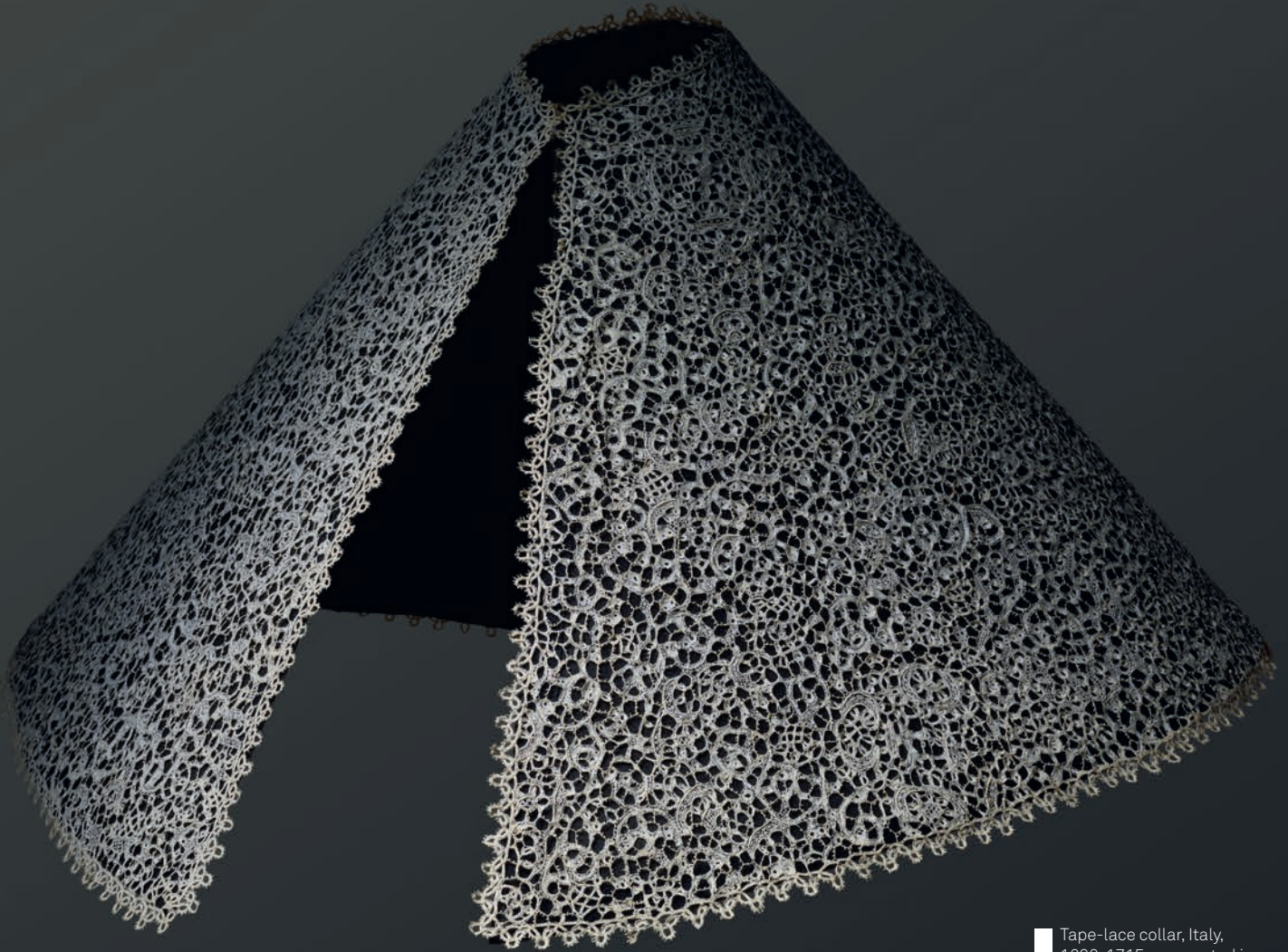


Threads of Power:

Lace from the Textilmuseum St. Gallen



Tape-lace collar, Italy,
1690-1715, remounted in
the 19th century. Linen.
Textilmuseum St. Gallen,
Donation of Leopold Iklé,
1905, 00524.

Exhibition Fact Sheet

Overview

Threads of Power marks the US debut of more than 150 examples of lace from the extensive collection of the Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland. It traces the development of lace from its sixteenth-century origins to the present—the first large-scale exhibition in New York in 40 years to tell this story. An introduction addresses needle and bobbin techniques and the skill of female lacemakers who crafted this sought-after status symbol. As garments and portraits demonstrate, handmade lace was a signifier of power and wealth at the courts of Habsburg Spain, Bourbon France, as well as in the Spanish Americas, until it fell from favor in the wake of the French Revolution. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, lace regained its popularity and by mid-century, with mechanization and industrialization, it was readily accessible to a rapidly expanding middle-class market. The consumption of both hand- and machine-made lace reached its peak at the turn of the twentieth century. A selection of couture garments from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries closes the exhibition, revealing new innovations in lace production that will shape this global industry's future.

