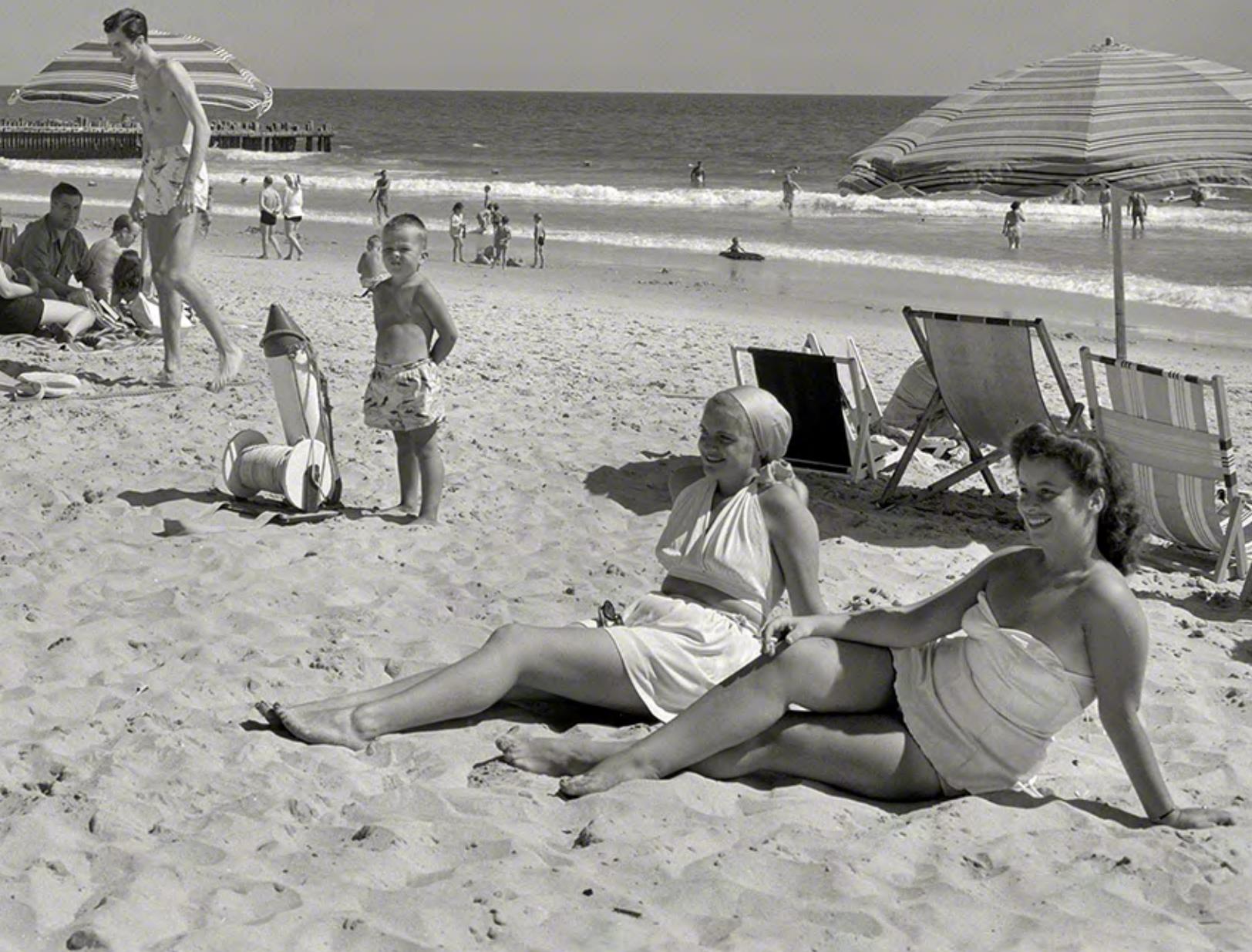


# THE VFG NEWS

SHARING OUR PASSION FOR VINTAGE FASHION

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*Summer 2023*





# Say Aloha to a Renaissance Man

## *An Interview with E. Tory Laitila (Mr. Tory) Curator of Textiles and Historic Arts of Hawai‘i at Honolulu Museum of Art*

