



## *The Costume & Textile Specialists*

Exhibitions, Collection Management, Appraisals, & Conservation

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### **Developing & Installing a Themed Clothing Exhibit**

**Hosting a themed clothing exhibit at your museum, historic house or site can have many positive outcomes such as increased visitation and visibility and a more committed volunteer core. However, it is important to be aware of the logistics, staff needs, and costs of such an exhibition. Throughout the exhibition process, you must keep in mind that displaying clothing and textiles is very stressful on them. There is no way to avoid a certain amount of manipulation in order to get the garment on a mannequin or a textile prepared for framing or hanging. The first consideration should always be to determine if the artifact is strong enough to withstand the manipulation needed for it to be attractively displayed.**

**Choosing a Theme and Obtaining Appropriate Artifacts:** These two aspects of the exhibit go hand in hand. You need a theme that is in keeping with aspects of interpretation of your institution and you need to have access to artifacts that can communicate this theme. The two main display venues are traditional museum gallery settings and rooms in historic house museums:

#### **Clothing Exhibit Theme Ideas:**

- Clothing focusing on or combining social, fashion or historical themes over a period of time or of a specific era. Don't forget the 20<sup>th</sup> and even the early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries are now history!
- Clothing from main era of your historic house interpretation—including fashionable dress and clothing worn by the servants.
- In a historic house or site, if different spaces are interpreted to different periods, clothing appropriate for the different spaces and periods.

#### **Clothing Sources:**

- Clothing from the collection of the institution
- Clothing loaned from a private collector or the public. Soliciting from the public can be a way to fill in pieces that are missing from your collection. For example, work uniforms from industries in your area, clothing brought by ethnic groups that have immigrated to your area or examples of modern clothing being designed or manufactured in your area. However, if soliciting from the public make sure that you allow enough time to acquire the clothing and that you have tactful excuses for rejecting items.
- A combination of clothing from the institution and private sources
- Clothing loaned from other museums
- Having reproduction pieces made to fill in missing historic garments to complete an outfit or to substitute for an original too fragile to display.

#### **How Stylized (forms without heads) or Realistic (forms with heads) Will Your Exhibit Be?**

- This is the most important question to answer when planning the installation of a clothing exhibit because it impacts as how complex and expensive your exhibit will be.
- Time, personnel and money will be factors no matter what how stylized or realistic the exhibit is, you just need to be aware of the options so you can make the most appropriate choice for your situation

## Staffing Needs for Clothing Exhibits

Exhibits of historic clothing are very time consuming to mount because with each fully mounted outfit, you will be creating a sculptural, three-dimensional representation of what the clothing looked like when it was worn. Also, some of the garments will probably have condition issues requiring sewing stabilization before they can be exhibited. Below are the general staffing needs for clothing exhibits.

