret, circa 1912, the father of haute couture who was credited with freeing women from corsets. Divine Diors of the 1950s, many having belonged to Olivia de Havilland, literally drip with crystal beading paste studs and gold embroidery. Funky accessories such as 1960s boots in white leather, black and yellow plastic by Courreges and Mary Quant, look as futuristic as ever.

"The 1970s are represented by designers such as Biba, Ossie Clarke and the indefatigable Vivienne Westwood, while the hedonistic 1980s and fin-de-siecle trends of the 1990s are captured in a stunning single owner collection of Gianni Versace creations."

Gianni Versace was one of the most important Italian designers of the 20th century and the collection in Sotheby's Passion for Fashion sale comprises more than 80 items of clothing and accessories dating from the mid 1980s to 1997.

One of the earliest designs in the collection is a black metal mesh cocktail suit, made circa 1985-87 (est: £500-1,000). Versace's development of this fluid interlocking steel fabric was regarded as a major technical breakthrough and created the perfect look for the power-dressing woman of the 1980s. The mesh is studded with diamanté decoration which radiates in a starburst design, exploding across the front of the knee length skirt and the jacket is trimmed with black enamel and diamanté effect buttons.

A number of sumptuous cocktail bustiers and tops complement the collection from a metal appliqué halter-neck covered with large gilt metal stars, beads and suspended discs and tubular pieces made circa 1990 (est: £700-1,000) to a strapless cocktail bustier decorated with two three-dimensional beaded flowers set against a densely worked background of beads and embroidery incorporating coloured pastes and faceted glass. Made circa 1989-91, this imaginative piece of Versace couture is estimated at £1,000-1,500.

A selection of clothing from Versace's 1992 collections, which drew inspiration from the worlds of bondage and sadomasochism, include jackets made from black wool crepe (est: £600-900) and cream wool cashmere (est: £400-600); a black silk crepe bondage bodice trimmed with gold Medusa head buttons (est: £300-500) and a scarlet silk crepe jersey evening gown (est: £800-1,200). This collection again illustrates Versace's technical brilliance, structuring fabric to hug a woman's figure without the use of restrictive corsetry.

The safety pin ornament, used to great effect on the revealing black dress worn by Liz Hurley to the premiere of the film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, appeared in Versace's 1994 collections. A blue version of this full length slash style dress with plunging neckline is featured in the sale and is estimated at £600-800.

In contrast to the strong lines and bold use of colour employed in many of Versace's designs is a delicate evening gown of appliquéd peach silk chiffon. The dress, made of double layers of gold, aqua and pale pink sheer fabric,

was part of Versace's 1997 collection and is estimated at £800-1,200. From the same collection is a metal mesh and chiffon cocktail dress embellished with silver beads, sequins and pastes (est: £1,200-2,000).

Fifty years earlier, designer Elsa Schiaparelli was shocking the fashion world with her witty and amusing designs often created in collaboration with famous artists such as Dali and Cocteau. Two examples of her work appear in Sotheby's Passion for Fashion sale one of which, an elaborately embroidered claret silk velvet evening jacket and halter-neck gown (est: £5,000-6,000), was made for Lady Clark, a former President of the London Fashion Designers Guild. This elegant ensemble was made in the winter of 1937 possibly the same year as the second Schiaparelli outfit comprising a wired black silk evening gown and cape (est: £1,000-1,500). This sleeveless full-length evening dress is ingeniously woven with undulating wire thread and is finished with a fish tail skirt. The back of the dress is cut into a plunging V shape with a black hand clip placed wittily in the centre.

At the beginning of the 1900s, the French designer Paul Poiret was responsible for loosening the formal silhouette of fashion and defining a more relaxed shape through his softly fitted gowns. In 1909, Poiret produced designs inspired by the Ballets Russe, exotic flowing garments that became favourites of the flamboyant dancer Isadora Duncan. A rare and early example of Poiret's work featured in the sale is a beautiful ivory satin tunic dress overlaid in powder-blue chiffon. Made circa 1911, the empire-line dress is finished with a silver rope tie and tassels around the high waist and is estimated at £1,000-1,500.