BY MAGGIE WILDS (DENISEBRAIN)

**MAGGIE:** Is your ancestry Hawaiian?

**TORY:** I'm Chamorro (the indigenous people of Guam, where my family is from, and the Mariana Islands). I was born in Ohio and raised in Hawai'i, my parents moved to Honolulu when I was just a few months old, and Guam.

**M:** What is one of your favorite items in the HoMA textile collection and why? What is the rarest item?

**T:** The textiles collection of the Honolulu Museum of Art holds about 6,000 objects from the 4th to the early 21st centuries, with a majority of the collection dating to the 19th and 20th centuries. The objects are primarily ethnographic and include costume pieces, textile fragments, furnishings, jewelry and personal accessories, lace, fiber art, ceremonial and ritual objects, textile tools and equipment.

One of my favorite works is a lei hulu (Hawaiian feather garland, 1440.01), made up of yellow feathers of Hawaiian honeycreeper birds, that belonged to Miriam Kalākua Kaheiheimālie (c. 1778-1842). She's an important figure in Hawaiian fashion as the first Hawaiian gown, the holokū, was made for her and debuted April 3, 1820.



Miriam Kalākua Kaheiheimālie's lei hulu (feather lei). You can read more about it on the HoMA website.

Another favorite is a Chinese export silk Watteau-back gown (8929.1) dating from the 1750s. It is a beautiful dress and was on exhibition a long time ago, before I worked at HoMA, and I would visit the dress.

Some of the rare works in the collection are 'ahu 'ula (royal Hawaiian feather capes), Hawaiian quilts, and pre-Columbian Peruvian textile fragments.

**M:** What would you like to add to the collection?

**T:** I am currently working on adding Hawaiian fashion, including aloha wear, to the collection.

**M:** When and why did you get into textiles?

**T:** I've always been intrigued by clothing and what it broadcasts about the wearer. I started making Halloween costumes for myself in kindergarten. They were very basic, and much later I worked for National Theme Productions selling Halloween

costumes. Whilst I was in kindergarten, my mother worked at a heraldry shop and she would bring me toy knights in armor. I saw their miniature coats of arms and the larger crests in the shop and became fascinated by the visual language of heraldry, which led to my love of flags. The idea of symbolic communication is very interesting to me.

**M:** Textile historian and conservator, historic Hawaiian arts curator, educator, vexillologist, costume designer and wearer, fencer ...and stormtrooper? Can you say a bit about what makes you who you are?

**T:** I've enjoyed flags for a very long time. As a boy scout in BSA and cadet in the Civil Air Patrol, I would volunteer for color guard duties and appreciated the customs, courtesies, and protocols it entailed. As I mentioned previously, I enjoy the symbolism of flags. As one who wears clothes, I've always enjoyed vintage fashion, mostly from the 19th century. Not being able to find vintage fashion in my size, I started creating my own.

I also appreciate science fiction. Beginning in the 1980s, I joined the local sci-fi club so that I could volunteer at local conventions in costume. When I left the Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives in 2002 with its living history programming in period clothing, I had a costuming void, so I joined the 501st Legion (of Star Wars imperial costumers). After all, why collect an action figure, when you can be an action figure? (I don't collect action figures.) There are similarities in replication historic and movie costumes. Unlike most of the cosplayers I know, the costumes I make are functional clothing (think pockets).

For sports, I played rugby in high school and fenced in college, and continued fencing after college for a while.

I appreciate the abilities of a Renaissance man and skills of the past; sewing, fencing, and ballroom dancing—that's how I caught my wife's eye—to name a few.



