

Press release from the
Deutsches Ledermuseum in Offenbach/Main

Exhibition

THE GLOVE

More than fashion

12 November, 2022 – 30 July 2023

Bernie Sanders set off a veritable hype by wearing them at President Biden's inauguration ceremony; the recently deceased Queen Elizabeth II wore ones that matched her outfits; the image of Audrey Hepburn with long black ones in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* has etched itself into the memory of her fans; and Karl Lagerfeld was never seen without them in the last few decades before he died. All four shared a love of gloves.

Although as an item of clothing gloves went out of fashion in the second half of the 20th century, they are currently making a comeback on the international catwalks and are also receiving greater attention owing to the hygiene measures implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic. From 12 November 2022, onwards, with its exhibition **THE GLOVE: More than fashion** Deutsches Ledermuseum in Offenbach/Main will be showcasing over 90 exhibits that illustrate the extensive cultural history of handwear and exploring the many facets of this underestimated accessory.

In Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, the exhibition is essentially a premiere, as there has not yet been a show so extensively dedicated to this special garment with its millennia-old tradition. And very few museums abroad have addressed the topic, either.

The Exhibition

The majority of the selected gloves and pairs of gloves has never been seen in an exhibition before. The Deutsches Ledermuseum collection boasts a wide range of glove types from different eras and cultures: They will be arranged in thematic sections to provide ever new insights. The tools and utensils used to produce gloves also reveal interesting facts about the

craft itself which was carried out entirely by hand from the Middle Ages until the beginning of the 19th century. It was once considered de rigueur to perfume gloves and visitors can experience this long-forgotten fashion with a specially-created fragrance station.

More Than Fashion – History and Importance

Luxury and Necessity

While gloves were already a luxury item in ancient Egypt and an indication of their wearer's status and power, mittens were primarily intended to protect the wearer against the elements. The mittens worn by the Inuit are a good example of how hands were kept warm using leather and above all fur. Alongside conventional types of gloves the display also showcases special designs. For example, in the 15th and again in the 19th century half-gloves became fashionable and the muff was popular as a luxurious alternative from the 16th century onwards.

Instrument and Symbol

In addition, the exhibition shows how for centuries gloves had a symbolic character as a sign of authority or as a means of challenging someone to a duel. A bishop's finely worked gloves from the 18th century underline the dignity associated with his office. The gauntlets of a knight's armor from the first third of the 17th century refer to the what was in former courtly, chivalrous culture a real practice and today merely a saying: to throw down the gauntlet.

Etiquette and Consumerism

For a long time, etiquette called for an elegant dress to be accompanied by gloves. A person's gender but also the situation determined what type of glove was proper and appropriate. Certain occasions or times of day demanded a certain cut, color or type of leather – be it nappa, glacé, suede or chamois leather be it goatskin, cowhide or deerskin. Numerous accessories were also needed for gloves: Exhibits from the collection include decorative glove cases made of leather or wood. The display also features such items as button hooks or the stretchers required to make gloves easier to put on – glacé gloves were supposed to fit like a second skin.

Fashions and Trends

Models by renowned designers such as Marc Jacobs and Dries Van Noten as well as major fashion houses like Chanel, Hermès, Maison Margiela or Prada complement the items from the collection and illustrate recurring fashions. To this day, celebrities, film and television, and most lately the social media also create symbols and trigger trends. Karl Lagerfeld is not the only person to be commemorated with fingerless gloves from the limited *Tribute-to-Karl-Edition* by

the traditional company Roeckl; the presentation also features a white glove as the trademark for cartoon character Mickey Mouse.

Protection and Performance

To this day gloves are indispensable for protection in a wide variety of professions. The largest market segment consists of disposable rubber or latex gloves and the exhibition also points to the wide range of their uses. Another item on display is the highly contentious *Pinky Glove* that failed to catch on as a female hygiene product. The increasing popularity of sports in the 20th century but also their regulation and commercialization spawned a multitude of glove types. Items such as rubber hand swimming paddles, ice hockey gloves from the 1960s or the boxing gloves worn by German heavyweight boxer Max Schmeling all illustrate how, on the one hand, they provide protection for athletes while, on the other, can help them improve their performance. The *Power Glove* launched for Nintendo in the 1980s expanded the field to include high-tech products.

Cooperation with the Accessory Design Course at Pforzheim University

For this exhibition the Deutsches Ledermuseum is collaborating with the Design Faculty of Pforzheim University for the exhibition. This faculty is the only one in Germany to offer a course a Bachelor's program in Accessory Design. Students from different years in Prof. Madeleine Häse's class together developed collections under the title PANTOPIA. Sketches of their ideas, prototypes and end products from nine selected projects not only emphasize aesthetic and functional aspects of the garment but also in conjunction with the Covid-19 pandemic place gloves in a social context of relevance today.

Publication

To accompany the exhibition arnoldsche Art Publishers is bringing out a comprehensive bilingual (German/English) publication featuring over 90 new photographs of the exhibits and more than 100 reference illustrations. It is edited by Inez Florschütz.

Press dates

Press tours of the exhibition with the curator, Museum Director Dr. Inez Florschütz and the co-curator Leonie Wiegand M.A. are scheduled for Wednesday November 9 and Thursday November 10, 2022, between 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. You are welcome to contact us for an individual appointment. The exhibition will run from November 12, 2022, till July 30, 2023, at Deutsches Ledermuseum.

The exhibition has been made possible thanks to generous funding from Dr. Marschner Stiftung and Hessische Kulturstiftung.



Dr. Marschner Stiftung

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Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Hessen-Thüringen, Kulturstiftung der Städtischen Sparkasse Offenbach am Main and Förderkreis des Deutschen Ledermuseum e.V. support the project as well.

 Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung
Hessen-Thüringen

 Kulturstiftung der
Städtischen Sparkasse
Offenbach am Main

 FÖRDERKREIS DLM e.V.

DEUTSCHES LEDERMUSEUM

Frankfurter Straße 86
63067 Offenbach/Main
phone +49 (0) 69 82 97 98 0
info@ledermuseum.de

Press contact
Natalie Ungar M.A.
phone +49 (0) 69 82 97 98 19
ungar@ledermuseum.de

www.ledermuseum.de

Wednesday to Friday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Weekends and public Holidays 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
On the second Thursday of the month 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



From Frankfurt main station: LRT lines S1, S2, S8, S9
to station "Ledermuseum", exit Ludwigstrasse
(approx. 10-minute walk)