- **A Curator:** Museum staff person or an outside consultant. The individual who selects the theme & the clothing, writes the label copy, and oversees the budget and all staff, contractors and volunteers working on various aspects of the exhibition.
- **A Design & Exhibit Installation Team:**
  - **Gallery Setting:** If you are setting up a display in a traditional museum gallery setting, you will need some type of design and exhibit furniture (platforms, vitrines, cases, moveable wall sections, barriers, etc.) This can be as simple as having the curator or in-house exhibit installers recycle exhibit furniture on hand into a new configuration appropriate for the exhibit or the more complicated and expensive option of hiring an outside design firm to create a design and make exhibit furniture specifically for that exhibit.
    - **Working with an Exhibition Design Firm:** Unless the exhibit design firm has done costume exhibits before, chances are that they will need to be educated as to the time & space needs of installing the costume components and the placement of labels so as not to obscure the clothing. If changes to exhibit designs are needed, there may be cost overruns to your exhibit budget.
  - **Historic House:** For a clothing exhibit in a historic house, the house itself provides the “design” background. However, careful plans will need to be made for the number of figures and their placement in the rooms and sometimes cases will be needed for accessories. Also, you need to figure out how you are going to display the labels as you will not be able to attach them to the walls—poster size labels on easels are a good solution for the main general labels and a hand-held printed gallery guide can provide visitors with the identification and donor details about individual outfits. You also have the option of placing garments on furniture on top of an acid-free barrier or laid out on a bed.
- **Clothing Installation Manager:** This person must be knowledgeable about all aspects of the mounting and installation process for clothing from scheduling to acquiring the mannequins/forms and other mounting supplies to actually installing the clothing on the forms or mounts. She/he can be the curator, a professional consultant or a volunteer. Museum design and installation firms generally will not have someone on staff who has experience installing clothing on forms—their focus will be on designing the gallery space, producing the exhibit furniture, and dealing with the label production. The design firm, as well as the museum’s administrators, will need to be educated as to the special complexities and time involved in properly mounting even a moderately-sized clothing exhibit and the need for specialized staff to install the clothing—hanging a painting on the wall and fully mounting an 1880s bustle dress have nothing in common!
- **Clothing Installation Staff:** These are the people that do the actual mounting and installation—they can be museum staff, volunteers, and/or professional installation/conservation consultants—the most time and cost-effective version is a combination of all three groups. These people must be trained in how to handle period clothing and, if necessary, how to stabilize it; have a background in clothing history in order to create the proper silhouette for the garments; and have both machine & hand sewing skills.
  - **Using Volunteers and Interns Effectively:** Clothing exhibits are great ways to use talents of a committed volunteer core, who will become even more committed to the institution as they work on the exhibition—as long as the experience is positive. Because costume exhibits are very labor intensive to mount, you don’t want to burn out your volunteers or your staff. If there is no costume specialist on staff, we suggest that you contract with a professional to provide a dressing techniques workshop for the volunteers and museum staff. For a small exhibit in a historic house, even just one day’s consulting from a professional can make a big difference. Volunteers and/or student interns have contributed to most of the exhibits we have worked on over the past thirty years—and in fact, these exhibits could not have been done within budget without such volunteer help.

## Mounting a Clothing Exhibit

Although handling and mounting period garments is very stressful on the garments, once the garments are mounted properly, they will be fully supported, and, as long light levels are low in the exhibit, the outfits will be safe to display for several months. Mounting a clothing exhibit is not rocket science but there are many tricks of the trade—if you do not have a historic clothing specialist on staff, consulting with an experienced professional in the planning stages can save you much time, trouble and money.

### Forms

The biggest hurdle to mounting a clothing exhibit, especially for women's clothing dating before the 1920s, is acquiring size-appropriate forms. Generally if the form has a head with a full body it is referred to as a "mannequin," while a "form" is a torso with no head. The word "form" will be used here in a general way for both types and distinctions noted if they are headless torso forms or forms with heads. It is possible to acquire or make period appropriate and archivally safe forms that do not cost the museum's entire budget for a year—provided you have the time and skilled personnel to make your own, plus money to purchase the materials or the funds to purchase commercially available forms and the time and skilled personnel to customize them to the needs of the clothing. Because the issue of what forms to use so complicated, it is good to have professional advice at the start of your planning period so you can make the best decision for your exhibit and site in terms of time and cost. Remember the decisions you make on how stylized or realistic you want the forms to look will impact the whole installation process. You have four options as to where to get the forms: making your own, purchasing them, borrowing them, or renting them.

**Making Your Own Forms & Mounts:** The biggest considerations here are whether you have the time and skilled personnel needed to make the forms and/or mounts, as well as the budget for the materials.