# Wichita Art Museum displays

BY CARRIE WELLBORN (THEVINTAGEBUNGALOW)

I love paper. When I was in college studying graphic design, we were invited to go to our local paper manufacturing company to get free samples to use for projects. I always took WAY more than I needed. Even though I don't scrapbook, I currently have a cabinet stuffed with scrapbook paper pads. I am a paper hoarder. So imagine my excitement when I found out about a new exhibition at the Wichita Art Museum called *Paper Couture: The Art of Isabelle de Borchgrave*. Vintage fashion and paper? Yes, please! The show opened with a large image of a painting of Madame de Pompadour and beside it was the paper reproduction of the gown by de Borchgrave. Through collaboration with costume designer Rita Brown, the precision of each piece is extraordinary. Using patterns, paper (some custom created), paint and glue, de Borchgrave crafted each garment like a sculptor. Her interpretations of evening gowns by Callot Souers and Worth, her Medici family and Fortuny collections, and her Botticelli-inspired dresses were all favorites. WAM dedicated a room to de Borchgrave's paper reproductions of the costumes of Les Ballets Russes. The entire exhibition was a genuine delight.

A small display of paper fashion, *Pulp Sensations*, was the perfect tie in, but the Wichita Art Museum didn't stop there. Working with the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum, WAM created an exhibition of fashion from 1888 to 1988, calling it *Wichita Wore What? A Century of Local Fashion*. Although Wichita is the center of Kansas, many miles from New York, London and Paris, designer fashion has always been a part of our history. The collection included a beautiful 1888 navy velvet gown with jet trim created by a local dressmaker named Florence Chambers. Although American by birth, she was given the French title of Madame as the most celebrated dressmaker in the area. Another favorite was a paisley day dress owned by Margaret Brown Innes, wife of Walter Innes, owner of the prominent Wichita department store Innis. Anyone who trades vintage in Kansas is very familiar with the Innes label. Also included in the collection were garments worn by Wichitans by Norell, Trigère, Travilla, Beene, Mori, de la Renta and many more. It was refreshing to see Wichita's sartorial history represented by garments from such famous designers.

From Madame de Pompadour's paper dress to Madame Florence Chambers' velvet, I thoroughly enjoyed my day at WAM. It's exciting to think of all the people who saw the exhibitions and came away with a different perspective or a newfound love of fashion. You can find past and future exhibitions of Isabelle de Borchgrave's work [here](#).



# summer shorts



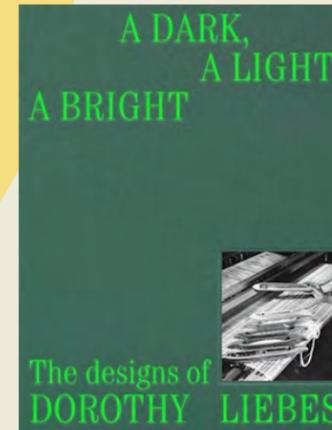
## Love and Gowns

**GAIL HIGGINS** (thegirlcanelhelpit) recently posted on Instagram about an experience that proved that people mean even more than (gasp!) numbered Diors:

"A stranger from across the country contacted me and said she had a collection of couture and designer vintage dresses that she wanted to sell because she had fallen in love with a Ukrainian man and had to get him and his family over here." This sounded fishy to Gail, so she asked to see garment photos.

"The Dior is the only label I can see, and it's numbered. The others are Ceil Chapman, Suzy Perette, Helen Barbieri, etc. She wants to ship them to me and then I should send her a check ASAP. Now doesn't this story just reek of scam? Why me in San Diego? Love in the Ukraine? Needs the check sent out immediately? So this goes on for a week—is it a scam, or is it not a scam? Then she sends me a photo of the huge box she's shipping and I receive 18 amazing dresses, four pairs of shoes and four evening bags ...along with a message which brought me to tears. She said, 'your contribution will save a whole family'."

