

# FLAIR

FROM SALON TO BOUTIQUE. AUSTRALIAN FASHION LABELS THROUGH THE '60s



11 February – 14 August 2005  
The Ian Potter Centre:  
NGV Australia  
Federation Square  
[www.ngv.vic.gov.au](http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au)

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FROM SALON TO BOUTIQUE. AUSTRALIAN FASHION LABELS THROUGH THE '60s

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Printing: The Craftsman Press

Exhibition dates: 11 February – 14 August 2005

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square  
[www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au)



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*cover*

LUCAS, *Melbourne Evening jumpsuit and tabard* 1968

Published in *Flair* magazine, January 1968, p. 54

Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia

If the Queen's royal tour of Australia in 1954 defined the character and mood of that decade, then the Beatles tour of 1964 aptly characterized the 'youth-quake' and changed attitudes and allegiances of the following one. Investigating the 'youth-quake' in September 1965, *Vogue Australia* summed up the 'universal upsurge of the Young Idea' that was making its impact locally on everything from arts to entertaining:

**The no-longer silent generation sets its own styles – and changes them overnight; makes – and breaks – its own pop idols; raises enough noise to perforate elderly eardrums; and is already effecting a revolution in manners.<sup>1</sup>**

The ascendancy of youth culture and the 'look' associated with it were pivotal to the radical social changes that took place in the 1960s. As areas of art, pop culture and design merged, fashion too came to be seen and experienced in totally different ways.

From the world of intimate, exclusive salons to the new swinging urban boutiques, fashion in Australia underwent a radical cultural transformation. As ready-to-wear replaced custom-made, a new generation of talented young designers emerged to produce garments for their own 'modern' lifestyles. Pioneering an aesthetic that was youthful and progressive, they experimented with new design ideas, fabrics and technologies. The formal categories of day and eveningwear were exchanged for casual dress, and the top-down dictates of couture were swapped for the trickle-up effect of the street.

Absorbed in pop culture, but appropriating the model of the atelier, speciality fashion shops became the universal vehicle for experiencing cutting-edge and creative fashions. From mini to maxi, baby-doll to unisex, *Flair: From Salon to Boutique* looks at the major style shift from middle-age to teenage, and considers its lasting influence on Australian fashion.

Fig. 1 MAGG, Melbourne, fashion house  
*Evening dress and Jacket* c. 1965 (detail)  
Gift of Anthea Ball in memory of Mrs Gladys Ball, 2004



## From the salon

During the 1950s, Australia's high-fashion landscape was characterized by the reign of several leading couturiers.<sup>2</sup> At the dawn of the 1960s, *Flair* magazine reported that celebrated dressmaking establishments, such as Le Louvre, Magg and Germaine Rocher:

[are] known to every woman with a trace of fashion in her veins, although only a few ever get to cross the portals of their exclusive salons; each season their openings are awaited with undisguised impatience by press and public alike, and their influence over the best-dressed segments of our society is incalculable; superbly indifferent to price, they strive to give to the Australian fashion world that touch of Paris that only the haute couture can impart.<sup>3</sup>

Catering to a primarily wealthy clientele, these establishments endorsed a particular set of social and aesthetic values. Differing from boutiques by their use of expensive, imported fabrics, hand-finishing and made-to-measure techniques, their designs reflected the traditional categories of day and eveningwear, and were heavily influenced by the dictates

of Paris. Despite growing investment in an Australian style, these high-fashion labels continued to import, interpret and champion the major style ideas of leading French designers throughout the decade.

One of the first two couture houses in Sydney, Madame Rocher's (established in 1935) was an elegant salon, decorated in grey with gilded chairs, a marble corridor, mirrored walls and deep carpets that replicated the extravagances of Parisian haute couture right down to the imported French pins.<sup>4</sup> Tasteful and elegant, garments were sewn on treadle machines to maintain high standards of finish and control, with care taken in all aspects of construction, from fabric selection to cutting, sewing, mounting, pressing, hemming and invisible stitching.<sup>5</sup>

Influential in setting rules for dress over the preceding decades, Madame Rocher certainly did not approve of the mini when it arrived in Australia in 1965. Stating that 'very short skirts and elegance were incompatible', she refused to lift her hemlines above mid-knee level.<sup>6</sup> Her *Cocktail dress*, c. 1965, shows a modest hem length suitable for after-five eveningwear.