Curators / Organizers

Co-curated by Emma Cormack, associate curator, Bard Graduate Center; Ilona Kos, curator, Textilmuseum St. Gallen; and Michele Majer, professor emerita, Bard Graduate Center. Organized by Bard Graduate Center (BGC) and the Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Exhibition Contents

Approximately 275 objects loaned by public, corporate, and private collections. The installation includes lace fragments, accessories, garments, tools, painted portraits, photographs, books, and works on paper that elucidate the major exhibition themes.

Exhibition Publication

Threads of Power: Lace from the Textilmuseum St. Gallen, co-edited by Emma Cormack and Michele Majer, is the first large-scale English-language publication in more than 20 years to explore the history of lace in fashion from its 16th-century origins to the present. Published by BGC in collaboration with Yale University Press, this richly illustrated volume features new photography and contributions by curators and experts from major museums and institutions worldwide.

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Threads of Power: Lace from the Textilmuseum St. Gallen

Threads of Power: Lace from the Textilmuseum St. Gallen will be the first large-scale exhibition of lace in New York in 40 years, offering visitors the chance to view some of the world's finest examples of needle and bobbin lace, including ecclesiastical lace and lace as worn in Habsburg Spain and Bourbon France; Swiss chemical lace; and contemporary innovations including laser-cut lace and 3D-printed silicone lace. Vitrines will allow visitors to circle the objects and fully appreciate the fragility, lightness, and technical details of each piece. More than 150 loans from the Textilmuseum's renowned collection of historical lace will be on view in the US for the first time, supplemented by more than 50 additional loans including garments, painted portraits, and pattern books from North American lenders. The exhibition will trace the development of lace and elucidate its important role in fashion from the sixteenth- to the twenty-first century, offering visitors a look at some of the finest examples of this luxury commodity, which became a symbol of power and status for the clergy and aristocracy for whom it was initially intended and produced.

Highlights include

- a newly commissioned piece of lace made by contemporary lacemaker and textile historian Elena Kanagy-Loux, who was commissioned to create a lace collar for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in 2018
- an Italian *point de Venise* capelet ca. 1700 (see fig. 1)
- a ca. 1695 *point de France frelange* with lappets—one of the few in the world that has survived intact (see fig. 3)
- a 12-foot-long golden antependium, made ca. 1700 with metal thread (see fig. 7)
- a bobbin lace cover likely made for the wedding of Phillip IV and Maria Anna of Austria in 1649 (see fig. 10)
- a *point de France* border ca. 1695–1710 (see fig. 11)
- three eighteenth-century garments—two women's dresses and one man's suit—accessorized with lace
- pattern and sample books compiled by late-nineteenth century St. Gallen-based textile manufacturers (see fig. 20)
- eleven garments by designers including Dior, Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent, Prada, Oscar de la Renta, and Akris that feature *guipure* lace produced by St. Gallen-based textile manufacturing companies
- the Isabel Toledo-designed ensemble that Michelle Obama wore to the 2009 presidential inauguration

Exhibition Overview

Threads of Power marks the American debut of a wide selection of objects from the Textilmuseum originally collected by German textile manufacturer Leopold Iklé (1838–1922), whose firm Iklé Frères specialized in fashionable machine laces (often called “Swiss chemical lace”) and operated branches in St. Gallen, London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and New York between 1864 and 1931. Among the Textilmuseum loans on display are a variety of objects collected and donated by Iklé’s nephew, John Jacoby (1869–1953), who opened the London branch of his uncle’s firm in 1895. Both Iklé and Jacoby were avid collectors who championed access to historical textiles as inspiration for contemporary designers. The Textilmuseum was established in 1878 for the express purpose of providing historic models for designers in the textile industry in Eastern Switzerland, and Iklé’s donations to the institution between 1901 and 1904 helped build the collection of approximately 6,500 objects spanning the medieval period to the twentieth century. The museum’s lace holdings are rivaled only by those collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Museum für angewandte Kunst in Vienna.

Threads of Power includes some of the Textilmuseum’s finest examples of both needle and bobbin lace, including an Italian needle-lace capelet ca. 1700 (fig. 1) and a bobbin-lace collar ca. 1660 from Flanders (fig. 2). A *point de France* *frelange* with attached lappets is one of the unique objects in the exhibition and one of the few intact *frelanges* to survive from the late seventeenth century (fig. 3). The checklist also includes historical lace that was later reworked in the nineteenth century, including an Italian bobbin-lace collar that was likely crafted from a larger piece of lace originally made between 1690 and 1715 (see cover). Lace was an enormously expensive and highly valued textile, and these reworked pieces speak to the practice of refashioning historical lace to conform to contemporary fashions. Objects from the Textilmuseum are displayed both mounted and flat in vitrines that encourage close looking, allowing visitors to appreciate the technical complexity of each piece.



Fig. 1. *Point de Venise* needle-lace shawl or *frelange*, Italy, ca. 1700. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 01180.



Fig. 2. Bobbin-lace collar/chest band, Flanders, probably Antwerp, ca. 1660. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 00691.



