

Lingerie is the final barrier to the fully nude body, and is thus inherently erotic. Yet the design of lingerie enhances its allure: it strategically reveals, conceals, and highlights the wearer's form. As French lingerie designer Chantal Thomass observed, "The essence and attitude of lingerie is all in suggestion."

*Exposed: A History of Lingerie* traces developments in intimate apparel from the eighteenth century to the present. There are two types of lingerie, hard and soft. Hard lingerie includes corsets, bustles, and structured bras, while soft lingerie consists of unstructured garments, such as slips, nightgowns, and panties. *Exposed* begins with a sky blue corset and ends with a sapphire blue bra and panty set from luxury label La Perla.

As the relationship between dress and the body has been redefined over time, so too have the function and appearance of lingerie. During the eighteenth century, some decorative corsets and petticoats were worn as part of a woman's dress. Many modestly designed nineteenth-century undergarments were viewed strictly within intimate settings. Yet in 1898, a "mania" for elaborate, colorful, and seductive lingerie led French journalist Octave Uzanne to lament that "the last remains of feminine modesty sunk out of sight." From the modern, streamlined "camiknickers" of the 1920s, to Dior's voluminous petticoats of the 1950s, to today's overtly erotic styles by Agent Provocateur, lingerie remains a topic of enduring fascination.

Colleen Hill, curator



1976 Valerie Porr, lounging pajamas, silk, USA.

*Exposed: A History of Lingerie* has been made possible by the *couture council*.

S U P P O R T T H E M U S E U M A T F I T

#### COUTURE COUNCIL

An elite membership group, the Couture Council helps to support the exhibitions and programs of The Museum at FIT. Members receive invitations to exclusive events and private viewings. Annual membership is \$1,000 for an individual or couple, and \$350 for a young associate (under the age of 35).

For more information, write to [couturecouncil@fitnyc.edu](mailto:couturecouncil@fitnyc.edu) or call 212 217.4532.

#### TOURS AND DONATIONS

Every six months, a changing selection of garments, accessories, and textiles from the museum's permanent collection is put on display in the Fashion and Textile History Gallery, located on the museum's ground floor. Tours of the Fashion and Textile History Gallery and of the Special Exhibitions Gallery may be arranged for a sliding fee of approximately \$350. Donations of museum-quality fashions, accessories, and textiles are welcomed.

For more information about tours, call 212 217.4550; about donations, call 212 217.4570.

## The Museum at FIT

Seventh Avenue at 27th Street  
New York City 10001-5992  
[fitnyc.edu/museum](http://fitnyc.edu/museum)

Hours:  
Tuesday-Friday, noon-8 pm  
Saturday, 10 am-5 pm  
Closed Sunday, Monday,  
and legal holidays

More than fifty of the objects featured in *Exposed: A History of Lingerie* are gorgeously reproduced in full color in the exhibition's companion book. Written by MFIT curator Colleen Hill, and featuring an introduction by director Dr. Valerie Steele, *Exposed* is published by Yale University press and will be available in summer 2014.

Book cover: Barbara Vaughn, early 1950s.  
Photograph by Lillian Bassman.



Cover: Maggy Rouff, nightgown, silk, silk satin, 1940, France.

All photographs MFIT unless indicated otherwise.

# Exposed

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## *A History of Lingerie*

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June 3–November 15, 2014

The Fashion and Textile History Gallery

The Museum at FIT



Circa 1889 Warner Bros., corset, silk satin, USA.

Circa 1770



Corset (stays), silk, whalebone, Europe.

Circa 1840



Dressing gown, cotton, lace, USA.

Circa 1880



Corset, silk and wool, France.  
Bustle, polka-dot cotton, USA.

Circa 1900



Fernande Burel, tea gown, chiffon, silk, and lace, France.

Circa 1924



Saks Fifth Avenue, camiknickers, crepe chiffon, silk satin, France.

Circa 1930



Paquin, slip, silk chiffon, Alençon lace, France.

1949 and 1951



Poirette, bra, nylon lace, USA.  
Christian Dior, petticoat, nylon net, taffeta, and horsehair net, France.

Circa 1954



Marie-Rose Lebigot for Lily of France, corselet, lace, nylon, elastic, USA.

1967



Rudi Gernreich for Exquisite Form, bra and panty, polyester tricot, USA.

1982



Fernando Sanchez, dressing gown, chiffon with multicolor metallic pinstripes, USA.

Circa 1988



Patricia Fieldwalker, teddy, silk charmeuse, lace, USA.

2014



La Perla, bra and panty, embroidered tulle, silk, stretch silk satin, Italy.