Germaine Rocher with models Published in *Vogue Australia*, June/July, 1963, page 24  
Reproduced with kind permission of *Vogue*. Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia



Fig.2 LE LOUVRE, Melbourne, fashion house  
Dress 1972 (detail). Gift of Elvala Ayton, 2004



Fig.3 TU, Melbourne, fashion house  
*Dress and Coat* c. 1969  
 Anonymous gift, 1997

Like Germaine Rocher's, Melbourne's Le Louvre was another exclusive establishment modelled on the grand couture houses of Paris. From the 1930s to 1960s, owner and chief designer Lillian Wightman sold day and eveningwear, produced in the shop's own workrooms, alongside hand-selected imports from leading overseas couturiers. The label's signature print was ocelot and it was reported that 'Lillian's devotion to it saw the sale of thousands of yards of the print on wool, silk, chiffon, in everything from raincoats and swimsuits to evening gowns'.<sup>7</sup>

*Dress*, c. 1972 (fig.2), and its matching coat were purchased as part of a wedding trousseau and demonstrate a loose structure and sophistication. Neatly tailored daywear ensembles like this were the antithesis of the mix-and-match separates that came to be sold later through the new boutiques. Presenting a seamless and uniform aesthetic free of visual clutter, these styles also addressed concerns of mobility, practicality and comfort. From three-piece to two-piece to trousers, the suit went through its most radical overhaul during the 1960s.



Germaine Rocher in her studio  
 Published in *Flair* magazine, November, 1966, page 59  
 Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia

In 1963 Erna Vilks and Arija Austin established the exclusive Tu boutique in South Yarra. Like Zara Holt's Magg in nearby Toorak, their designs revealed an appreciation of the fabrics, styles and colours suited to an Australian lifestyle. The trapeze-style *Dress*, c. 1969 (fig.3), comes with an identically cut, matching topcoat and is informed by the spare clean lines and solid high-key colours perfected by French designer, André Courrèges. One of a new class of French couturiers creating ready-to-wear lines, Courrèges launched the trouser suit in 1964, followed by the space-age 'Moon Girl' collection, which featured short pinafore dresses well above the knee – now truly minis! Querying whether Australians had the 'Courage for Courrèges', in July 1965, *Vogue Australia* discovered that the designer's severe masculine lines were making a tremendous impact on local fashions. Comprised of tailored panel sections edged in topstitching, *Dress and Coat*, c. 1969, feature these same stark architectural qualities. True to high-fashion finishing, both garments are fully lined in silk and organza.

Magg's Zara Holt was known for her personal flair and eye for colour, and was 'always designing with some situation in mind'.<sup>8</sup> During the 1960s, her show-stopping creations won her the prestigious Australian Gown of the Year Award three times.

The colourful silk patchwork *Evening dress*, c. 1968 (fig.4), worn by devoted client Mrs Gladys Ball, was created for Holt's diffusion 'miss magg' label, which catered for a more youthful clientele. Visually overpowering when worn with matching wool *Jacket*, c. 1968, the outfit is a cleverly constructed, upmarket version of the appliquéd and patchwork styles popularized by hippies in the late 1960s. Likewise, *Evening kaftan*, c. 1967, reflects fashion's adoption of optical patterns and contrasting areas of line and colour, inspired by the Op Art movement. Both outfits typify the late '60s trend for flowing maxi-length styles in the evening.

As the decade wore on, time-consuming couture practices like hand-beading and embroidery were less frequently seen or desired, reflecting the demand for less 'fussy styles'. None-the-less, many of the salons still produced spectacular one-off examples for special occasions and valued clients. *Evening dress*, 1965, by Miss Paulette, is one such example, presenting a column of luminous yellow fabric, hand-decorated with the dazzling geometry of more than 119,168 silver sea beads across the bodice and hemline.



right  
Fig.4 **MAGG, Melbourne**, fashion house  
*Evening dress and Jacket* c. 1968 (detail)  
Gift of Anthea Ball in memory of Mrs Gladys Ball, 2004

opposite  
**MAGG, Melbourne** *Evening kaftan* 1967  
Published in *Vogue Australia*, October 1967  
Report on "International Fashion Collection"  
Reproduced with kind permission of *Vogue*  
Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia



## ... To The ...

Department stores and manufacturers like The House of Lucas were also keen to capitalize on Australia's changing fashion landscape. Having been active in purchasing Paris models under licence throughout the 1950s, the company initiated a deal as early as 1960 with leading international couturier Pierre Cardin to produce his designs locally. The House of Lucas was also one of the first to foster technological changes in the clothing industry by investing in new machinery to produce synthetic fabrics and fibres, and specialist knitwear.