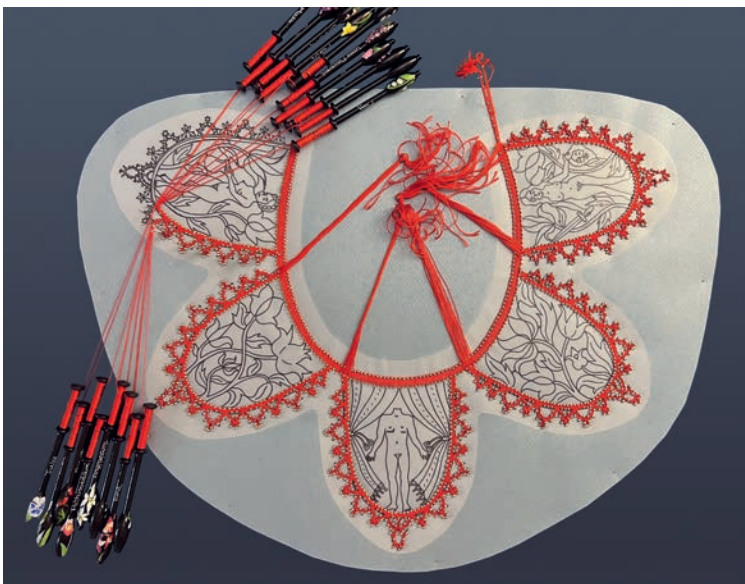
Fig. 3. *Point de France* needle-lace *frelange* with lappets, Orne, France, ca. 1695. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 01246.

Exhibition Description

Contemporary Connections

Presented on three floors of Bard Graduate Center's Gallery, *Threads of Power* is arranged chronologically and thematically. The first object visitors will encounter is a specially commissioned bobbin-lace collar made in red silk by New York-based contemporary lacemaker Elena Kanagy-Loux that upsets the historical divide between luxurious lace and the anonymous hands that created it. She boasts a background in textile arts and fashion design and notably created a bobbin-lace collar for Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the 25th anniversary of her investiture to the US Supreme Court. Kanagy-Loux's interest and expertise in historical lace developed during a four-month-long grant-funded study of traditional handmade techniques during which she worked with and learned from lacemakers in more than 14 different European countries. Visitors will be presented with this collar and a photograph of Kanagy-Loux wearing it before entering the first exhibition gallery as a reminder that historically, lacemakers were unable to purchase and wear the goods they created.

The piece was inspired by iconography Kanagy-Loux noticed in several examples of historical lace from around the world made by now-unknown women: the Old Testament story of the widow Judith beheading Assyrian general Holofernes. An early Italian example in the Met's collection initially caught Kanagy-Loux's eye, and the Textilmuseum collection includes a similar piece that is on view in the exhibition. Although the many surviving examples of this subject are needle lace, she crafted her piece in bobbin lace in a style inspired by twentieth-century makers including Wiener Werkstatte textile artist Anny Schröder-Ehrenfest (1898–1972), Margarete Naumann (1881–1946), and Czech lacemaker Luba Krejci (1925–). The final form of Kanagy-Loux's collar evokes the pronounced scallops of Genoese bobbin-lace collars of the seventeenth century, and the decision to use red silk instead of the traditional white linen or silk is deliberate—the dash of red at the wearer's neck is both a nod to the striking colorful accents that often punctuate the historical examples and a reminder of Holofernes's ultimate fate.



Elena Kanagy-Loux,
Judith and Holofernes
bobbin-lace collar,
United States, 2022.
Silk. Bard Graduate
Center, New York.

Introduction and Early Lace

The ground floor exhibition gallery introduces the emergence of lace in the late sixteenth century and trace the development of bobbin and needle lace from other techniques including openwork, cutwork, embroidery, and whitework. Videos produced by the Textilmuseum displayed alongside examples of unfinished needle and bobbin lace and lacemaking tools (fig. 4) will help visitors understand the making process and encourage them to consider the immense time and skill involved in creating the lace on display throughout the exhibition. Examples of early lace from the Textilmuseum alongside reproductions of portraits and illustrations demonstrate how lace during this period was worn and sold (figs. 5 and 6).



Fig. 4. Lace pillow with bobbins, Lauterbrunnen, Switzerland, 1897. Cotton, paper, metal, wood. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, 40017.

The discussion of early lace addresses sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pattern books, each paired with examples of Textilmuseum lace similar to the printed designs. Featured pattern books include *Ein New Modelbüch* (published by Johann Schönsperger, 1524), the earliest dated textile pattern book; Isabella Canatea Parasole's *Gemma pretiosa virtuose donne* (published 1625 in Rome); and Bartolomeo Danieli's *Vari disegni di merletti* (published in 1639 in Bologna). This section illustrates the connections between the lace and textile industries and the book printing industry. A selection of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century botanical books in this section are similarly displayed alongside Textilmuseum lace that incorporates floral and vegetal motifs.

Ecclesiastical Lace

Significant examples of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ecclesiastical lace occupy the first gallery on the second floor. Although *Threads of Power* focuses on lace and fashion, the church was an important and enthusiastic consumer of lace, much of which was produced in convents in the early modern period. Incorporated into vestments and used in the form of altar cloths during the liturgy, lace communicated the material and spiritual splendor of the church. Featured objects from the Textilmuseum in this section include a 12-foot-long golden antependium, made ca. 1700 with metal thread (fig. 7), and an Italian needle-lace chasuble ca. 1650–75.

