

# ChicagoHistoryMuseum

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Media Contact:  
Lauren R. Dolan  
312-799-2161  
dolan@chicagohistory.org

## **FASHIONEXT: DESIGN-INSPIRED FASHION COMPETITION**

Chicago-based designers compete to become part of history

CHICAGO (January 9, 2009) – The Chicago History Museum announces the next stage in FashionNext; a design competition featuring established Chicago designers who are each creating a couture garment inspired by one of five selected pieces from the exhibition, *Chic Chicago: Couture Treasures from the Chicago History Museum*. The five designers have submitted their design sketches and fabric swatches that will be used to create their original piece.

The designers and design teams participating in this competition include Jermikko Shoshanna, Lauren Lein, Melissa Serpico Kamhout, Paul Sisti, and Price Walton. “Each design sketch is a reflection of the artist’s distinctive style, but with a twist based on the five inspirational pieces from our collection,” said Timothy Long, exhibition curator. “From the sketches and the exquisite fabrics chosen, this competition of accomplished designers, is not to be missed.”

Each phase of this design competition will be showcased within the exhibition and on the Museum’s website and blog over the next few months. The competition began with five designers and will be narrowed down to three as of February 5. The winner will be announced during the FashionNext finale event on April 17, 2009. For more information on the designers and to view their design concepts, visit the online gallery at <http://chicagohistory.org/planavisit/exhibitions/chic-chicago/fashionnext>.

The competition will be judged by Timothy Long, costume curator; Andrea Kalish Reynders, professor and Sage Studios chair, Department of Fashion Design at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Dr. Valerie Steele, director and chief curator at the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology; Iris Wang, vice president, Design and Marketing of Brentano Fabrics; Gaynor Strachan-Chun, senior vice president of Marketing at Ovation TV; and Noren Ungaretti, president of the costume council of the Chicago Historical Society.

"At Ovation TV, we encourage viewers to incorporate art into their everyday lives and the FashionNext contest mirrors that mantra," states Gaynor Strachan Chun, SVP, Marketing, Ovation TV. "Now that Ovation TV has expanded its cable distribution in Chicago through Comcast, we thought this was a perfect opportunity to

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showcase this innovative event. Through our participation, we hope to raise awareness for this contest, the Chic Chicago exhibition, and provide a national showcase for Chicago's vibrant fashion scene."

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The Chicago designers participating in FashionNext have found the competition inspiring. “For the FashionNext competition, I took my inspiration from the Comme des Garçons convertible dress/gown. The idea that a garment can function more than one way immediately provokes the wearer to think about how the garment works and what happens when you start to interact with it beyond what is initially evident to the eye,” stated by Melissa Serpico Kamhout.

Ovation TV is the presenting sponsor of FashionNext, and Brentano is the exclusive provider of all the fabric for this design competition. The Museum also recognizes the support of the Costume Council of the Chicago Historical Society and the Chicagoland Mercedes-Benz Dealers for their support of FashionNext.

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The Chicago History Museum, a major museum and research center for Chicago and American history, is located at 1601 N. Clark Street. The Museum can be reached by CTA buses 11, 22, 36, 72, 151, and 156. Parking is conveniently located one block north of the Museum at Clark and LaSalle Streets (enter on Stockton Drive). Admission to the Museum is \$14 adults with audio tour, \$12 seniors/students with audio tour, free for children 12 years and younger. General Admission is free on Mondays. Please call 312.642.4600 or visit us at [www.chicagohistory.org](http://www.chicagohistory.org). The Chicago History Museum is affiliated with the Chicago Historical Society and acknowledges the Chicago Park District’s generous support of all the Museum’s activities.

About Ovation TV: Ovation TV is a multi-platform network devoted to art, culture, creativity and making art more accessible to viewers in their daily lives. The network showcases the world's greatest artists in theater, dance, opera, literature, film, visual and fine art, music, design, photography and architecture. Ovation TV reaches a national audience of 30 million households through carriage on DirecTV (channel 274), Dish Network (channel 157) and on cable and telco systems in major markets across the country. Ovation TV’s programming is also available on video on demand (in both standard and high definition), as well as at <http://www.OvationTV.com>.