Against a backdrop of technological change and space-age futurism, designers in the 1960s began to experiment with a plethora of new materials from paper and plastic to polyvinyl acetate, (pvc) with interesting results. *Fashionweek*, the Australian fashion and textiles trade newspaper, began circulation in 1962 and reported on all the latest perma-pleat and non-iron fabrics – crimplenes, dacrons, terylenes, bri-nylons and arnels – to hit the market.

Locally, these easy-care clothes were marketed as the 'creations of science'. Crease-resistant, unshrinkable, synthetic fibres and blends gave women a 'luxury look without tears',<sup>9</sup> while the relatively cheap cost of synthetic fabrics and dyes offered manufacturers a palette of bold, lurid and exciting artificial colours.

Lurex, in particular, was a fabric that revolutionized after-five wear as 'a touch of Hollywood glamour that could be dunked in the same tub as your stockings'.<sup>10</sup> The lurex and polyester *Evening jumpsuit and tabard*, 1967 (fig.5) by The House of Lucas is an example of one of the company's more radical designs. A lime-green tabard patterned with Indian-inspired motifs conceals a hot-pink, sleeveless jumpsuit. The dazzling outfit combines comfort and ease of movement by using stretch fabric in psychedelic colours.

However, synthetic fabrics were in direct competition with traditional manufacturers like the Australian wool industry, which was forced to develop new processes to combat problems of shrinkage and machine washability.

In 1955 the Australian Wool Fashion Awards (AWFA) were established to foster public and industry interest in wool fashions.<sup>11</sup> Open to all designers and manufacturers, by the early 1960s the AWFA had become an enormous national competition. Gold-medal-winning designs were given a special point-of-sale tag ticket, featured in full-page colour magazine spreads, and exhibited in Sydney and Melbourne department store fashion parades.

Unlike the more conservative Australian Gown of the Year Award, many of the new young designers took the opportunity to enter the wool fashion awards. Notable designers Prue Acton and Norma Tullo both won these awards during the 1960s, and each developed an important ongoing relationship with the wool industry. Tullo, in particular, was instrumental in raising the profile of the wool industry by choosing to design with woollen fabrics. As in *Hostess dress*, c. 1969, fabrics were often woven and produced to her specification and colours, and featured her trademark floral motifs.

Norma Tullo had begun her fashion career in 1956 while still employed full-time as a legal secretary. Unable to find the type of clothing that she wanted to wear, she set about designing and making her own garments, despite a lack of professional training. Tullo found great commercial success with her smart, spare, feminine designs at a time when young girls were looking for more youthful options than those offered in the high street stores.

*right*  
Fig. 5 LUCAS, Melbourne, manufacturer  
*Evening jumpsuit and tabard* 1967 (detail)  
Gift of Mrs Margaret Price, 1980



Later credited with having 'cracked the youth market right open',<sup>12</sup> her commitment to designing and manufacturing locally for Australian lifestyles created an environment in which a generation of new Australian designers could flourish. *Suit*, 1964 (fig. 6), featuring a prim navy and white theme, and contrasting polka dot trimmings, was purchased to be worn at the Melbourne Cup.

While competition between the manufacturers of the new synthetics and the wool industry was played out in the pages of fashion and trade magazines, it also produced one of Australian fashion history's defining moments. When English model and face of the 1960s, Jean Shrimpton – here to promote Du Pont's<sup>13</sup> synthetics – appeared at the Melbourne Cup, she horrified the conservative old guard with her attire. Without hat, stockings or gloves, and wearing a mini that sat several inches above the knee, Shrimpton expressed the defiant attitudes of a younger generation.