Fig. 5. (Top) Bobbin-lace border with trim, Venice, first quarter of the 17th century. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, John Jacoby, 01010.

Fig. 6. (Bottom) Golden needle-lace antependium (altar frontal) or flounce, Flanders, France, or Italy, ca. 1695–1710. Linen, silk. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Gift of Leopold Ikle, 1905 and John Jacoby, 00816.



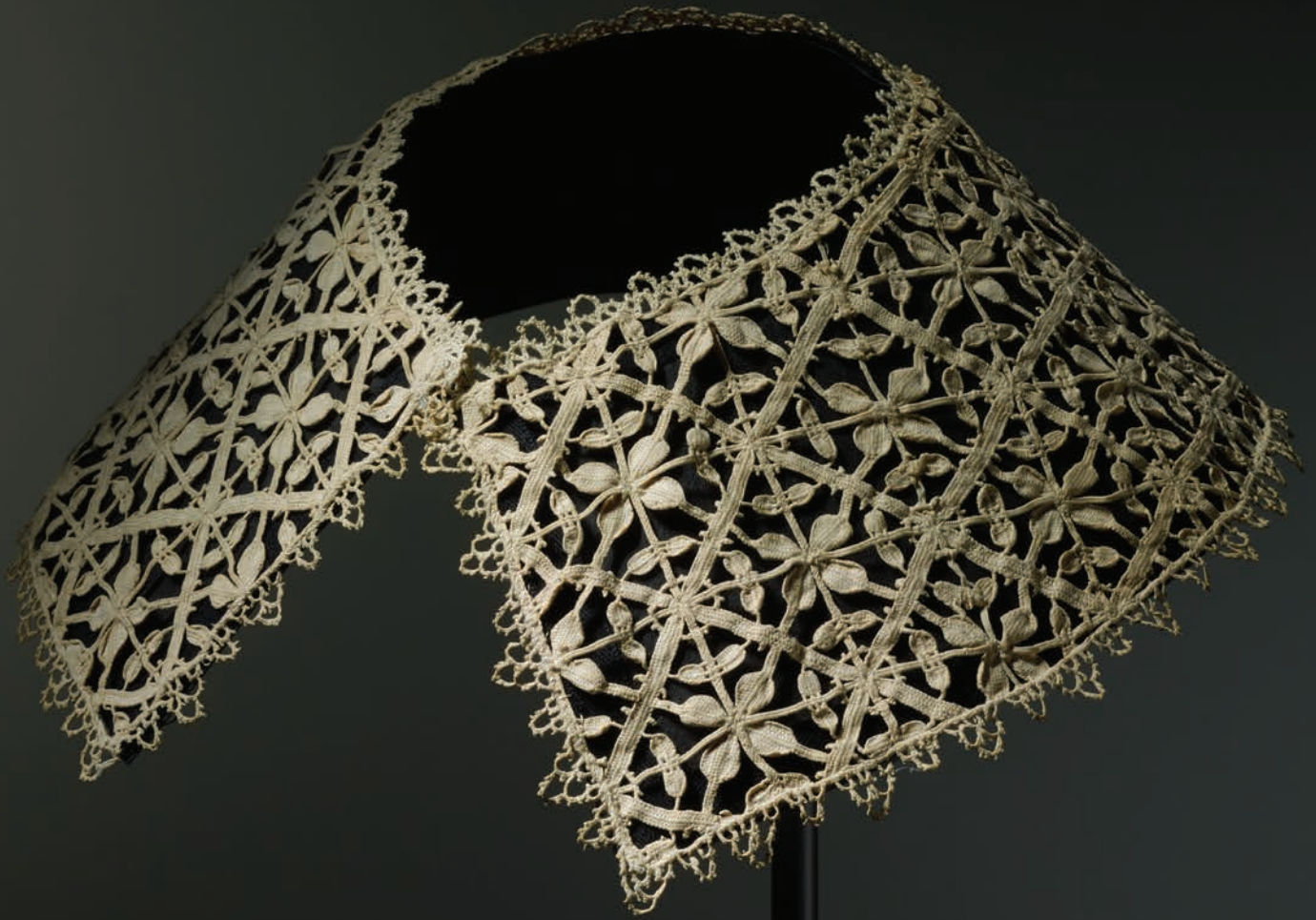


Fig. 7. *Punto a fogliame* needle-lace collar, Italy, ca. 1600, reworked in the 19th century. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Gift of Leopold Ikle, 1904, 00402.a-c.

Fashions in Lace, 1600–1800

In the following two galleries, Italian, Flemish, and French needle- and bobbin-lace collars, cravat ends, lappets, cap backs, sleeve ruffles, stomachers, and a rare surviving *frelange* headdress dating to about 1700 attest to the lavish consumption of this expensive textile among elites in Spain and France between 1600 and 1800 (fig. 8). In presenting Spain and France as the two most important political and cultural centers in Europe, separately and consecutively, these galleries invite visitors to explore lace as an expression of status and power.

