EXHIBITION FACT SHEET

Title: INSPIRING BEAUTY: 50 YEARS OF EBONY FASHION FAIR

When: January 31–April 24, 2016 in the Grand Gallery

Description: Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Stephen Burrows, Patrick Kelly, Vivienne Westwood, Valentino, Alexander McQueen… These are just a few of the world-class designers whose stunning creations were selected for Ebony Fashion Fair, a traveling spectacular that helped redefine the concepts of empowerment, pride and achievement for African Americans. This major exhibition is the first to explore the 50-year history of the show, which along with Ebony magazine, proved that black was indeed beautiful.

MAG is the only Northeast venue for Inspiring Beauty, which is in the midst of a national tour.

Contents: Forty fashion ensembles, including haute couture and ready-to-wear gowns, feathered coats and statement designs, from the 1960s to the 21st century; archival photos and video.

Programs & events: These include a series of talks, an evening with fashion stylist David Zyla, a conversation with Ebony Fashion Fair personalities, a gala, a series of gospel brunches, a teacher inservice and two member previews. Complete list attached.

Credit line: Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair was developed by the Chicago History Museum in cooperation with Johnson Publishing Company, LLC, presented by the Costume Council of the Chicago History Museum, and toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC.

In Rochester, it is presented by the Gallery Council of the Memorial Art Gallery and New York State Council on the Arts. Major support is provided by The Gouvernet Arts Fund at the Community Foundation, Abigail Riggs Collection, Canandaigua National Bank & Trust, and Wahl Media. Additional funding is provided by three anonymous donors, City of Rochester, COMIDA, FULL MEASURE, John D. Greene Endowment for Contemporary Exhibitions, Robert L. and Mary L. Sproull Fund, and Nocon & Associates, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

Media sponsors are the Democrat and Chronicle Media Group and News10NBC.

Special hours: Wednesday–Sunday 11 am to 5 pm and until 9 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. Opening at 10 am on Saturdays, February 6, March 5 & April 2. Open Mondays & Tuesdays, February 15 & 16 and March 28 & 29 (school break weeks) from 11 am to 5 pm. Closed Mondays and all other Tuesdays.

Admission (includes admission Inspiring Beauty): $14; senior citizens, $10; college students with ID and children 6–18, $5; always free to members, UR students, and children 5 and under. Half-price general admission Thursdays from 5–9 pm is made possible in part by Monroe County. Free admission from 10 am to noon on three Saturdays (February 6, March 5 & April 2) is made possible by the City of Rochester. February 13–21 & March 25–April 3 (school break weeks), ages 18 and under are free if accompanied by an adult.

MAG on the web: mag.rochester.edu

Press contacts: Meg Colombo (585) 276-8934 / mcolombo@mag.rochester.edu
Susan Chekow Lusignan (585) 276-8937 / slusignan@mag.rochester.edu
March 2, 2016

MAJOR EXHIBITION AT MAG FEATURES 40 SHOW-STOPPING FASHION ENSEMBLES

Inspiring Beauty Tells Story of Ebony Fashion Fair

ROCHESTER, NY — Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Stephen Burrows, Patrick Kelly, Vivienne Westwood, Valentino, Alexander McQueen… These are just a few of the world-class designers whose stunning creations were selected for Ebony Fashion Fair—a traveling spectacular that helped redefine the concepts of empowerment, pride and achievement for African Americans.

A major exhibition opening January 31, 2016 at the Memorial Art Gallery is the first to explore the history of the Ebony Fashion Fair and the inspirational woman behind it, Eunice Johnson. Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair brings together forty show-stopping ensembles, both haute couture and ready-to-wear, among them glamorous gowns, feathered coats and statement designs from the 1960s to the 21st century. Also on view are archival photos, memorabilia and video footage. MAG is the only Northeast venue for the show, which is in the midst of a national tour.

The exhibition remains on view through April 24.

Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair was developed by the Chicago History Museum in cooperation with Johnson Publishing Company, LLC, presented by the Costume Council of the Chicago History Museum, and toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC.

In Rochester, it is presented by the Gallery Council of the Memorial Art Gallery and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Major support is provided by The Gouvernet Arts Fund at the Community Foundation, Abigail Riggs Collection, Canandaigua National Bank & Trust, and Wahl Media. Additional funding is provided by three anonymous donors, City of Rochester, COMIDA, FULL MEASURE, John D. Greene Endowment for Contemporary Exhibitions, Robert L. and Mary L. Sproull Fund, and Nocon & Associates, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. Media sponsors are the Democrat and Chronicle Media Group and News10NBC.

About Ebony Fashion Fair

Ebony Fashion Fair was the brainchild of Eunice Walker Johnson of Chicago, who with her husband and business partner, John, owned Johnson Publishing Company. Among the company’s successful ventures was the groundbreaking magazine Ebony, and it was as a feature of this magazine that the Ebony Fashion Fair was born.