Find Gail's Etsy shop at [etsy.com/shop/THEGIRLCANTHELPIUSA](https://www.etsy.com/shop/THEGIRLCANTHELPIUSA) and her bricks-and-mortar store in the North Park neighborhood of San Diego.



## A Dark, a Light, a Bright, a Book

If you don't already, you must follow the Instagram account of **LEIGH WISNER** (Leigh Wishner) @[patternplayusa](https://www.instagram.com/patternplayusa), where you will always be delighted by the wit and wisdom she offers. Recently her followers have been able to share her glee over all things Dorothy Liebes. Leigh was asked to write for a book dedicated to the career of Liebes, viewing her work through the lens of fashion, while other contributors address further facets of Liebes impactful textile artistry.

The result is *A Dark, A Light, A Bright - The Designs of Dorothy Liebes*, edited by Susan Brown and Alexa Griffith Winton, which was published on June 27, 2023. Besides Leigh, contributions are by John Stuart Gordon, Emily M Orr, Monica Penick and Erica Warren.

The book is as vibrant, well-made and innovative as the textile designs of Dorothy Liebes herself. It is published by Yale University Press in association with Cooper Hewitt and Smithsonian Design Museum. Read about the book, and Liebes, at [Cooper Hewitt](https://www.cooperhewitt.org).

## Encore, Encore!

It's the encore of Encore Vintage! **JONATHAN WALFORD** (Jonathan) reports that the boutique will be open again at least through Labor Day, and this time the space is larger, allowing for a lot more stock. The shop, located just down the street from his Fashion History Museum in Cambridge, Ontario, will feature a wide selection of vintage clothing and housewares, dress patterns, fabrics, books, and other paraphernalia of interest.

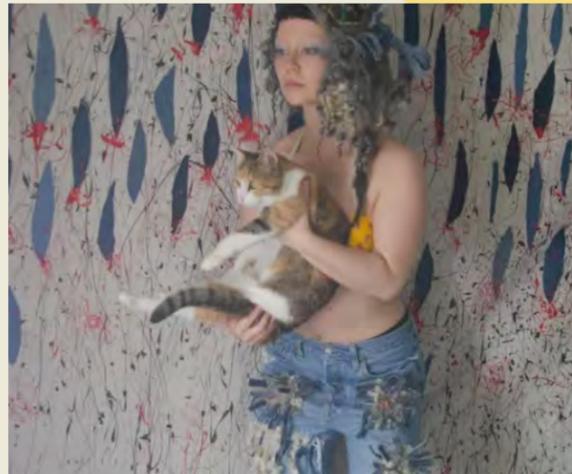


In other FHM news, Eldon House, London, Ontario's oldest extant residence, has borrowed 15 mannequins that feature 1920s clothes from the museum's collection. The restored house museum features more than a century of furnishings and treasures that belonged to the family that occupied the home until the 1950s. Open now, the exhibition runs until September 4, 2023.

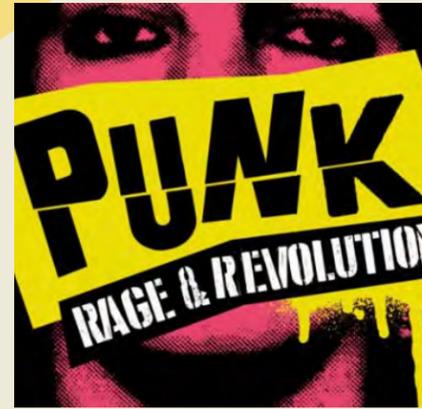
# summer shorts

## Good Jeans

Longtime member **CHRISTINE ANDERSON** (yumyumvintage) applied her love of denim and her visual storytelling prowess (she's an award-winning photographer) to showcasing vintage Levi's 501 jeans. Vogue selected her photo for "Your 501 Story," a Global Open Call in partnership with Levi's celebrating the 150th anniversary of the 501 jean. You can see the online exhibition at [vogue.com/article/exhibition-your-501-story](http://vogue.com/article/exhibition-your-501-story)