Hapsburg Spain

Focusing on the long Spanish Golden Age (1580 to 1680), this section of the exhibition displays approximately 70 examples of primarily Italian lace from the Textilmuseum's collection. Prior to the mid-seventeenth century, Venice, in particular, produced high quality lace, called *point de Venise*, that was in demand throughout Europe, especially by the Spanish aristocracy (fig. 9). Highlighted loans from the Textilmuseum in this gallery include an anchoring example of ceremonial lace that functioned as a material signal of power: a bobbin-lace cover likely made for the wedding of Phillip IV and Maria Anna of Austria in 1649 (fig. 10). Consolidated by strategic marital politics, Spain's sphere of influence during this period spanned the entire globe. This dominance is also reflected in fashion; Europe's elites vied with one another to keep up with Spanish style at the royal courts. At the height of Hapsburg grandeur, imported lace became an indispensable and highly valued accessory among those in power, and it rapidly adorned the collars and cuffs of courtiers, the altars of important cathedrals, and the tables of the largest palaces in Spain and Europe. Alongside mounted examples of Textilmuseum lace accessories, portraits of men and women wearing lace demonstrate how it complemented fashions of the period.

One section of this gallery also discusses how imported European lace served as a signal of status and wealth for eighteenth-century men and women in the Spanish colonies in the Americas. A digital interactive experience explores lace and openwork techniques present in modern-day Latin America before Spanish colonization in the sixteenth century. After the Spanish invasion, imported European needle and bobbin lace was worn extensively by men and women. The interactive focuses on specific examples of these complex, labor-intensive textiles produced by Indigenous makers: gauzes made by the Chancay people between 1100 and 1450 AD in present-day Peru, locally produced bobbin lace in sixteenth-century Mexico, and lace motifs present in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Peruvian woven textiles.



Fig. 8. Bobbin-lace border mounted as a millstone collar, Northern Europe, 1580-1620. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Gift of Leopold Iklé, 1904, 00679.



Fig. 9. *Point de Venise* needle-lace collar, Venice or Orne, France, ca. 1690. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Accessioned from Edith Jacoby, 1954, 01194.



Fig. 10. Bobbin-lace coverlet, perhaps made for the 1649 wedding of Philip IV and Maria Anna of Austria, probably Italy, 1625-1650. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, 52093.



Fig. 11. *Point de France* needle-lace border, France, 1695–1710. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 01231.



Bourbon France

Military conflicts including the Thirty Years War (1618–1648) permanently weakened Spain in favor of France, which advanced to become the most powerful country in Western Europe in the second half of the seventeenth century and is the focus of the following gallery. King Louis XIV (1638–1715) glorified himself as *Le Roi Soleil* and during his reign, Versailles became the center of political power and the model of fashion for Europe's elite. The arts were as much at his service as the country's centrally governed economy. Silk manufacturers in Lyon and the French centers of lace production in Valenciennes and Alençon were closely associated with the court and systematically promoted and controlled by it, a connection that is exemplified by objects including a lace border ca. 1695–1710 featuring sun motifs (see p. 10). Following a Royal Proclamation issued in 1665, Jean Baptiste Colbert, France's first Minister of State, enlisted skilled Venetian and Flemish female lacemakers to aid in the development of a domestic lace industry in a number of selected French cities. In the subsequent years, needle lace, known as *point de France*, became highly desirable (fig. 11). The monarchy's support of the industry helped propel France to become one of the centers of innovation in European lace production and lace *à la française* was not only worn but also copied in other regions.

Approximately 60 pieces of Textilmuseum lace, primarily from France and Italy, are displayed with other examples from Germany, England, and Flanders. Portraits of French sitters for whom lace was a defining expression of wealth, status, and personal identity are included here, paired with similar lace accessories from the Textilmuseum. These loans and reproductions will offer visitors a sense of how the lace looked when worn on the body. Also featured in this section will be three eighteenth-century garments: two women's dresses and one man's court suit, paired with similar lace accessories from the Textilmuseum including collars, cravat ends, sleeve ruffles, caps, and lappets that illustrate changes in fashion and lace over the course of the century (figs. 12–15).

A digital interactive will supplement the objects in this gallery, providing a window into the lives of unnamed women and girls who created lace during this period. Drawing on surviving research, this interactive experience focuses on three fictional young lacemakers: one in seventeenth-century Italy, one in eighteenth-century France, and one in eighteenth-century England. Visitors will be able to learn about each fictionalized lacemaker through short texts and supplemental images that will provide historical context for their family and daily life, education, the local lace industry, the tools and materials they used, and their culture and community.

Figs. 12–15 (previous page, from left to right) 12. *Point de France* needle-lace lappet, Venice or Orne, ca. 1700. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 01203. 13. Bobbin-lace lappet, Mechelen, Belgium, ca. 1740. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 03047. 14. Brussels needle-lace lappets, Brussels or Alençon, ca. 1710. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 00721. 15. Alençon needle-lace lappet, Alençon or Argentan, ca. 1760. Linen. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, Acquisition from the John Jacoby collection, 1954, 00729.1-2.



Fig. 16. Chantilly bobbin-lace shawl, France or Flanders, ca. 1860. Silk. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, John Jacoby collection, 00480.



Fig. 17. Chantilly bobbin-lace shawl, France or Belgium, 1860–70. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, John Jacoby collection, 00486.