- **Torso Forms:** The archival hard foam to use to make headless torso forms is "Ethafoam." It can be carved and is made by the Dow Chemical Corp. and the only truly archival hard foam available. Ethafoam comes in blocks and planks of various thickness and size, and is available at building supply stores that sell plastic products, as well as from conservation catalogues (it is also used for storage mounts). The basic method is to glue several blocks together and carve them (using steak or electric knives) into a torso based on measurements from your garment or use a single plank to create a "paper doll" style silhouette. Then the form is padded out using polyester quilt batting and covered with cotton stockinet as a skin. You will also need to make arms of stockinet or nylon knee-high stockings (see about arms under "Other Considerations" below) &, if you are dressing full-length garments, deal with having stands made for them.
- **Fosshape:** An Oddy-passed specially engineered polyester material that is similar to a thick felt in a raw state. When fosshape is exposed to varying degrees of heat (200 degree F range) and pressure, can be used to create torsos or body parts--it is used extensively for theatrical props.
- **Hanger Mounts:** Hangers that have been covered and padded with a stuffed torso shape work very well for children's clothing as well for some adult clothing separates, such as tee shirts. The best hanger to use is a flat wooden hanger that has been cut to the width of the shoulder of the garment. Cover the hanger with quilt batting (the thicker the better) or mattress padding in the size and shape you need for the "body" to go under the garment and then cover it with stockinet. Arms will need to be made and ruffled netting can be added for petticoats to fill out skirts. For display, the dressed hanger mount can be hung on wall with hooks or grid display panels or the metal hanger removed and eyehooks substituted and the form suspended from the ceiling with fishing line. Or the hanger mount can be used on a stand with a wooden support added to the center of the hanger with a hole drilled in it for a rod—this works very well for children's clothing.
- **Other Constructed Mounts:** There are many instances that you will be called upon to use your ingenuity in order to make economical mounts that will work well to display garments or accessories that won't fit onto a traditional form. In all cases, barriers (polyester batting, stockinet, etc.) are used to protect the garments from the mount materials. These include:
  - **T-shaped stands:** made of wood covered with padding and fabric or plastic with to display simple T-shaped clothing such as kimono, tee shirts, women's chemises, men's shirts, etc.
  - **Waist mounts:** for skirts or pants made out of wood or "Ethafoam," which has been cut to fit inside the waistband of the garment. After covering with batting and fabric, the garment waistband can be hand sewn onto the mount & positioned on a stand or suspended from eyehooks using fishing line.
- **Board Mounts:** The traditional mount for small flat textiles, such as samplers, textile fragments, lace collars, bandanas, etc. is a board mount in which a support fabric is stretched over a piece of acid free museum board padded with a layer of quilt batting and the textile stitched to it. A board mount can be framed using UV filtered Plexiglas or conservation glass. Plexiglas does scratch easily and has a lot of static electricity, which can be very harmful if it is allowed to touch the textile, so a spacer must be used in

the framing. Plexiglas is also expensive, especially if you need a sheet larger than 4' by 8'. Padded form core board mounts placed on an angle in the exhibit (slant boards) can be used for clothing, accessories, or textiles by tacking the object in place but this method does not work well for highly dimensional garments. In a pinch, the "paper doll" cut-out method can be effective—a sheet of foam core board is cut out in the shape of the garment & the board padded and covered with fabric and the garment placed on it.

- **Quilts, Banners, & Flags:** Quilts and other large textiles can be hung on a wall by machine sewing the loop side of a 2" strip of Velcro to a strip of 3" wide twill tape or webbing and then hand sewing the Velcro loop strip to the back of the quilt. Staple or hot glue the hook side of the Velcro to a strip of wood and attach the mount to the wall and carefully marry the Velcro on the quilt to that on the wall mount.

**Purchased Forms:** With purchased forms, you need to have the funds to purchase the forms, plus you need to have the time and skilled personnel to customize the forms for your garments. The likelihood of purchased forms, even expensive forms specifically made for museum use working for any garment without some customization is practically nil. Refer to the Mannequin Source Handout for more information about specific firms and the types of forms available from them.

- **Museum Forms:** There are a few firms that make forms that are specially designed for use in museum exhibits. The main difficulty with these forms is their cost, which range from \$600-\$2000 (or more, as you need to count shipping) each.
  - **Kyoto:** Female only with detachable heads, Japanese-made fiberglass bodies, split at waist, foam arms & hands, different body shapes for 18<sup>th</sup> c., 19<sup>th</sup> c. & early 20<sup>th</sup> c., \$2000 plus each
  - **Goldsmith:** Male (with head) & Female (detachable heads), fiberglass, split at waist, works well for 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> c. Male--\$1000 plus each; Female \$1500 plus each
  - **Dorfman:** Male & Female (headless), Ethafoam, 2 styles--split at waist or dress form (\$625-\$850), make nice stylized arms (\$150 a pair) & heads (\$115)
- **Commercial Store Forms:** There are two types of commercial forms that are readily available: fiberglass forms, which come in many styles, and hard foam forms that can be carved.
  - **Fiberglass:** Modern fiberglass forms (made after the 1970s) are generally too big for use with period garments and they are often stylized into strange positions not conducive to displaying museum garments. However, if you are doing an exhibit with clothing dating after the 1920s, such forms may work well. Fiberglass forms dating before the 1970s can work for period garments because they are generally smaller than current forms, are less stylized, and break at the waist not the hip (gives you more options to adjust the waist length of a garment), but such forms will still probably need to have major surgery—in particular, the bust area often needs to be cut out and often they will need refurbishing with repairs and repainting. Versions of forms of all styles and dates are available at used mannequin stores in most large cities.
  - **Hard Foam:** The Manex France Display is one company that makes excellent quality hard foam forms that can be carved to shape. Although not made of Ethafoam, the Manex foam is stable and at no time are the garments in direct contact with it because the forms come with a cotton knit cover and then are covered with additional layers of fiberfill padding and final covering of cotton stockinet. These forms are sold headless but stylized heads are available for them. We suggest these forms more than any others to small institutions because of their moderate cost (most styles range from \$150 to \$250 each), ease of use (they are lightweight & go together easily), and the stands work with all form sizes and styles. They require carving and/or padding out to customize them for period clothing and the addition of soft arms, but are by far the most economical and flexible solutions for short term exhibits of a year or less. For 19<sup>th</sup> century adult clothing, we find that adapting and padding larger size children's forms works best.