For five decades beginning in 1958 the Ebony Fashion Fair, now a traveling fundraiser, drew mostly female, mostly African American audiences in cities such as Montgomery, Alabama, Detroit and Rochester, New York. At its height, models trod the runway each year in 187 venues to crowds that could exceed 5,000. In the process, Ebony Fashion Fair raised millions for social causes and helped Johnson Publishing Company reach a wide audience.

Eunice Johnson had a remarkable flair for fashion, but early on she struggled for acceptance from fashion houses in Europe and America. As her husband wrote in his autobiography, “Certain designers assumed that White
women wouldn’t value their designs if they were worn by Black women. We finally got through to one or two of the leading designers, and the others followed.” At a time when African American women were largely excluded from mainstream fashion, Ebony Fashion Fair, along with Ebony magazine, showcased and celebrated the best in black life—and proved that black was indeed beautiful.

Special hours / admission
The museum is open Wednesday–Sunday 11 am to 5 pm and until 9 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. Opening at 10 am on Saturdays, February 6, March 5 & April 2. Open Mondays & Tuesdays, February 15 & 16 and March 28 & 29 (school break weeks) from 11 am to 5 pm. Closed all other Mondays and Tuesdays.

General admission is $14; senior citizens, $10; college students with ID and children 6–18, $5; always free to members, UR students, and children 5 and under. Includes admission to Inspiring Beauty.

Half-price general admission Thursdays from 5–9 pm is made possible in part by Monroe County. Free admission from 10 am to noon on three Saturdays (February 6, March 5 & April 2) is made possible by the City of Rochester. February 13–21 & March 25–April 3 (school break weeks), ages 18 and under are free if accompanied by an adult.

Programs and events
MAG will host talks by exhibition curators Joy L. Bivins and Virginia Heaven, and Cheetah Girls author and former runway model Deborah Gregory; an evening with Emmy Award-winning fashion stylist David Zyla; a conversation with Ebony Fashion Fair personalities moderated by WHEC-TV news anchor Janet Lomax; the Inspiring Beauty Gala; a series of gospel brunches; a teacher inservice; and two member previews. For detailed information see attached release.

Catalog
A fully illustrated softcover catalog of the exhibition is available for $29.95 at the Gallery Store.

National tour
Inspiring Beauty was on view at the Chicago History Museum March 16, 2013–May 11, 2014. From Chicago, it traveled to the Museum of Design Atlanta, Milwaukee Art Museum, Minnesota History Center and Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit. MAG is the only Northeast venue for the show, which continues to Bellevue Arts Museum in Bellevue, WA (May 20–August 12, 2016) and George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum in Washington, DC (February 10–June 4, 2017).

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INSPIRING BEAUTY: 50 YEARS OF EBONY FASHION
Programs and Events  Learn more at mag.rochester.edu/InspiringBeauty.

MEMBER EVENTS
MAG is planning two members-only exhibition preview parties with live music and entertainment.
For more information call the membership office, 585.276.8939 or email memberperks@mag.rochester.edu. The members opening party on January 30 is sponsored by 585 Magazine.

TALKS
Sunday, January 31, 2 pm: lecture by Inspiring Beauty curator Joy L. Bivins and consulting costume curator Virginia Heaven

Sunday, February 28, 3 pm: WHEC-TV news anchor Janet Lomax moderates a conversation with Ebony Fashion Fair veterans. Model Jacquie Robnett-Williams, a native of Depew, NY, toured with the show from 1987 to 1989; designer Raul Siro Ferreira worked as a master draper while employed by Izquierdo Studio in New York City; and Rochelle McDaniel was a local Fashion Fair organizer. Included in MAG admission.

Saturday, April 2, 2 pm: talk by Deborah Gregory, former runway model and author of the Cheetah Girls series; moderated by Timothy J. Cosgriff, assistant to the dean at Empire State College

Sponsored by Empire State College.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Wednesday, February 24, 5:30 pm: “Be the Canvas: Explore Your Personal Style at the MAG,” an evening with Emmy Award-winning fashion stylist David Zyla.

Sponsored by Laureen A. Burke, MD / Partner in Women’s Health, Lori Van Dusen / LVW Advisors, Drs. Gail and Patrick Riggs and family, and The Red Barn Fine Apparel. For tickets visit mag.rochester.edu/events/be-the-canvas/.

Saturday, April 2, 8 pm: Inspiring Beauty Gala, an evening of dancing and entertainment. Celebrate the exhibition Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair at a gala evening of dancing and entertainment. Enjoy music by Garth Fagan Dance, Atlas Band, Nate Rawls Trio and Dilynda; silent auction with designer showcase; vogue dancers; midnight fashion parade; and late night live DJ. Featuring savory fare and sweet delights from Max Rochester, cash bar. Dress to impress! $175 per person.