Decline, Revival, and Mechanization

A selection of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century hand- and machine-made lace objects on BGC's third floor transition the visitor into an overview of chemical lace production and fashion in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. Although both hand- and machine-made laces were worn in the first half of the nineteenth century, a true revival of the industry did not occur until the 1850s. Examples of lace from the third quarter of the century include pieces from the Textilmuseum's collection: French Chantilly lace (figs. 16, 17), British Honiton lace, Brussels application lace, and machine-made lace imitating earlier handmade styles. As in the other galleries, one garment, reproductions of period fashion plates, and painted portraits illustrate popular lace accessories, including flounces, handkerchiefs, shawls, and veils. Thanks to technological advances during this period, lace was more widely available but still retained its inherent cachet as a signifier of status.

The United States was an important market for European hand- and machine-made lace. A final digital interactive in this gallery explores the consumption of lace by nineteenth-century American consumers. Relying on surviving photographs of sitters wearing lace, the interactive displays a collection of photographs taken between 1850 and 1900. Short texts and supplemental images reveal personal details about the sitters and information about the use of lace during this period, illuminating various aspects of how middle- and upper-class women used lace to communicate social standing, political leanings, family ties, and access to fashion.

Swiss Chemical Lace

The second large gallery on this floor highlights the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century textile industry in eastern Switzerland, which became famous during this period for the production of so-called "Swiss chemical lace." St. Gallen in particular boasts a long history as a center for textile production, and by 1900 was the world leader in exporting machine-made lace. Swiss chemical lace, also called *guipure*, was created by machine embroidering lace motifs onto a woven ground which was subsequently dissolved (often using caustic soda or chlorine), leaving only the embroidered threads behind. A functional nineteenth-century embroidery machine is on display at the Textilmuseum, and a video of the machine in operation will help visitors understand this unique production process. Other objects that tell this story include fashion photographs by St. Gallen-based manufacturers, approximately 35 pieces of chemical lace, one garment, and a selection of Iklé Frères pattern books containing machine-made imitations of historical styles (figs. 18–20).



Fig. 18. Fritz Rau, manufacturer. Chemical lace galloons, St. Gallen, ca. 1920s. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, 55035.



Fig. 19. Woman wearing skirt made from Fritz Rau *point de France* lace at the Grand Prix de Paris, 1920. Ink on photograph. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, 55440.

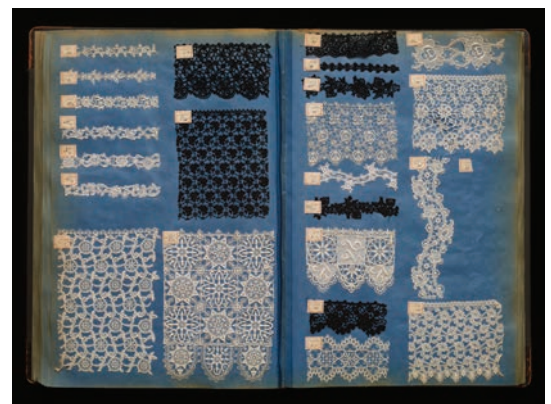


Fig. 20. Iklé Frères and Co. Chemical lace sample book, St. Gallen, 1900-30. Paper, cardboard, leather, and cotton. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, STI ILK 4.

Contemporary Innovation

St. Gallen has maintained its position at the forefront of the machine-made lace industry, and today supplies high-end textiles to designers around the world. The final gallery of *Threads of Power* features a selection of 11 contemporary couture garments and examples of recent inventive approaches to lace production. A particular highlight in this section is the ensemble Isabel Toledo designed for Michelle Obama for the 2009 presidential inauguration (fig. 21). Made from wool *guipure* designed by St. Gallen-based manufacturer Forster Rohner, Obama's dress and coat embodied the historical significance of that January day. The ensemble constitutes a recent example in the long tradition of employing lace on the body as a symbol of power and status.

Three St. Gallen companies are the focus of this room: Forster Rohner and Jakob Schlaepfer, both established in 1904, and Bischoff Textil, founded in 1927. These firms notably design and manufacture custom lace and embroidery for couture houses including Prada, Dior, Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Akris, Oscar de la Renta, Comme des Garçons, and Givenchy, and each holds extensive archives that attract designers from all parts of Europe. In addition to garments on loan from the Textilmuseum and other North American institutions, this installation includes pieces from private designer archives, including never-before-exhibited garments. Illustrations, swatches, garments, and samples from these archives give visitors a window into the designer-manufacturer collaboration process as well as an introduction to new techniques including laser-cut lace and 3D-printed silicone lace, called "Hypertube" (fig. 23). These techniques, which are a specialty of Jakob Schlaepfer's production, illustrate lace manufacturers' dedication to the continuous innovation required to meet the changing demands of a worldwide market. This closing portion of the exhibition underscores the ongoing importance of lace in fashion and invites visitors to consider the creativity that shapes today's venerable industry.



Fig. 21. Isabel Toledo (designer) and Forster Rohner AG (textile manufacturer), 2009 Presidential Inauguration ensemble worn by First Lady Michelle Obama, United States and St. Gallen, Switzerland, ca. 2008. Felted wool lace, silk radzimir, and silk netting. Courtesy Barack Obama Presidential Library, Chicago, FL2011.1a-b.