### **Other Considerations: Underpinnings, Arms, Hands, Legs, Heads & Hair, Repro Accessories**

For any successful display of an outfit, in addition to the form being padded out (or cut down!) to the size of the original wearer, it must have the correct period silhouette such as the cone-shaped torso of the 18<sup>th</sup> century woman, or the hour glass figure of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the period appropriate shaping for skirts that was provided by hoops, petticoats, and bustles, etc. If using a headless form, it also must have arms, and if using a full mannequin with a head, it will need hair, and if the legs show, stockings & shoes.

- **Underpinnings:** In order for the dressed outfits to look correct on the forms, they will need some sort of underpinnings—including padding, petticoats, slips, etc. or some combination of these. You cannot just put the garments on forms and expect that they will have the proper period silhouette—even a 1960s mini-

dress needs a slip. Your local bridal shop is a great source for inexpensive (\$10-\$15 each) used nylon net petticoats that can be adapted for period garments. You may also be able to borrow underpinnings from a local or university theatre department. If at all possible you should try to avoid making petticoats from scratch because of the time involved. However, sheer dresses may require a custom-made slip so that the other underwear pieces don't show through. Men's outfits may need shirts--whenever possible we make reproduction shirts or use modern non-collection as props. We cut the arms off the shirts to make it less stressful to get a coat on the form's arms.

- **Arms:** Nothing spoils an otherwise nicely mounted garment on a headless torso form more than if it doesn't have arms to support the sleeves. For these forms, you will need to make soft arms out of 2" stockinet or nylon knee high panty hose, and it will need to have an armature of wire covered with plastic from the hardware store built into it. We generally sew the arms on or attach them with quilt pins into the hard foam. Manex sells knit-covered foam rubber arms for their headless forms but they are often too big for period garments. The Dorfman company makes nice ethafoam arms that can be adapted for use with headless forms but they are expensive (\$150) a pair. Fiberglass forms with heads come with removable arms and hands but attaching the arms can be one of the most difficult and stressful aspects of dressing. Each company will have its own attachment system and it can be very awkward to get the arms into the garment sleeves and the arms secured into the form. Using a narrow plastic bag (like those used for newspapers) over the arm makes it easier to insert into the sleeve.
- **Hands:** If your form has a head, it needs to have hands. If you are using a headless form, you can get away with not having hands but in many displays, even headless forms have hands because it can be more graceful to have a hand at the end of the sleeve. Fiberglass forms have detachable hands that attach to their arms. Manex makes fiberglass hands that can be taped to soft arms.
- **Legs:** Manex's Evolution line of headless forms are meant to be used for outfits with trousers—they have thigh-length legs and the rod goes up one leg, rather than the middle of the form. For these forms, the bottom of the legs need to be filled out. One solution is to make leg-shaped tube of pellon (stiff nonwoven interfacing-- pellon also works as skirt supports for modern A-line skirts) and line it with fiberfill or use fosshape to create legs.
- **Heads & Hair:** For mannequins with heads, what to do about the hair is one of the most problematic issues to deal with. All sorts of materials have been used over the years from realistic wigs to stylized hair made of fabric, paper, plastic horsehair, or raffia. Look at different costume exhibits to get ideas of what you will want to do but, whatever you choose, be prepared for this aspect of the installation to take a lot of time and effort. Better yet, opt for headless forms!
- **Reproduction Accessories:** Reproduction accessories such as shirts, collars, undersleeves, etc. often need to be constructed to give the outfit a proper period look.