## Punk: Rage & Revolution



**ROGER K. BURTON** (RogerKBurton) is a key contributor to the current fashion exhibition Punk: Rage & Revolution on view at Leicester Museum & Art Gallery and Soft Touch Arts until September 3rd. This exhibition explores the origin and influences of the 1970s punk scene in the United Kingdom. It also features the fashion, music, art, and insights into the punk youth subculture. This exhibition showcases fashions from Roger K. Burton's hire company, The Contemporary Wardrobe Collection. With over 20,000 original pieces in his comprehensive collection, Mr. Burton displays the real look of the youth subculture style and offers his own insight into the exhibition of the UK punk scene.

*"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart."* —ELIZABETH ANDREW

## A New Store with a Twist

**JAMIE PHOENIX** (Ultratwist Vintage) has opened a store at 7730 W National Avenue in the Milwaukee suburb of West Allis. She relocated there from Portland, Oregon in January, "a crazy move to make in the middle of winter!" Along with the move came a business name change, as it was previously called Shipyard Millie's Vintage. That shop opened in 2014 and was named for Jamie's great-grandmother, who had worked in the Portland Kaiser Shipyards during WWII. She explains that although Milwaukee has water, "hello Lake Michigan! The historical roots of the shop's name were irrelevant here. Rebranding to Ultratwist actually reflects the business well as I focus on vintage style with a twist! I have a penchant for classic silhouettes in bold prints and bright colors; true vintage and vintage-inspired clothing that allows you to literally wear your personality!" [ultratwistvintage.com](http://ultratwistvintage.com) Facebook/Instagram:

[@ultratwistvintage](https://www.instagram.com/ultratwistvintage)

## Think Pink

**JEN KARPIN** (Morning Glorious Vintage) attended a PINK Creatives retreat for women business owners in April, in Round Top, Texas. PINK stands for "Play, Inspire, Niche and Know-How." Jen was inspired by this three-day workshop to focus on her favorite niche of colorful, whimsical, maximalist vintage, and is in the process of updating her shop, both physically at her studio and in the merchandise she offers. She is no longer describing clothing as "men's" or "women's," rather portraying items by their inherent physical characteristics—cut, color, etc. Morning Glorious Vintage: The Joyful Wardrobe will be ready for in-person shoppers by the end of the summer, as it celebrates its 22nd year in business, and 11th year in Brattleboro, Vermont. Visit Jen online at [MorningGlorious.Etsy.com](http://MorningGlorious.Etsy.com), and on Instagram at [@morninggloriousvintage](https://www.instagram.com/morninggloriousvintage).

**Spotlight on longtime VFG member and volunteer, HARRIET ULPH** (afternumbernine)

Harriet is currently serving as VFG Secretary, a position she has held since last year, and which she also held in 2007. She has been on the board for six years in total. She is a delight, as you may glean from her answers here.

*When did you join the VFG?* I first joined the VFG in 2004. I can't believe it's over twenty years ago.

*Where do you live?* In a tiny rural village in Lincolnshire, UK. (Conveniently only a ten-minute drive from the largest antiques centre in Europe, however, which is not a complete accident!) We moved here around three years ago, when we put everything we had into buying a derelict Jacobean Revival house—this is very slowly being restored by us to its former glory while we camp out full time in the garden!

*Do you have any vintage collections?* I think as I have a fairly eclectic taste, my own collection is a rather broad church. I probably spend most of my time as a dealer trying NOT to collect one particular thing...

I am a big lover of social history, and as such one of my longstanding hoards is of homemade and handmade textiles and accessories—everything from Regency to Punk. They may not necessarily all have huge intrinsic value, but I just find them fascinating as

they can give you such a sense of the individual that created and used them. I love to see a make-do-and-mend approach and how that can relate to whatever was going on historically at the time, as well as tiny dropped stitches, mismatched thread, reused materials and ancient darns. I like Victorian mourning jewellery, fob seals, and other sentimental treasures for the same reason. I also have quite an assortment of novelty prints of all eras. Oh, and I love a good buckle!