Also available: Dinner/Gala tickets including cocktail reception and dinner at Cityview Ballroom of the Strathallan.

Sponsored by Alesco Advisors, with additional support from Margaret M. and David J. Burns, KeyBank, and Alan L. Cameros.
For tickets and information call 585.276.8943 (jhart@mag.rochester.edu).

FAMILY DAY
Sunday, February 21, noon to 5 pm

Celebrate Black History Month and Inspiring Beauty with hands-on art activities, music and dance demonstrations, and storytelling. Suggested donation $5 per family.

Sponsored by St. John Fisher College with additional support from the Robert and Madeleine S. Heilbrunn Memorial Fund.
GOSPEL BRUNCHES  
Sponsored by City newspaper and the Eastman School of Music
From 10 to 2 on select Sundays* during the exhibition, enjoy brunch served by MAG’s new café, Brown Hound Downtown; music; and tours of Inspiring Beauty (MAG admission required). Reservations requested (585.506.9725).

*Please note that we will offer our Easter weekend Gospel Brunch on Saturday, March 26.

SALES EVENTS
Throughout Inspiring Beauty, the Gallery Store will feature clothing, jewelry and accessories by regional designers; gifts inspired by the exhibition; and books that explore the art of fashion. Visit maggallerystore.com for information about upcoming trunk shows and pop up shops.

ART & ART HISTORY CLASSES
This winter, MAG’S Creative Workshop is offering “Fashion Forward” art classes for kids, teens and adults. These include drawing, jewelry and fiber classes and Performing Fashion, a Thursday evening art appreciation class, and a teen fashion camp during spring break (March 28–April 1). The Workshop winter catalog with a complete listing is at mag.rochester.edu/creativeworkshop.

ESPECIALLY FOR EDUCATORS
Wednesday, February 3, 4:30–7 pm; $25 (preregistration required*)
To register or for more information, contact Chelsea Anderson (585.276.8971).

GUIDED EXHIBITION TOURS  (included in museum admission)
Sunday, January 31 (opening day), 1, 2 and 3 pm
Sundays and Fridays, February 5–April 24, 1 pm

BUS TOURS
To book a bus tour that includes admission to Inspiring Beauty, visits to other area attractions and shopping opportunities, call Aristocrat Travel, 585.235.5770, or Carpe Diem Travel, 585.295.9393.

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INSPIRING BEAUTY: 50 YEARS OF EBONY FASHION
Ensembles on view

Azzedine Alaïa (France)
Evening dress, 1986

L’Amour Ameer (United States)
Evening ensemble, 2001

Pierre Balmain (France)
Cocktail ensemble, 1988–89

Laura Biagiotti (Italy)
Day ensemble, 2006–07

Bill Blass (United States)
Day ensemble, 1997–98

Marc Bohan for Christian Dior (France)
Day coat, 1964–65
Evening ensemble, 1968–69

Stephen Burrows (United States)
Evening dress, 2007

Pierre Cardin (France)
Evening dress, 1988–89

Dimitrios (United States) and
Giorgio Cosani (United States)
Formal ensemble, 1981–82

Erreuno (Italy)
Day ensemble, 2002–03

Valentino Garavani (Italy)
Evening ensemble, 1978–79

Hubert de Givenchy (France)
Evening ensemble, 1974

Tilmann Grawe (France)
Cocktail dress, 2003–04

Henry Jackson (United States)
Ball gown, 2005

Patrick Kelly (United States)
Evening dress, 1986

Naeem Khan (United States)
Evening dress, 2008–09

Krizia (Italy)
Cocktail ensemble, 1981–82

Christian Lacroix (France)
Cocktail ensemble, 1987–88

Karl Lagerfeld for Chloé (France)
Evening dress, 1983–84

Guy Laroche (France)
Evening suit, 1972–73

Bob Mackie (United States)
Evening ensemble, 1984–85

Angelo Marani (Italy)
Day ensemble, 2005–06

Alexander McQueen for Givenchy
(France)
Evening dress, 1997–98

b. Michael (United States)
Ball gown, 2007

Missoni (Italy)
Day ware, 2006–07

Hanae Mori (Japan)
Evening ensemble, 2001–02

Todd Oldham (United States)
Evening dress, 1997–98

Jean Patou (France)
Day ensemble, 1986–87

Paco Rabanne (France)
Cocktail ensemble, 1993–94

Fausto Sarli (Italy)
Evening ensemble, 1999–2000

Yves Saint Laurent (France)
Cocktail ensemble, 1977–78
Evening ensemble, 1977–78

Jean Louis Scherrer (France)
Day ensemble, 2000–01

Fabrice Simon (United States)
Coordinating cocktail ensembles, 1990

Pauline Trigère (United States)
Day ensemble, 1972

Emanuel Ungaro (France)
Evening dress, 1987–88
Bridal gown, 1996–97

Vivienne Westwood (United Kingdom)
Ball gown, 2002–03