**Accessories:** The disparate nature of accessories means that you often have to be very creative when displaying them. They can be displayed in many ways, both realistically and in stylized manners.

- **As they would have been worn or used on the body:** If you have forms with heads and feet, you can display hats on the heads and shoes on the feet. Manex also has hat mounts that can be attached into the neck of headless forms, allowing the display of a hat above an outfit without having a head. Shoes can be tricky because the feet of the form has to be the right size, but if it is possible to cut down the feet, it is possible to display period shoes on forms.
- **In vitrines:** There are many ways to display accessories in cases--on shelves, on custom-made mounts, on risers, attached to a backboard or just flat in the case. Look at vitrines in exhibits to get ideas.
- **Buckram, Fosshape, and acrylic made into "invisible" mounts:** These materials can be crafted into "invisible" mounts that conform to the contours of the accessory. They can be placed on stands or even hung from the ceiling.
- **Historic House:** Accessories can simply be placed on a table or laid out on a bed. Obviously, you should not place easily portable items out without security precautions, especially if your visitors can take self-guided tours.

## Scheduling & Space Considerations

Mounting and installing even a small clothing exhibit (5 or fewer forms) is time consuming—in fact, if it is done right, mounting a clothing exhibit will take more time than you ever thought possible (certainly more time than your museum administrators think it will take!). We generally allow 8 to 10 hours for mounting most 19<sup>th</sup> century women's garments, 4 to 6 hours for 20<sup>th</sup> century women's garments, and 2 to 6 hours for men's and children's clothing--keep in mind, we are very experienced--if this is your first time out it will take longer. These hourly ranges include the process from identifying and acquiring the proper forms through the actual mounting process to installing the outfits at the exhibit site—and individual outfits can take even more time. These estimates do not include the time required to make the initial selection of the garments. Once you have acquired the garments from whatever sources you are using, you should also try every outfit on a form to see what dressing issues it may have and photograph it for easy reference. Other considerations include scheduling any conservation/ stabilization that may need to be done to the garments—keep in mind that some condition problems may not become obvious until the garment is being mounted and must be addressed at that time—so you always need to allow time for unexpected problems.

- **When to Begin:** You should try to allow a year to plan a moderate size exhibit of about 20 fully mounted outfits and adjust the time accordingly for less or more pieces and how realistic or stylized your mounts will be. Keep in mind that besides the actual mounting process (see below), adequate preparation time is needed for staff to secure funding for the exhibit, research and develop the theme, locate the garments and the forms, write labels and any accompanying printed materials such as gallery guides, develop public programs in conjunction with the exhibit, publicize the exhibit, etc. (There is a lot of etc.!)
- **Exhibit Notebook:** The curator and the main installer must keep exhibit notebooks in order to keep track of all aspects of the exhibit. To track the mounting process, we use a chart format customized for that exhibit with one row for each mounted outfit that is updated as during the dressing process. An example of an initial chart from a recent exhibit attached to this handout--this chart was not updated during the dressing process so reflects the many questions from the initial try-on session. For exhibits with more than 5 dressed outfits, it is helpful to have some kind of numbering system to identify the outfits.
- **Staging Space:** Because the mounting paraphernalia of clothing exhibits—forms, petticoats, etc., take up so much room, you must have adequate space to mount the clothing, including space for work tables and clothing racks, space for installers to walk around the outfits being mounted on forms, etc. Keep in mind that this space or an adjacent space will need to be secure storage for the historic garments while you are working on the preparing the forms.
- **Mounting and Installation:** The actual mounting process for an exhibit of 20 outfits should begin at least 2 -3 months before the opening—this means that a staging space must be available by this time. Because this staging process usually cannot take place over such a long time in the exhibit gallery or at a historic house site, we generally “pre-dress” the outfits on the forms in the staging area or our studios, working out all the adaptations to the forms, padding and underpinnings. We then take the historic garments off their mounts and take the forms to the exhibition site in their underwear. The historic garments are brought to the site and redressed on their forms. If doing it this way, you should allow at least a week for the installation at the exhibit site.
- **Labels:** The writing of the exhibit labels is one of the curator's jobs and it can be very time consuming depending on how many garments there are and how complicated the labels are. A full discussion of this topic that is beyond this handout but as always, allow enough time to do this. You also need to make sure that you figure out how the labels will be displayed and make sure that there is a enough room in the exhibit space for the label stands, label or whatever as well as the garments.