From that moment on, the mini was here to stay. As Prue Acton recalled:

All the kids who I was supplying, all the 18–20 year olds, said: 'That's what I wanna look like'. And overnight we were cutting the skirts. We were cutting two inches off, and the next week, another two and another two. By Christmas we were up to something quite disgusting.<sup>14</sup>



above  
Norma Tullo in her studio  
Published in *Flair* magazine, January 1962, page 16  
Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia

right  
Fig. 6 NORMA TULLO, Melbourne, fashion house  
*Suit* 1964 (detail)  
Gift of Mrs Norma Lepp, 2004





Perhaps what best characterized the new designers of the 1960s was that the looks they created were very much a reflection of themselves. The ability to tune into the latest trends and identify with the aesthetics and values of a burgeoning youth culture meant that these entrepreneurs were driving changes within the Australian fashion industry and retailing.

Summed up by *Flair*, the magazine subtitled 'Australian fashions and where to buy them', the new fashion leaders presented:

**a clean, well-scrubbed beauty, dead-level gaze and complete disregard for compromise or artifice. They go with their generation in a very Chelsea direction ... these are the girls who will wipe the fashion slate clean and scrawl on it with their own straightforward, but unmistakable signature.**<sup>15</sup>

It was an image reinforced by other magazines such as *Vogue Australia*, first published in 1959. Charting shifts in Australia's fashion landscape, *Flair* and *Vogue* pictured top models and entertainers wearing Australian designs and introduced the new talents in Australian fashion design. Also changing the way that fashion was reported, commercial photographers such as Helmut Newton and Bruno Benini moved out of the studio, producing energetic images that drew on these new, edgier types of femininity.

When Mary Quant's Bazaar opened in King Road, London, it propelled fashion and shopping into a new era. Bazaar was a 'bouillabaisse of clothes and activities', where 'girls in their teens and twenties could find clothes that they can put on in the morning and feel right in at midnight'.<sup>16</sup>

Creating clothing that was far removed from the structured, fussy garments of her youth, Quant recognised that, universally, young men and women no longer wished to dress like their parents. By creating garments that were inexpensive, uncomplicated and chic, she promoted the idea of the total 'look' – a fusion of image and attitude created through fashion, make-up, accessories and hairstyles.

Quant wrote: 'the whole point of fashion is to make fashionable clothes available to everyone'.<sup>17</sup> Central to this achievement was the establishment of the boutique with its mass-produced, ready-to-wear designs and fast turnover, as a venue for transferring what had previously been the preserve of the elite to a mass audience.

In Australia, 'Boutiquing' was advertised as a new sport for 'Miss Sydney' in 1964 by the department store Anthony Horden & Sons, and by 1966 Sportsgirl had launched its own cutting-edge fashion section, Bigi.

Launching her label in 1963, nineteen-year-old Prue Acton was often called Australia's Mary Quant<sup>18</sup> for her adoption and translation of the Chelsea look into an Australian idiom. Like Quant, Acton believed that clothes were one of the most important ways in which a person could express their personality, and her outlook was 'anything you wear must say something'.<sup>19</sup>

Instrumental in developing the concept of the 'total look' in Australia, Acton designed ranges of trend-setting mix-and-match separates, coats, sportswear, accessories, boots, stockings and, later, her own cosmetic range. She also wrote a fashion column for new weekly magazine *Go-Set*, which emerged as a creative voice for the teenage scene, focusing on music, fashion and aspects of Australian pop culture.



Fig. 7 PRUE ACTON, Melbourne, fashion house Mini dress 1967. Gift of Diana Reece, 2004



## carnaby to castlereagh: The House of Merivale and Mr John

This is where it's at: *Simpatico, Sensous, Stunningly-staffed, Sonorific: The House of Merivale and Mr. John, Pitt St. Branch.*<sup>20</sup>

*Mini dress*, 1967 (fig. 7), demonstrates the quintessential baby-doll look – synonymous with the 1960s – which displaced the womanly New Look silhouette of the 1950s. Skinny pinafores, cut-away shifts and hotpants all represented new types of garment forms that could be worn without foundation garments. Acton's design vocabulary was rich in textural elements and, as seen here, often incorporated experimentation with fabric by pin-tucking, pleating, braiding and appliqué.