A number of designs by the House of Paquin include a rare and early Paquin and Lalanne silk bodice made in 1893 (est: £200-300) and an evening gown of embroidered tomato red and black ciré satin, with a bodice panel embroidered in gilt metal threads and mother of pearl sequins (est: £800-1,200). The House of Paquin was founded in 1891 by Jeanne Beckers and her husband and produced rich glamorous and romantic clothes that became popular with actresses and socialites. Madame Paquin as she became known, retired in 1920 but the House of Paquin continued to produce designs.

British designer Norman Hartnell began designing clothes in 1923 and showed his first collection in Paris in 1927, followed by a second highly acclaimed show three years later. An example of his work from this early stage of his career, before he was appointed dressmaker to the royal family in 1938, is represented in Sotheby's sale by a bead and sequin embroidered oyster silk evening gown (est: £600-800) which was designed in the early 1930s.

Christian Dior's controversial first collection was produced in 1947 and was nicknamed the New Look, as its huge skirts which blossomed from tiny waists were the exact opposite of the austere style of the second World War.

A number of Dior outfits, predominantly from his 1956 collection, feature in the sale, the highlight of which is a stunning silver beaded cocktail ensemble comprising dress and matching hat. Both items are embroidered with gilt metal thread applied in a lattice design and embellished with glass droplets, and together they are estimated at £1,200-1,800. A second cocktail dress with matching stole is made from of emerald green silk faille (est: £1,000-1,500). The dress has a fitted bodice and a flaring skirt supported by net petticoats.

Two further cocktail dresses designed by Yves Saint Laurent for Christian Dior also feature in the sale. The first, a black ziberline gown of simple design (est: £1,000-1,500) was made for YSL's Spring/Summer Collection of 1958, his first for the Dior label. The second example of his work is a black crepe and taffeta dress which was made a year later for the Autumn/Winter Collection. Originally owned by the actress Olivia de Havilland, the dress is estimated at £2,000-3,000.

The uncluttered formal style of clothes produced by Spanish designer Cristobal Balenciaga is represented in the sale. A fushia pink silk velvet tent coat made circa 1957 illustrates a departure from his usual sombre palette. The soft voluminous coat is lined with raspberry silk and comes in its original box (est: £1,200-1,800). A caped coat made of scarlet ottoman silk originally purchased by a Texan oil heiress is estimated at £1,200-1,800.

Sixties design is represented by outfits from all the big fashion houses including Chanel with the traditional yet ever popular Chanel suit in cream boucle wool (est: £300-500) and chunky tweed (est: £300-500) as well as Marc Bohan for Dior, Valentino and Balenciaga.

The Italian designer Emilio Pucci was known for his use of bold pattern and colour. A group of psychedelic patterned outfits from the 1970s reflect this characteristic of his work with estimates ranging from £350-450 for three silk jersey cocktail dresses, to £250-350 for six items of clothing incorporating the Emilio Pucci label. The 1970s section also

includes designs by Ossie Clark, Mary Quant, Biba and three "bondage shirts" by Vivienne Westwood/Malcolm McLaren, made circa 1977 (est: £400-600)

The original sketches of fashion designers and illustrators can often be more valuable than the resulting fabric creation. A section in Sotheby's sale is dedicated to these unique documents and includes drawings by two of the most important fashion illustrators of the 20th century - Carl Erikson, known as Eric, and Compté René Bouët-Willaumez.

René Bouët-Willaumez worked as an illustrator for Vogue for more than twenty years from the 1930s - 1950s. Although he had a talent for drawing, his family guided him instead into a career of science and technology. Art aside, his other passion was horses and horse-racing and he sketched many race track scenes. His free-flowing and expressive style did not go unnoticed and impressed the director of Vogue, Condé Nast who invited him to work for the magazine in the United States and later for American Vogue in London.

Bouët-Willaumez developed a personal style that depicted fashions of the day, but also captured the elegance and hauteur of fashionable women who would wear them and the frivolity of their daily lives, from cocktails, lunch dates and walks with their poodles, to the all important dinner date with a dashing escort.

Examples of his work in Sotheby's sale date from 1937-1952 and range in estimate from £300-500 to £600-1,000.