## Costs & Funding Sources

It is not possible to do a clothing exhibit for no money, but it is possible to do very effective exhibits on a limited budget. Small gallery exhibits overseen by in-house staff and volunteers and by reusing forms and exhibit furniture can be done with modest outlays of one to five thousand dollars though big blockbusters at major museums easily run into hundreds of thousands of dollars. Keep in mind that by displaying the outfits in a historic house setting, you have the cost advantage of using the room settings as your background design. In historic houses usually you can get by without expensive design services or exhibit furniture like platforms or vitrines needed in more traditional gallery settings, though garments are sometimes displayed on forms on platforms or accessories in vitrines in historic houses. An important consideration in an historic house is how the will the labels be mounted so they don't impact the historic house structure (easels are one way to go).

**Expenses to Consider:**

- **Historic Clothing:** Conservation services and materials, loan or shipping fees for borrowed clothing, costs for making reproduction items if elements are missing from the original.
- **Design Firm:** Depending on the scale of the exhibit and the number of services supplied, this fee can run in the tens of thousands of dollars. However, it is very unlikely that the design firm will have anyone on staff qualified to do the actual costume mounting, so there needs to be a separate budget line item for the costume mounting and installation costs.
- **Professional Staff:** Fees for a guest curator and/or professional mounting and installation services.
- **Forms and Supplies:** Form purchases or rental, mounting materials (ethafoam, fosshape, quilt batting, stockinet, etc.), underwear (slips, petticoats, etc.), reproduction garments, sewing supplies, etc.
  - **Borrowing Forms:** Borrowing forms from another institution is sometimes an option. However, this may not be as convenient or as economical an option as it first may seem. Fiberglass forms with heads also have arms, hands, stands and/or legs, which can be awkward and/or costly to transport or ship, and all of these parts are subject to breakage. It also will be difficult to determine ahead of time if the forms you want to borrow are the right size if you are only working from measurements. For example, even if the waist measurement of a bodice is the same as that of the form you want use, if the waist length of the bodice is shorter or longer than that of the form, the bodice waist will not correspond to the waist of the form and will not fit on the form. Lenders will also likely place restrictions that won't allow you to make permanent changes for the forms in order to customize them.
  - **Renting Forms:** Museums and used mannequin firms may have rental options, and we also have a "stable" of forms that work for period garments that we rent out at reasonable rates for short term exhibits. Unlike borrowing for free, where you would have to take what you are offered, you would only rent forms that will work for your garments. This option is best for a site doing a one-time exhibit of clothing that will have no use for the forms afterward. A combination of purchase/rental also works well for sites that are doing a largish exhibit (more than 5 dressed forms), but would like to have a few forms on hand for future displays. One of the (many!) difficulties of dealing with forms is where to store them after the exhibit—they take up a lot of room & most sites don't have much space to store forms that will only be used on occasion in exhibits.
- **Labels:** Don't forget the costs of having professional looking labels printed. Our modern computers can produce very nice smaller labels and gallery guides but if your in-house capacity is limited, be sure to include printing costs for labels. And make sure that you have something to put the labels on if walls are not readily available as in a historic house or if it will be too distracting to put the labels on the gallery walls.
- **Programming:** Developing public programs for the exhibit run should be integral to your exhibition preparation process. There are many creative programming ideas that can be implemented in conjunction with clothing exhibitions, including specialized group tours for both school children and adults, symposia, lectures or living history vignettes related to the exhibit theme, workshops on how to store and care for clothing heirlooms, etc.

**Funding Sources:** You need to be creative in order to fund clothing exhibits or to get free in-kind help. However, because the final result will be appealing to a wide audience, this opens the door to a range of potential donors.