It was not until 1968 that Acton opened her Prue & Sue boutique in the Block Arcade, Melbourne. With shiny white and silver decor, clothes strung from the ceiling by silver chains, and girlish coloured ribbon trims, the store was situated near other youth emporiums like Mr John and Sportsgirl, and was similarly envisaged as a site of entertainment and consumption.

above  
PRUE ACTON, Melbourne, fashion house  
*Mini dress* 1967 (detail)  
Gift of Diana Reece, 2004

above right  
Interiors of *The House of Merivale* store c. 1970  
Images courtesy of the Hemmes family.

Established in Sydney in 1960 by Merivale and John Hemmes, The House of Merivale drew inspiration from London's rising boutique culture and pop world mix of fashion, music and art. Decrying the fact that 'there wasn't much fashion in Australia between the very high couture and the very ordinary',<sup>21</sup> John and Merivale championed fashions that articulated the mood and identities of a younger generation.

The House of Merivale was formed with the intention of creating an atmosphere that was lively, fun and constantly changing, and designing 'modern clothes for people with a zest for life'.<sup>22</sup> Initially stocking hand-selected imports and clothes designed by inspirational young Australian designers, such as Prue Acton, Norma Tullo and Kenneth Pirrie, the House of Merivale later featured ranges designed by the self-taught Merivale Hemmes.

The first shop, located in Castlereagh Street, Sydney, resembled a Victorian bazaar. Furnished and decorated by the Hemmes, it had a vibrant and eclectic atmosphere with enticing window displays, the latest music blaring throughout the shop, and gorgeous, slim sales staff. Customers were encouraged to believe they were arriving at an extravagant party.<sup>23</sup>



The House of Merivale label specialized in affordable clothing for eighteen to twenty-five-year-olds who understood fashion to be a creative force for self-expression. Headquarters to a young hip set, notable international and local celebrities also shopped there.

Within the first few years, The House of Merivale stopped stocking other Australian designers in favour of Merivale's own designs. Manufacturing locally from their own factory – staffed by highly trained seamstresses and tailors – and producing around twenty-five new garments each week, the label produced short runs of each style, allowing them to stay ahead of the market.

In 1966, Carnaby Street, London – known globally as Peacock Alley – was lined with men's boutiques and was the world centre of male fashion. Mods and other style-conscious young men were challenging the view that shopping was a female preoccupation. Racks of flashy, fanciful clothes heralded a worldwide revolution by revising the infrequently reinvented parameters of menswear. Mirroring the kind of attention given to women's dress, presentation became everything and men's clothing became more decorative and flamboyant.



In 1967, following international trends and constant questions from clients to 'design something for my boyfriend', the original Mr John store opened in King Street, Sydney. One of the first boutiques to retail fashionable menswear, the Mr John stores gave a voice, look and location to young Australian males bored with conservative dress and attitudes.

With ranges of suits, shirts, trousers, leather jackets, shoes and accessories in mix-and-match separates, the look was daring, colourful, sophisticated and suave. Separates like *Blazer*, c. 1973, in primary colours, introduced flair into casual dress and enabled the wearer to get more variety out their wardrobe.

*Suit*, c. 1973 (fig. 8), in deep burgundy corduroy, was purchased to wear for a night out and is also a typical Mr John style. Newly adopted as a fashion fabric in the 1960s, the heavy corduroy material is well suited to the execution of a sharp, tailored line. The belted, emphasized waist is also indicative of the trend in the early 1970s towards unisex attire which saw traditionally ascribed 'masculine' and 'feminine' codes of dress become more complex, ambiguous and often androgynous.



A year earlier in Melbourne, designer Joseph Saba opened the Shirt and Sweater shop in Flinders Lane, where he sold ranges of coordinates as an 'alternative to the standard white business shirt and jacket'. Within twelve months, the success of the shop caused Saba to open a city store in Bourke Street named The Stag Shoppe. *Blazer*, c. 1973 (fig. 9), is an interpretation of English collegiate wear from this period.

Reflecting the new attentiveness to male appearance, the House of Merivale and Mr John also began publishing its own free monthly newspaper. Aimed at 'swingy guys and girls', the paper advertised the latest in-store gear and accessories, and, much like the women's advice columns of the 1950s, advised on how to put it all together.