Hairstyle illustrations by Carl Erikson, Bouët-Willaumez's co-illustrator on Vogue, also feature in the sale. Known as Eric, Erikson regularly worked for Vogue from 1925 until the 1950s. He developed a lively fluid and confident drawing style, in contrast to the conventional flat linear style of the 1920s and specialised in drawings of people in fashionable settings.

His hairstyle illustrations featured in Sotheby's sale date from the 1950s and were produced for Monsieur Guillaume, a top Parisian hair-stylist who designed styles to match couture collections. Estimates range from £400-1,200.

Other notable lots from this section include: illustrations by Drian dating from 1910 – 12 (est: 350-600); costume designs by Erté from the 1920s (est: £2,000-3,000); sets of imaginative hand coloured prints depicting the contemporary French fashions from 1911/12 (est £300-500); fashion drawings for Worth from 1936 (est: £400-1,000); Pierre Balmain Couture designs from the early 1960s (est: £800-1,200); Lanvin-Castillo designs, circa 1958-63 (est: £1,500-2,500); six fashion designs by Karl Lagerfeld from the 1980s (est: £700-1,000) and an archive of fashion designs, circa 1914, by Redfern, who was the dressmaker to Queen Victoria and Queen Alexandra (est: £4,000-6,000).

A head-to-toe selection of vital fashion accessories in the sale complement the multitude of outfits on offer including: handbags, shoes, gloves, hats, sunglasses and costume jewellery. Examples of high fashion footwear include: a pair of size 3, Mary Quant yellow vinyl knee boots from the 1960s with zips to the sides and to the ankles and finished with the Mary Quant five-petalled daisy logo stamped on the bottom of the transparent heel (est: £400-600); a pair of size 4 white kid leather mid calf boots made by Courrèges in 1963, complete with original box (est: £450-650) and a pair of 1979 peach, yellow, pistachio and blue snakeskin high heeled shoes by Terry de Havilland, sold together with a Zandra Rhodes shoulder bag (est: £150-250)

Shoes, hats and gloves in every colour and in an assortment of shapes and sizes are assembled in group lots and represent excellent value for money. Examples include a large group of approximately 45 ladies' hats and gloves, mainly 1960s and 1970s, together with a Christian Dior natural straw hat with wide brim and cut out flower centre front (est: £200-300) and a group of evening shoes and handbags late 1950s to the early 1960s (est: £400-600).

The costume jewellery section includes a large collection of paste jewellery made for Kenneth J Lane, costume jeweller to the rich and famous. His first collection was launched in 1963 and was an overnight success attracting clients such as Jackie Kennedy. Lane's vision was to create fake jewellery that was: "Classic, something that is collected rather than bought for a season" - as beautiful and timeless as the real thing.

Large groups of this jewellery are featured in the sale ranging from a selection of colourless paste pieces (est: £150-250) to pink, mauve, chartreuse and amethyst stones (est: £300-500) and gilt metal and faux pearl (est: £300-500).

The most stunning piece of this section, however, is an emerald and clear past pendant necklace made after a

design by Harry Winston, circa 1960 (est: £800-1,200). The necklace, which is believed to have belonged to the Duchess of Windsor, is a copy of a necklace sold by Sotheby's in 1987 for £339,506.

A comprehensive fashion retrospective is provided by an archive of approximately 411 copies of Vogue magazines charting 35 years of changing fashions in costume, accessories, hair, make-up and life style.

Dating from February 1943 to December 1979, the archive contains landmark editions such as: the February 1941 edition which imparts advice on Utility wear and coupon shopping; the June 1945 Victory Number; the April 1947 issue proclaiming Dior as 'the new name in fashion' and 11 years later, Yves Saint Laurent's first collection for Dior. Later editions feature the futuristic fabrics and shapes of Cardin and Courrèges in the 1960s the Zandra Rhodes floaty printed dresses of the 1970s.

Other magazine archives include: a large collection of Harpers Bazaar magazines dating from January 1960 to December 1969 (est: £500-700); Queen magazines from May 1957 to December 1963 (est: £400-600) and a collection of early Vogue magazines from December 1924 to December 1928.