



'Balenciaga, Master of Couture' to Open This June at Montreal's McCord Museum



We generally don't need additional reasons to plan a long weekend in Montreal. But our calendars are definitively marked for June 15, when the McCord Museum will open what could very well be the pinnacle of high-fashion exhibitions: *Balenciaga, Master of Couture*.

The show will follow on from *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion*, which closed this month at London's Victoria & Albert Museum. The McCord has drawn more than 100 garments, hats and photographs from the V&A's extensive collection – and will present them in an almost forensic manner, attempting to slip behind the mystery of the designer's unparalleled mastery of fabric and cut.

Cristóbal Balenciaga Eizaguirre, of course, was the Spanish born trailblazer of contemporary couture, whom Dior would exalt as “the master of us all.” He dressed the post-war elite, from movie stars to royalty, in his storied Paris atelier, until his death in 1972, aged 77; his influence carried on in the work of Ungaro, Givenchy and Oscar de la Renta.

On the day of his passing, *Women's Wear Daily* solemnly proclaimed, “The king is dead.”



“We are thrilled to present, for the first time in North America, this unique exhibition highlighting the artistry of one of the world’s greatest fashion designers,” says Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum. “This exhibition enables the museum to utilize its conservation and costume mounting expertise, in addition to offering insight into Cristóbal Balenciaga’s lasting impact on generations of designers and the history and evolution of haute couture.”

Montreal was already responsible for the landmark exhibition *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*, which opened at the MMFA in 2011 before touring the world. And in February of 2019, *Thierry Mugler: Creatures of Haute Couture* will debut at that same museum. We’re sensing a pattern here.