Symptomatic of the excitement and air of possibility of the 1960s, the rise of the boutique as a fashionable environment and outlet for youth culture, innovation and change completely revolutionized people's experience of shopping and fashion. As Australian designers forged new ground, pioneered new trends and questioned what Australian fashion actually was, they generated an electric moment which made fashion an agent and placed it at the forefront of wider cultural change.

above left  
Fig. 8 MR JOHN, Sydney, fashion house  
Suit c. 1973 (detail).  
Gift of Phil Parnell, 2004

above right  
Fig. 9 THE STAG SHOPPE, Melbourne, fashion house  
Blazer c. 1973 (detail).  
Gift of David and Peppy (Margaret Ursula) Sherr, 2004

If the arrival of the boutique as symptomatic of wider social movements signalled one type of revolution in fashion, then the fallout from times of economic prosperity and rampant consumerism produced another type of revolution in the hippy and counterculture trends of the late 1960s. Represented by an interest in historical revivalism, Eastern cultures, nostalgia, and thrift-store recycling, the hippy look reintroduced decorative techniques such as fringing, beading, embroidery and patchwork to contemporary dress.

The handmade aesthetic, with its emphasis on customization and surface decoration was also tied to a youth subcultural identity. The free-flowing, folk-inspired *Dress*, c. 1967 (fig. 10), by Barbara McLean, with its gathered and embellished yoke and wide angel sleeves, contrasts heavily with the clean spare lines of the space-age fashions. The rejection of consumer-driven desires in place of humanist concerns with global instability had an effect, shifting attention and values away from the look of 'now'. In this dress, souvenirized Afghani and Indian printed cottons, mother-of-pearl buttons, antique embroidery and beads speak of a different set of social and aesthetic values.

Danielle Whitfield  
Assisant Curator, Australian Fashion and Textiles

## Notes

- 1 'What's in Vogue', *Vogue Australia*, September 1965, p. 49.
- 2 In France, the term and practice of haute couture is protected. Defined by a strict set of formal criteria, houses must belong to the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture. The term couturier, however, was locally employed to describe anyone with a high-end or made-to-measure practice.
- 3 'Anyone Can Dream' *Flair*, October 1966, p. 78.
- 4 Wendy Stokes, 'Phase out for the fashion phenomenon', *The Australian*, Women's Section, 1971, p. 2.
- 5 Mary Lidden, 'The secrets of the great couturiers', *Flair*, November 1966, p. 58-9.
- 6 *ibid*, p. 59.
- 7 Alexandra Joel, *Parade: The story of Fashion in Australia*, Harper Collins, 1998, p. 82.
- 8 *ibid*, p.159.
- 9 *Flair*, June 1962.
- 10 *ibid*.
- 11 Australian Wool Board literature.
- 12 Joel, *op. cit*, p. 171.
- 13 Shrimpton had already appeared in a series of advertisements for Orlon and later appeared as part of Australia's greatest ever knitwear promotion.
- 14 Prue Acton, interviewed by George Negus, ABC TV, 29/4/04.
- 15 *Flair*, February 1964.
- 16 Fogg, M, *Boutique: A '60s cultural phenomenon*, Mitchell Beazley, 2003.
- 17 Mary Quant, *Quant by Quant*, Redwood Press Ltd, London 1966.
- 18 Denise Whitehouse, National Institute of Design, Swinburne University of Technology for RMIT Research Fund Grant *Prue Acton case study*, <http://www.cyberfibres.rmit.edu.au/biogs/>
- 19 *Adelaide Advertiser*, 30.5.64, p. 14.
- 20 *JAM* November, 1971 issue 2.
- 21 John Hemmes, Australian Press material, c. 1979.
- 22 John Hemmes quoted in 'Setters of Trends', Australian Press material, c. 1979.
- 23 'Setting Trends in Boutiques', *The Australian*, 10 October, 1970, p. 10.

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J. Cockington, *Mondo Weirdo: Australia in the sixties*, Mandarin Press, 1992.  
R. Healy, *Couture to Chaos, Fashion from the 1960s to now*, NGV, 1996.



## sponsor's message

Myer's partnership with the National Gallery of Victoria celebrates a shared respect and deep affection between two great Melbourne institutions. In particular, our support of the Myer Fashion and Textiles galleries at NGV International and NGV Australia acknowledges the very important role fashion plays – in the world of retail, and in the world of art. It also acknowledges fashion's capacity to delight, to engage, and to inspire. Myer, the NGV and fashion – three magnificent cultural endeavours – brought together in a wonderful way.

