

What's Textile and Costume Conservation?

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1. Introduction

- Exhibitions at National Museum of American History (NMAH) of Smithsonian Institution (SI)
- Textile Conservation Lab at NMAH
- Concept of Conservation, Preservation, and Restoration

2. Textiles and Costume Conservation

A. Survey the Object's Condition

- Evaluate the condition of the object to determine whether it can be exhibited
- Estimate the number of hours for mounting, treatment, and budget planning
- Write condition report with photo documentation

B. Object Treatment

- Write a treatment proposal and get necessary permissions to proceed
- Treatment performance
 - Cleaning (wet or/and dry)
 - Steaming
 - Reinforcement with support fabrics
 - Reinforcement with stitching
 - Write treatment report with photo documentation

C. Prepare Object for Exhibition

- Construct the support forms:
 - 3-dimensional form: Custom-made forms for the costumes such as 18th-century men, 18th- and 19th-century women with extreme postures
 - 2-dimensional form: Silhouette form for costumes that have flat construction
 - Partial form: hats, shoes, and other accessories
- Use of commercial mannequins
- Mounting support forms to fit for each individual object
- Mounting flat textiles
- Installing the object in the exhibition cases

D. Prepare Loan Objects for Packing

- Cavity packing
- Packing in box
- Consult with packers

E. Rehousing Objects

- Construct soft support forms for the object that can be stored in horizontally in drawers or in boxes
- Construct hard support forms for the object that have extreme construction to require to store vertically
- Make padded hangers
- Make the partial support forms for costume accessories

3. Testing and Selection of Archival Supplies

4. Conclusions and Suggestions