- **Object Donors or Lenders:** If you are using items donated to your collection or borrowed from local people, consider asking the donors or lenders for money to support the conservation and/or display of their family pieces. Even a \$100 per outfit can help.
- **Your Volunteers:** Your volunteers may be willing to contribute more than their labor—especially if the long-term benefits of their contributions to the institution are emphasized. For example, after a volunteer at a small historic house museum saw the problems of using old store mannequins, she and her husband contributed the money to purchase two Manex forms.
- **Local Businesses:** Contact local clothing-related businesses such as retail stores, fabric stores, dry cleaners, etc. for support. Other business may be interested if the theme of the exhibit relates to their enterprise, such as funeral home helping to sponsor an exhibit on mourning or a children's clothing catalog underwriting an exhibit of children's clothing. But don't overwhelm small businesses by asking for too much—even \$300 to \$500 can make a big difference for a small exhibit. Support from such firms can also come as in-kind contributions, such as borrowed forms, fabrics, or dry cleaning services.
- **Individuals Connected to the Exhibit Theme or Local Clubs or Societies:** For an exhibit on 20<sup>th</sup> century department stores in Richmond, individuals who had worked at the stores contributed prop items such as original store fixtures to the exhibit, and one former executive contributed money. Veterans groups such as the VFW can be both sources for uniforms and monetary support for exhibits about local participation in recent wars. Consider contacting ethnic heritage societies if you are doing an exhibit on individuals from their group who settled your region.

- **Local or Regional Public and Private Granting Sources:** Local or regional arts councils or private foundations that fund cultural projects are great sources to contact for support. Be sure to be aware of any grant deadlines and requirements so you can include them in your planning process.
- **State and National Governmental Granting Sources:** For larger projects, consider state or national historic or arts granting agencies. These sources very specific requirements and need long lead times. For more information, check out websites on grants & granting agencies.

## Dressing Materials Suppliers

**Buffalo Batt & Felt Co.**  
3307 Walden Ave  
Depew, NY 14043  
716.683.4100, ext 130

**Polyester fiberfill quilt batts:** Super Fluff on a roll is best buy—get the roll that is 1 ½ inch deep by 50 inch wide by 18 feet long for most flexibility —can separate into layers as needed.

**Test Fabrics (Fabric Swatch Books)**  
415 Delacran Avenue  
P.O. Box 26  
West Pittston, PA 18643  
570.603.0432

Supplier of **unprinted & unsized fabrics** in many fibers and weaves use in conservation and storage of clothing & textiles. Can order samples

**Jule-Art, Inc**  
P.O. Box 91748  
Albuquerque, NM 87199  
505.344.8433 / info@jule-art.com  
[www.jule-art.com](http://www.jule-art.com)

Prefabricated & custom-made acrylic display pieces for all kinds of objects and all kinds of countertop display units.

**Cotton Stockinet:** 8” stockinet is used for holding fiberfill in place on the torso of forms and 2” stockinet is used for making arms- it is great stuff, lots of uses for museum storage & display. Always wash before using. It is possible to purchase cotton stockinet via the Internet but there is no guarantee that you will get the right weight for use in clothing display. The best quality we have gotten has been by going through a local orthopedic place (it is used in the big world as a medical supply). The info on the box reads: SC-08, Cotton Stockinette 25 yards X 8”; Cascade 800-888-0865 Lancaster Distribution Center. Must be washed before use.

## Some Mannequin Sources

**Dorfman Museum Figures (Brochure)**  
6224 Holabird Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21224  
800.634.4873, [www.museumfigures.com](http://www.museumfigures.com)

Suppliers of **conservations forms** made of “*ethafoam*”, also realistic figures. Forms run from about \$500 to thousands for the realistic ones.

**Goldsmith Inc. (Brochure)**  
10-09 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Long Island City, NY 11101  
212-366-9040

Developed “**Ladies of Fashion, 1860-1910**” adjustable fiberglass female forms with heads and male “Napoleon” forms. Work well for 19<sup>th</sup> century garments but cost about \$1500 plus each.

**Manex France Display (Catalog)**  
126 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10001  
800.699.6466, [www.manex-usa.com](http://www.manex-usa.com)

Headless hard foam torso forms & a variety of other mannequins. Best buy for short term exhibits; headless forms cost \$150-\$300 depending on style. Will give volume discount for museums & universities. Excellent service—get orders quickly. The website is not that useful. Try and get a catalog. Our current contact is Joseph Debello.

**Used Mannequins:** Most large cities have display fixtures stores where you can buy used fiberglass forms. One good one is: **Mannequin Service Company**, Att. Lania D’Agostino, 1440 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21230, 410.727.6874.