Myer is pleased to join with the NGV in presenting *Flair: From Salon to Boutique. Australian Fashion Labels through the '60s*. The 1960s saw the rise of new fashions and new retail experiences that expressed the creativity and experience of youth. This exhibition explores the shift from custom-made to ready-to-wear fashions, acknowledging the skills and lasting impact of the young Australian designers who were leading the fashion industry.

I welcome you to the Myer Fashion and Textiles Gallery, and I hope you enjoy this fantastic exhibition.

Dawn Robertson  
Managing Director  
Myer

Principal Sponsor

**MYER**

Fig. 10 Barbara McLEAN, artist  
Dress c. 1967  
Gift of Barbara McLean, 1982

## SALON

**GERMAINE ROCHER, Sydney, fashion house**  
1935–1971

**Madame ROCHER, designer**

born Russia c. 1907, lived in France c. 1917–30,  
arrived Australia c. 1932

*Cocktail dress* c. 1965

silk, cotton, metal

84.0 cm (centre front); 35.0 cm (waist, flat)

Private collection

**JEANNE DE CAMPO, Melbourne, fashion house**  
c. 1946–c. 1978

**Jeanne DE CAMPO, designer**

born Australia 1923

*Evening dress* 1961

acetate, nylon, cotton, metal

100.0 cm (centre back)

Gift of Jeanne de Campo, 1987 (CT117-1987)

**LE LOUVRE, Melbourne, fashion house**  
est. c. 1929

**Lillian WIGHTMAN, designer**

Australia 1903–92

*Dress* 1972

silk, cotton, acetate, metal

103.2 cm (centre back); 47.0 cm (waist, flat);

59.0 cm (sleeve length) (dress)

Gift of Elvala Ayton, 2004

*Evening bolero* 1965

silk, plastic, glass

42.0 cm (centre back); 41.0 cm (sleeve length)

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria

by Ms Janet F. Purves, Member, 1995 (1995.317)

**MAGG, Melbourne, fashion house**  
1920–1925, 1950–1977

**Zara HOLT, designer**

Australia 1904–89

*Evening kaftan* 1967

silk, cotton, metal

155.5 cm (centre back); 35.0 cm (sleeve length)

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria

by Mrs Patricia Davies AM, Member, 1997

(1997.216)

*Evening dress and jacket* c. 1968

silk, wool, cotton, plastic, metal

147.0 cm (centre back); 42.0 cm (shoulder) (dress)

71.5 cm (centre back); 66.0 cm (sleeve length) (jacket)

Gift of Anthea Ball in memory of Mrs Gladys Ball,  
2004

*Denim mini* c. 1965

cotton, metal

70.0 cm (centre back); 32.0 cm (waist, flat)

Private collection

**MISS PAULETTE, Melbourne, fashion house**  
est. 1960

**Paulette GOLDBERG, designer**

born France 1938, arrived Australia 1950

*Evening dress* 1965

polyester, glass, nylon, cotton, synthetic lining

137.0 cm (centre back)

Gift of Paulette Goldberg, 2004 (2004.566)

**TU, Melbourne, fashion house**  
est. c. 1963

**Aria AUSTIN, designer**

active in Australia 1960

**Erna VILKS, designer**

active in Australia 1960

*Dress* c. 1969

wool, silk, cotton

89.0 cm (centre back); 22.0 cm (sleeve length)

Anonymous gift, 1997 (D27.a-b.1977)

*Coat* c. 1965

wool, silk, vinyl, plastic, metal, polyester

97.0 cm (centre back); 43.0 cm (waist, flat)

Private collection

## TO THE

**COURREGÈS, Paris, couture house**  
Est. 1961

**André COURREGÈS, designer**

born France 1923

*Mini tunic and skinny rib top* c. 1969

cotton, polyurethane, polyamide, wool, metal

69.0 cm (centre back); 84.0 cm (waist, flat) (tunic)

Gift of Mary Lipshut, 1983 (CT108.a-b-1983)

(D178-1979)

**Ernest STAUBER, Melbourne, tailor**

active in Australia 1960s

*Suit* c. 1969

wool, acetate, cotton, rayon, metal

83.0 cm (centre back); 57.5 cm (sleeve length) (jacket)