Fig. 22. Labhard & Co., manufacturer. Chemical lace galloon, St. Gallen, first third of the 20th century. Textilmuseum St. Gallen, 54239.



Fig. 23. Jakob Schlaepfer AG, manufacturer. Hypertube lace collar, St. Gallen, ca. 2021. Silicone. Private collection.

Exhibition Catalogue

Published by Bard Graduate Center in collaboration with Yale University Press, and co-edited by Emma Cormack and Michele Majer, the exhibition catalogue produced in conjunction with *Threads of Power* constitutes a significant addition to the scholarship about the history of lace in fashion.

The publication is divided into five sections that reflect the geographic and chronological breadth of the exhibition:

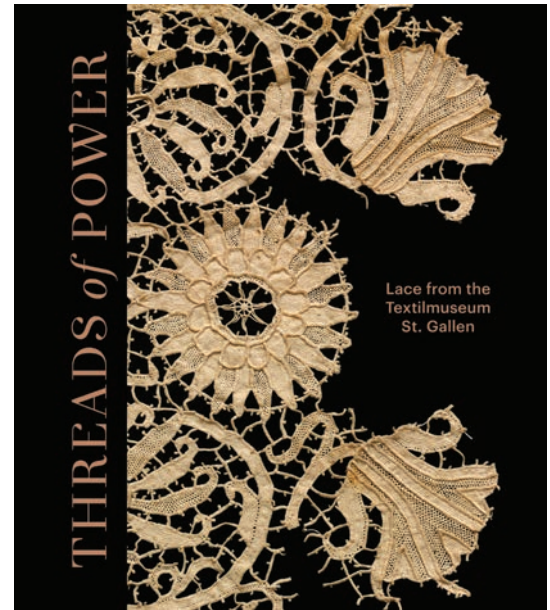
1. *The Emergence of Lace in Early Modern Europe*
2. *Fashion and Lace in Spain and the Americas, 1500–1800*
3. *The Dominance of France, 1690–1790*
4. *Mechanization and Revivalism: The Lace Industries, 1800–1925*
5. *Innovations in Lace, 1900 to Today*

Taken together, these sections chart the five-century relationship between lace and fashion. In their investigations of the many facets of this narrative, the authors (historians, curators, and experts from major museums and institutions) draw on a wide range of visual and textual primary sources and highlight objects from the Textilmuseum's collection.

Across this long history, despite changes in lace production and consumption, several common “threads” emerge including

- issues of gender in the making, selling, and wearing of lace, notably the primary role of untold thousands of anonymous female lacemakers
- lace as a material signifier of status, class, and race, and the enactment of sumptuary laws, particularly in the early modern period, to ensure the exclusivity of this commodity and dissuade extravagant expenditure
- the importance of design, whether for hand- or machine-made lace
- the international trade of this initially rarified handmade commodity to its mechanization and widespread dissemination
- the wearing, collecting, and dealing of antique lace

The final section of the catalogue, which highlights twentieth- and twenty-first-century fashions in lace, includes an interview with Tobias Forster and Hans Schreiber of Forster Rohner and Martin Leuthold of Jakob Schlaepfer. Representing the future of high-quality Swiss lace, this interview elucidates the various trends and challenges both companies have encountered over the last several decades in the industry. Parallel to the final section of the exhibition, this portion of the publication invites readers to consider the innovative future of lace in fashion.



Exhibition Interactives

Tracing Lace Story Tour

Writer / storyteller / composer James Harrison Monaco and multimedia artist / researcher Janani Balasubramanian have created imaginative short stories accompanied by original music that are hidden throughout the *Threads of Power* exhibition. Visitors are invited to access these audio complements with their own devices and headphones.

Lacemakers' Studio

Members of the Brooklyn Lace Guild demonstrate lacemaking on Saturdays and Sundays, September 24–December 18, from 1 to 5 pm.

a kii s.e.s.ó. gbélé (we do not dress up beautifully to sit at home)

This interactive micro-exhibition features a piece of Austrian-made lace that was exported to Nigeria, alongside excerpts from BGC's podcast, *Fields of the Future: There Is Nothing New about Lace*, that explores Nigerian dress, the role lace plays in it, and how lace was exported from Austria to Nigeria. Created by BGC alumna mary adeogun.

Exhibition Tours

30-minute tours of the exhibition, led by BGC gallery educators, are offered beginning October 6 on Thursdays at 12:30 pm. Free for BGC members; students, faculty and staff with a museum or school; and people with disabilities and their caregivers. Linger after the tour to enjoy the exhibition on your own. Free for BGC members and people with disabilities and their caregivers. \$6 for students with valid ID; \$12 for seniors 65 and older; \$15 all others. Advance ticket purchase recommended; visit bgc.bard.edu/ThreadsofPower.

Exhibition Location, Hours, and Admission

Bard Graduate Center Gallery is located in New York City at 18 West 86th Street, between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. Gallery hours are Wednesday, 11 am–8 pm, and Thursday through Sunday, 11 am–5 pm. Admission is by timed entry. Free for BGC members and people with disabilities and their caregivers. \$6 for students with valid ID; \$12 for seniors 65 and older; \$15 all others. Advance ticket purchase recommended; visit bgc.bard.edu/ThreadsofPower.