*What's your vintage fashion holy grail?* Holy Grail has probably got to be a really early piece of surreal Schiaparelli, and I wouldn't be fussy about what!

*Can you name a memorable moment as a VFG volunteer?* My most memorable was volunteering on the VFG promotional stand at the Clothes Show Live in the UK in my first year of being involved with the Vintage Fashion Guild. I was there to help the then President, Anne Dettmer. I have to say I have never 'stood' a show that busy since, and it was at a time when vintage was hugely popular with 'mainstream' fashion buyers. Anne gave me some very sweet little swallow pins as a thank you, which I still have somewhere.

*Where can we find your business?* I sell online as After Number Nine—[afternumbernine.com](http://afternumbernine.com), and [@afternumbernine](https://www.instagram.com/afternumbernine) on instagram will also show the way to my Etsy store.

# Auction News

Congratulations to VFG Member **KERRY TAYLOR** (Kerry Taylor) for the spectacular results of The Mr Steven Philip Collection (part 1) & Passion for Fashion Auction. The biggest winner was a rare and important John Galliano printed 'Vultures' kimono, 'The Ludic Game' collection, Autumn-Winter, 1985-86, which sold for £160,000.



At the Augusta Auctions June 28 sale run by VFG Member **JULIA RICKLIS** (AugustaAuctions), the surprise favorite was a lot of two Geoffrey Beene evening jackets from the 1980s to early 1990s.

# Welcome to Our Newest Members

**BROOKE NAULT** /DaisyandStella: A long-time VFG forum guest, Brooke hails from Minnesota, and specializes in Victorian through the 1930s, along with some 1940s, fashion. Get ready to be awed. There is her website [daisyandstella.com](http://daisyandstella.com) and [Etsy shop](#), and she is on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#). In her spare time (ha!), Brooke recently started an in-person antique & vintage show called The Twin Cities True Vintage Show.

**DIDI CHISHOLM** /Halcyon Vintage: Didi's brick & mortar shop, Halcyon Vintage, is located in Richmond, Virginia. Full address, hours, and drool-worthy look book to browse are on the website [halcyonvintage.com](http://halcyonvintage.com). Check out this [Southern Living article](#) from March that includes Halcyon Vintage as one of the best places to shop in Richmond. You can find Didi and Halcyon on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#).

**BRENT AMERMAN** /Brent Amerman: Brent is on [1stDibs](#) with his shop called Brent Edward which is positively overflowing with jaw-dropping designer vintage fashion. Brent previously had a bricks & mortar boutique in San Francisco and now lives in San Diego. Follow Brent on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

**MARY BETH VOGEL** /Gingham Girl: Mary Beth is based in California and has an Etsy sewing pattern shop called [TheGinghamLife](#) and a website, [Vintage Sewing Pattern Directory](#), that serves as a clearing house for other independent pattern sellers who meet certain criteria. She has a blog there as well—busy woman! You'll want to follow her on: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#).

**VANDA SMITH** /VS Vintage Archive: Vanda is based in the UK. Visit her website, [VS Vintage Archive](#) where she specializes in sourcing high-end vintage clothing and accessories for fashion houses seeking inspiration and reference from fashion history. Also look for her custom-designed Vanda Smith pieces. Vanda also has a shop on [1stDibs](#). Follow her @vsvintagearchive on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

**CHRISTINA PALOMO** /senoritahollywood: We are delighted to welcome back returning VFG member Christina. She has an Etsy shop called [SkirtChaserVintageLA](#), and she also does the occasional vintage pop-up. Look for [skirtchaservintage](#) on [Instagram](#). And Angeleno Christina has another passion—check out her second Instagram handle [@vintagecaliforniahome](#). Wow.

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