80.0 cm (inner leg); 35.0 cm (waist, flat) (trousers)

62.0 cm (centre back) (waistcoat)

Private collection

**LUCAS, Melbourne, manufacturer**  
1934–1968

**Eva OGILVIE, designer**

active in Australia 1960s

*Evening jumpsuit and tabard* 1967

lurex, polyester, plastic, glass

150.0 cm (centre back) (tunic)

142.0 cm (centre back); 71.0 cm (inner leg) (jumpsuit)

Gift of Mrs Margaret Price, 1980

(D195a-b-1980)

**NORMA TULLO, Melbourne, fashion house**  
1956–1977

**Norma TULLO, designer**

born Australia c. 1936

*Hostess dress* c. 1969

wool, metal, cotton

139.0 cm (centre back); 59.5 cm (sleeve length)

Gift of Mrs Nonie Long, 2004 (2004.584)

*Suit* 1964

rayon, acetate, cotton, metal

58.3 cm (centre back);

53.0 cm (sleeve length) (jacket)

56.0 cm (centre back); 29.0 cm (waist, flat) (skirt)

Gift of Mrs Norma Lepp, 2004 (2004.583a-b)

## BOUTIQUE

**HOUSE OF MERIVALE, Sydney, fashion house**  
1960–late 1980s

**MR JOHN, Sydney, fashion house**

1967–late 1980s

**Merivale HEMMES, designer**

born Australia 1931

**John HEMMES, business manager**

born Indonesia 1931, arrived Australia 1955

*Blazer and Trousers* c. 1973

cotton, acrylic, metal

82.0 cm (centre back); 63.0 cm (sleeve length) (blazer)

37.5 cm (waist, flat); 85.0 cm (inner leg) (trousers)

Gift of David and Peppy (Margaret Ursula)

Sherr, 2004

*Suit* c. 1972

polyester, cotton, plastic, metal

69.0 cm (centre back); 57.0 cm (sleeve length) (jacket)

34.5 cm (waist, flat); 78.0 cm (inner leg) (trousers)

Gift of David and Peppy (Margaret Ursula)

Sherr, 2004

*Suit* c. 1973

cotton, acetate, metal, plastic

78.0 cm (centre back); 39.0 cm (waist, flat) (jacket)

36.0 cm (waist, flat); 67.0 cm (inner leg) (trousers)

Gift of Phil Parnell, 2004

**MARY QUANT, London, fashion house**  
est. 1955

**GINGER GROUP**

est. 1963

**Mary QUANT, designer**

born England 1934

*Mini dress* c. 1963

rayon, cotton, metal

76.0 cm (centre back); 37.5 cm (waist, flat)

Gift of Joanna Motion, 1996 (1996.119)

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**PRUE ACTON, Melbourne, fashion house**

1964–c. 1991

**Prue ACTON, designer**

born Australia 1944

*Mini dress* 1967

acetate, cotton, nylon, metal

80.0 cm (centre back); 32.0 cm (waist, flat)

Gift of Diana Reece, 2004

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**THE STAG SHOPPE, Melbourne, fashion house**

1965–1974

**Joseph SABA, designer**

born Australia 1940

*Blazer* c. 1973

wool, acetate, cotton, plastic

76.0 cm (centre back); 64.0 cm (sleeve length)

Gift of David and Peppy (Margaret Ursula)

Sherr, 2004

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**Barbara McLEAN, artist**

born Australia 1944

*Skirt* c. 1966–70

found ties; rayon, polyester, metal, plastic

66.0 cm (centre back); 60.0 cm (waist, flat)

Gift of Barbara McLean, 1979 (CT194-1982)

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*Dress* c. 1967

cotton, shell, metals, glass, seeds

89.0 cm (centre back); 36.0 cm (sleeve length)

Gift of Barbara McLean, 1982 (CT195-1982)

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**RACHELLE KING STUDIO, Melbourne,**

**fashion house**

est. 1962

**Rachelle KING, designer**

born Australia 1940

*Dress* c. 1965

wool; hand-crocheted

100.0 cm (centre back); 50.0 cm (sleeve length)

Gift of Rachelle King, 1985 (CT39-1985)

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