

FASHION SHOW

As frothy, extravagant, and outrageous as fashion is, it is also serious business and an essential expression of each era's dreams and concerns. Three sumptuously illustrated books take three different approaches to celebrating fashion's beauty and resonance.

★ **History of International Fashion.** By Didier Grumbach.

Nov. 2014. 462p. illus. Interlink, \$45 (9781566569767). 746.9.

You can't ask for a more knowledgeable and entertaining guide to the art and business of fashion than Grumbach, who has long been at the epicenter of the industry. The original edition of his definitive history has been a best-seller in Europe for two decades. The first English edition is thoroughly updated and abundantly illustrated. An extraordinarily in-depth report, it is richly layered with up-close profiles, energetic and expert analysis, and insider tales enlightening and scandalous. Grumbach covers the evolution of haute couture and the knotty regulations that have controlled every aspect of its operations while tracing the careers of such indelible designers as Coco Chanel, Christian Dior, Hubert de Givenchy, and Nina Ricci, and onward to Issey Miyake, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Thierry Mugler, and Sonia Rykiel. He reveals shocking financial struggles and organizational battles and betrayals as outlandish and dramatic as over-the-top fashion shows. Grumbach's dissection of the ready-to-wear world is even more compelling with its cast of intense personalities, cut-throat competition, and audacious practices, including the explosion in branding and licensing. Much of this is channeled through Grumbach's own extensive experiences, beginning with his family's textile company, where he strove "to create ready-to-wear that had the same quality manufacturing as haute couture." Grumbach concludes with a shrewd look at today's globalized fashion industry. Just like the best designer clothes, this exposé is both dazzling and enduring. —*Donna Seaman*



Vintage Fashion Complete: Women's Style in the Twentieth Century. By Nicky Albrechtsen.

Dec. 2014. 432p. illus. Chronicle, \$85 (9781452140216). 746.9.

Vintage, Yves Saint Laurent explains in his introduction to this spectacular showcase, "encompasses the collective fashions of past eras that are worn today simply because they are beautiful, and therefore always desirable." Fashion stylist and vintage clothing collector Albrechtsen has organized this large, superbly well-designed, and lushly colorful volume in three sections. "Decades" is a chronological stroll through the finest of fashion, from the 1920s to the 1980s. "Elements" focuses on imaginative hats, gloves, shoes, handbags, and evening wear from across the vintage spectrum. "Hallmarks" identifies timeless themes, from botanicals to polka dots to lace to the "little black dress." Albrechtsen's commentary is fluent, witty, and informative as she charts fashion traditions and innovations, matching design trends to social change, from war to economic booms and busts to surges forward and back in women's quest for gender equality. New photographs of clothing and accessories are mixed with vintage ads, fashion spreads, and images of glamorously attired celebrities. Guidance on buying and caring for vintage clothes completes this enlivening fashion history, this feast for the eyes, this wish book. —*Donna Seaman*



Vogue: The Gown. By Jo Ellison.

Nov. 2014. 304p. illus. Firefly, \$125 (9781770854987). 746.9.

An art book about gowns must be as opulent and enchanting as its lavish subject. So it is with this grandly produced and mesmerizing celebration of *Vogue's* devotion to the ultimate haute couture confection. Ellison, features director at British *Vogue*, has astutely curated a collection of 300 romantic, irreverent, and racy photographs from the 1920s to the present of gowns worn with poise and attitude in mise-en-scènes stark and sumptuous, indoors and out. The gowns are marvels of grace and audacity, sophistication and mischief, and the images are sequenced not according to date but rather to style, categorized as classical, fantasy, drama, decorative, and modern. Gowns have inspired photographers, from the renowned Cecil Beaton, Edward Steichen, and Herb Ritts to current adventurous players Corinne Day, Mario Testino, and Tim Walker, to feverish creativity as they seek to capture allure, sangfroid, and rebellion. And how magnificent the models are, from Hollywood stars to such fashion royalty as Naomi Campbell, Linda Evangelista, and Kate Moss, as they bring each gown and vignette to glamorous, sexy, or playful life. A stunning volume. —*Donna Seaman*



music during WWII; and the arrival of R&B and rock and roll. No less than Harry Smith, of *Anthology of American Folk Music* (1952) fame, maintained that the modern era of folk music recordings began with Ralph Peer. Now Peer finally receives his due in this excellent biography. —*June Sawyers*

Rodin.

By Antoinette Le Normand-Romain.

Nov. 2014. 432p. illus. Abbeville, \$135 (9780789212078). 730.92.

Le Normand-Romain, former curator of the Musée Rodin, offers a large-format, lushly illustrated book worthy of its subject. Hundreds of full-page photographs capture the expressive bodies, fluid modeling, and play of light in the French master Auguste Rodin's sculpture, encyclopedically covering the breadth of his prolific career. Of particular interest is the extensive documentation of Rodin's preparatory sketches, watercolors, and plaster maquettes, many never before seen. Le Normand-Romain's biographical text moves chronologically through the artist's career to reveal the working methods and formal concerns at play in each his major sculptures. Her meticulous scholarship frames Rodin's oeuvre in light of his professional rise, his international recognition, and his prominent portraits and commissions, which made him tremendously famous in his own lifetime. Chapters introduce Rodin's engagement with the aesthetic influences of antiquity, modernism, and monumentality, often juxtaposing the artist's personal correspondence and the sculptures it references. The pairing of scholarship and imagery in this major work makes it a definitive resource, of interest to both researchers and art enthusiasts. —*Lindsay Bosch*

Watch Me.

By Anjelica Huston.

Nov. 2014. 400p. Scribner, \$26.99 (9781476760346). 791.430.

Watch her, they have. Huston has been cast in some of the most iconic roles of the past several decades, from the Academy Award-winning performance as Maerose Prizzi in *Prizzi's Honor* to the comically eerie embodiment of Morticia Addams in *The Addams Family*. But perhaps no roles have been more challenging than those of companion to the capricious Jack Nicholson or daughter to her equally mercurial father, legendary actor/director John Huston. Determined to learn to be an actress in her own right, Huston worked with some of the most innovative directors in the industry, from Wes Anderson to Woody Allen, but as her career soared, her personal life collapsed under the demise of love affairs and through the deaths of both her father and husband, sculptor Bob Graham. In her second memoir, following *A Story Lately Told* (2013), that is as genuine as it is gossipy, Huston lays bare the anguish she felt at being perennially in the shadow of such giant talents and the courageous steps she took to forge her own identity. —*Carol Haggas*

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