Events

Symposia

Friday, November 18, 9 am–12 pm, BGC Lecture Hall,
38 West 86th Street

Making Lace: Global Networks

Presented in conjunction with—and expanding on the European and American focus of—the exhibition *Threads of Power: Lace from the Textilmuseum St. Gallen*, this symposium brings together lacemakers and lace scholars to foreground historical and contemporary traditions of lacemaking from around the world, focusing particularly on how they relate to issues of gender, labor, race, and identity. Talks will consider the variety of cultural landscapes from which lacemaking techniques and traditions emerge, the tools of the craft, and the significance of this labor-intensive textile in fashion.

For Families

Drag Story Hour

Saturday, October 1; Saturday, November 5; Saturday, December 3
at 10 am, BGC Gallery, 18 West 86th Street

Free; advance registration is strongly recommended as seating is limited.

Imagination rules! Enjoy children's books read aloud by glamorous drag artists who reflect the joy, fun, and positivity of a world in which everyone can be their authentic selves.

Wednesdays@ BGC

Bard Graduate Center's Wednesdays@BGC series takes the expansive view that research is the art of asking questions. The series includes performances and films, lectures and conversations, artist talks, and more. Free for BGC members; students, faculty, and staff of museums or schools with valid ID; and people with disabilities and their caregivers. \$12 for seniors 65 and older; \$15 all others. Exhibition-related events are listed below; to view all events in the series, visit bgc.bard.edu/events.

Lace and Music

Wednesday, October 26 at 6 pm, BGC Gallery, 18 West 86th Street

Performer and musicologist Elizabeth Weinfield (Juilliard) and celebrated opera director Elena Araoz (Princeton) collaborate on an evening of music and performance that takes place throughout the *Threads of Power* exhibition, with selections that explore the mathematic and aesthetic dimensions of lace through the lens of history, gender, and labor.

Justice Ginsburg and Her Lace

Performance / Conversation with Elevator Repair Service and Vanessa Friedman (*New York Times*)

Wednesday, November 16 at 6 pm, BGC Lecture Hall, 38 West 86th Street

Elevator Repair Service's Susie Sokol reprises the role of Ruth Bader Ginsburg for this performance and conversation about the late Supreme Court justice, her iconic lace collars, and the performance of power and femininity, with *New York Times* fashion director Vanessa Friedman and members of the award-winning theater ensemble Elevator Repair Service.

Preserving the Craft of Lacemaking in Contemporary Fashion

Conversation with Emily Adams Bode Aujla (BODE New York)

Wednesday, December 14 at 6 pm, BGC Lecture Hall, 38 West 86th Street

An evening with acclaimed menswear designer Emily Adams Bode Aujla, an innovator in textile and craft conservation and the re-use, study, and preservation of antique lace. Bode, in conversation with *Threads of Power* curators Emma Cormack and Michele Majer, will explore the importance of the archive in contemporary lace fashion and how the craft of lacemaking connects us to our past, present, and future.

Covid-19 Precautions

Visitors to Bard Graduate Center's exhibitions and events must show proof of Covid-19 vaccination and one booster shot. Masks are required.

About Bard Graduate Center

As the leading research institute in the United States dedicated to the study of decorative arts, design history, and material culture, Bard Graduate Center and its Gallery have pioneered the study of objects as a means to better understand the cultural history of the material world. Offering experiences for scholars, students, and the general public alike, Bard Graduate Center is built on multidisciplinary study and the integration of research, graduate teaching, and public exhibitions.

Since its founding in 1993, it has established a network of more than 450 alumni who work in leading museums, universities, and institutions worldwide to advance new ways of thinking about material culture.

Bard Graduate Center's classrooms and library are located at 38 West 86th Street, between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. BGC Gallery is located at 18 West 86th Street. bgc.bard.edu

About the Textilmuseum St. Gallen

The Textilmuseum St. Gallen houses one of the most important textile collections in Switzerland including thousands of pattern books, designs, fashion photographs, magnificent textiles, flamboyant garments, needlework utensils, and a hand embroidery machine that provides demonstrations for visitors. It portrays the multifaceted history of the textile industry from its beginnings to the present. Among the highlights of the collection are late antique fabrics from Coptic graves in Egypt, historical embroideries from the fourteenth century on, handmade lace from major European lace-making centers, ethnological textiles, historical fabrics and costumes, and contemporary textile art objects. The hand- and machine-embroideries as well as fabric prints document the impressive development of the textile industry in Eastern Switzerland.

The collections of the Textilmuseum St. Gallen date back to the second half of the nineteenth century and follow in the tradition of the museums of applied arts and design and sample collections founded throughout Europe at that time. In 1863 the Kaufmännisches Direktorium—the Association of St. Gallen's Merchants—began to collect pattern samples from local manufacturers. The museum was founded in 1878, and has made its home in the *Palazzo Rosso* in St. Gallen's Old Town since 1886. Over time, the collection has been expanded through acquisitions and the donation of significant private collections and textile industry archives, such as those given by the industrialist family, Iklé. The museum is a source of inspiration for designers and innovators. It showcases a permanent exhibition and two to three temporary shows each year. textilmuseum.ch/en/

Exhibition Credits

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Lenore G. Tawney Foundation



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