## 1800-1815: Rhode Island Room February 3, 2016

Room, Date Acc. Number, Form #, N#	Description & Condition	Form Head/Hair Arms	Underwear & Accessories	Pictures
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>1497: Coat 1805-10</p> <p>RI-1,</p>	<p>COAT: Beige Homespun</p> <p>Condition:</p> <p>Shirt Front: Repro</p> <p>Waistcoat: MDD??</p>	<p>Form: Ethafoam <b>OR</b> Fosshape <b>OR</b> C&amp;TS Vest form????</p> <p>Stand: Assign depending on form</p> <p>Head: N/A</p> <p>Arms: Knee Highs</p>	<p>Accessories:</p> <p>Shirt Front: Repro</p>	
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>81: Coat ???: Vest ???: Breeches</p> <p>RI-2, N-M3</p>	<p>COAT: Tan wool</p> <p>Condition: Extensive</p> <p>Shirt Front: Repro</p> <p>Waistcoat: MDD?? Or DAR??</p> <p>Pantaloons: Repro?</p>	<p>Form: Napoleon <b>Or</b> Manex???</p> <p>Stand: Assign depending on form</p> <p>Head: ???? </p> <p>Arms/Hands: ???? </p>	<p>Accessories:</p> <p>Shirt Front: Repro</p> <p>Pantaloons: Repro???</p>	
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>6945: Coat MDD loan : Vest MDD loan: Breeches</p> <p>RI-2, N-M3</p>	<p>COAT: Navy Blue wool</p> <p>Condition: ???</p> <p>Shirt Front: Repro</p> <p>Waistcoat: MDD?</p> <p>Breeches: ???</p>	<p>Form: Napoleon <b>Or</b> Manex???</p> <p>Stand: Assign depending on form</p> <p>Head: ???? </p> <p>Arms/Hands: ???? </p>	<p>Accessories:</p> <p>Shirt Front: Repro</p> <p>Boots: Repro?</p> <p>Pantaloons: Repro</p>	
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>79.12.1, 1800- 05</p> <p>RI-4, N-9</p>	<p>DRESS: Off-white muslin with short sleeves &amp; train</p> <p>Condition: Good</p>	<p>Form: C&amp;TS Roe Assign Paint?</p> <p>Stand: Assign</p> <p>Head: N/A</p> <p>Arms: N/A</p>	<p>Understructure: Yes</p> <p>Petticoat: <u>Make:</u> Slip Style</p> <p>Accessories: N/A</p>	

Room, Date Acc. Number, Form #, N#	Description & Condition	Form Head/Hair Arms	Underwear & Accessories	Pictures
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>2528, c. 1800</p> <p>RI-5, N-13</p>	<p><b>DRESS:</b> Brown damask, long sleeves</p> <p><b>Condition:</b> Good</p>	<p><b>Form:</b> C&amp;TS Roe W/ Head Assign <b>OR</b> Goldsmith?? Paint?</p> <p><b>Stand:</b> Assign</p> <p><b>Head:</b></p> <p><b>Arms:</b></p> <p><b>Hands:</b></p>	<p><b>Understructure:</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Petticoat:</b> Bridal-one layer w/self-ruffle</p> <p><b>Accessories:</b> ?????</p>	
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>ALDEN, c.1810</p> <p>RI-6, N-11</p>	<p><b>DRESS:</b> Off-white cotton ground printed with red polka dots, long sleeves</p> <p><b>Condition:</b> Good</p> <p><b>Chemisette:</b> Mary's?? Single ruffle</p>	<p><b>Form:</b> C&amp;TS Roe <b>OR</b> Manex Small ?? Assign Paint?</p> <p><b>Stand:</b> Assign</p> <p><b>Head:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Arms:</b> Knee highs</p>	<p><b>Understructure:</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Petticoat:</b> Bridal-one layer w/self-ruffle</p> <p><b>Accessories:</b> <b>Chemisette:</b> Mary's?? Single ruffle</p>	
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>RI-7 N-11</p> <p><b>MOVE TO BED In SC</b></p>				
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>RI-8, N-12</p> <p><b>CUT</b></p>				
<p>Rhode Island 1800-1815</p> <p>98.2.2, c.1810</p> <p>RI-9, N-31</p>	<p><b>DRESS:</b> Yellow cotton ground printed long sleeves</p> <p><b>Condition:</b> Good</p>	<p><b>Form:</b> C&amp;TS Roe <b>OR</b> Manex Small ?? Assign Paint?</p> <p><b>Stand:</b> Assign</p> <p><b>Head:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Arms:</b> Knee highs</p>	<p><b>Understructure:</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Petticoat:</b> Bridal-one layer w/self-ruffle</p> <p><b>Accessories:</b></p>	