



Merchant's House Museum

Newsletter

Spring 2003

Gilding the Lintels

Thanks, Benjamin Moore & Co.!

With the exterior east wall restoration now complete, we are moving indoors.

Thanks to a \$30,000 grant from Benjamin Moore & Co., we are undertaking a thorough scientific analysis of the history of paint finishes of the Merchant's House interiors.

Phase one, the ground-floor family room, hall, and kitchen, is under way. The results of the study will appear in the next newsletter, and repainting in original colors will take place soon after.

"Good Talk and Good Wine" (Make a Very Good Party)

Thomas Jefferson said it and we believe it, so on Thursday, April 10, from 6:30 to 9 p.m., we will celebrate the 260th birthday of the father of American Classicism.

Michael Batterberry, founding editor and publisher of *Food Arts* magazine, will present a slide lecture, *Thomas Jefferson: The Springtime of American Gastronomy*, and afterwards, thanks to our friends at Blue Hill and La Metairie restaurants, some of TJ's favorite foods, including our own coconut cake, will be served. And of course, wine, "the necessity of life," will flow. See calendar for more details.



Merchant's House Costume Collection Reflects the Changing Silhouette of Fashion in the 19th Century



Two-piece day dress of silk taffeta from the Tredwell group of dresses in the Merchant's House Museum costume collection. The dress dates from 1858-61. The drawing was sketched in 1935 for the Index of American Design, a federal arts project.

Nineteen dresses worn by the women of the Tredwell family will be the focus of a slide lecture by Marci Morimoto at the Merchant's House Museum on Friday, April 25, at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Morimoto, a graduate student in costume history at New York University, has been working with the costume collection for almost one year. It is the subject of her Master's thesis.

In her lecture she will illustrate how 19th-century fashion changed through the decades and discuss what these garments tell us about the women who wore them and the society in which they lived. She will also show how construction of the garments changed over the years and how this knowledge can be used to date an item of clothing.

In addition to the Tredwell dresses, the collection includes outerwear, undergarments, and accessories with an established Tredwell provenance as well as other 19th and early 20th century articles of dress accessioned by the Museum. Altogether there are approximately 420 items spanning the years 1805 through 1914. Only the Brooklyn Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art can boast a more significant collection.

For a year, beginning on April 24, the costume collection will be the subject of a changing exhibition. A typical dress from each of the decades, 1830-1880, will be featured every other month. The exhibition will begin with a muslin dress from the 1830s. Amazingly, this ankle-length dress with its enormous leg-of-mutton sleeves and empire waist is, after all these years, in pristine condition.

Still Wishin'

Gifts to the Merchant's House Museum are tax deductible. If you would like to donate an item, please call 212-777-1089 or e-mail nyc1832@merchantshouse.com.

Card Tables for our garden teas.

Counter-top Ovens: Convection and Microwave

Books for our Research Library
Choose from a list of titles.

State-of-the-art Mannequin
to display our costume collection. To contribute to the fund to purchase the mannequin, which costs \$1500, please make checks out to Merchant's House Museum, marked "mannequin."

Yes, Indeed! I (We) would like to become a member of the Merchant's House Museum

- Good Neighbor—\$50
 Family/Household—\$75
 Protector—\$125
 Cultural Hero—\$250
 Princely Supporter—\$500
 Leading Light—\$1,000
 Paragon of Virtue—\$2,500
 Senior Citizen/Student—\$25

Enclose a check made out to the Merchant's House Museum and mail to 29 East Fourth Street, New York, NY 10003, or charge your contribution.
 Visa
 Master Card
 American Express

Card No. _____ Exp. _____ Signature _____

You may be eligible for a matching contribution from your employer. If so, please enclose a matching gift form.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Tel. _____

The Merchant's House Museum is New York City's only family home preserved intact—inside and out—from the 19th century. A National Historic and New York City landmark, the house was built in 1832 and was home to a prosperous merchant family for 100 years.

Visit Thursday-Monday, 1-5 p.m.

29 East Fourth Street, New York, NY 10003

212-777-1089

www.merchantshouse.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

Through Monday, April 28

Flirting with Fans—

The Language of Love in the 19th Century

Features fans (we have 17!), parasols, and gloves from the collection.

"... a fascinating and well-researched undertaking, providing more than enough swoon-inducing romance for the tenderhearted." *Time Out New York*

Elegance Restored—

An 1840s Dress from the Tredwell Collection

A restored cotton voile dress worn by one of the Tredwell women in the 1840s is now on display, along with a photographic step-by-step record of the restoration process. The work was done by F.I.T. graduate student Helen Kapodistrias.

Opens Thursday, April 24

The Changing Silhouette of Fashion— Six Decades of Tredwell Costumes

The first costume in our parade of fashions from the collection will be on display, a cream-colored muslin gown from the 1830s.

Thursday, April 10, 6:30-9 p.m.

"Good Talk and Good Wine"

Thomas Jefferson's (260th) Birthday Celebration

Slide lecture by *Food Arts* magazine founding editor and publisher Michael Batterberry on *Thomas Jefferson: The Springtime of American Gastronomy*. Our 5th annual Birthday Party for TJ follows at 7:30 p.m. featuring some of his favorite foods and wine. \$50, members \$25. Reservations are required.

Friday, April 25, 6:30 p.m.

Lecture: *The Changing Silhouette of Fashion*

Marci Morimoto, costume historian, will trace fashion through the decades with a slide lecture highlighting costumes from the Museum collection. \$15, members \$10.

For reservations, call 212-777-1089 or e-mail nyc1832@merchantshouse.com

Mid-April to Mid-May

Bulbs-a-Burstin'

We've planted our garden with over 500 bulbs this year! Come "smell the dirt" and view the brilliance of spring as multiple varieties of crocii, snowdrops, daffodils, and grape hyacinths make their showy appearance in our garden.

Sunday, May 11,

Seating at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Mother's Day Tea in the Garden

Celebrate with a traditional afternoon tea in our garden. Buttermilk scones with clotted cream and jam, finger sandwiches, delicate "pretty" cakes, and frosted confections, served with pots of brewed English tea. Includes House tour. \$40 per couple, members \$30. Additional guest per couple \$15. Reservations required.

SPRING WINE TASTINGS

In collaboration with our NoHo neighbor
ASTOR WINES & SPIRITS

Spring Bouquets, Thursday, April 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

We celebrate the arrival of Spring and brighter days with dazzling, fresh wines from around the world.

Heading for the Hamptons, Tuesday, May 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Some of the world's best wines are right in our own backyard. Begin the Memorial Day weekend and launch of summer with the best of Long Island wines.

Rose with the Roses, Thursday, June 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Intoxicate your senses of sight, smell, and taste on an early summer night in our garden—we'll be tasting the pick of this summer's Roses in every hue of pink.

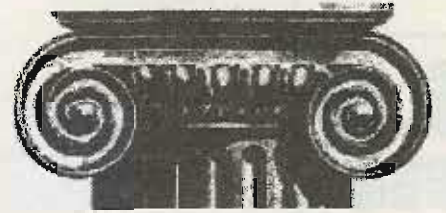
Each night, Astor's resident oenologists will present a selection of wines, which will be paired with delicious hors d'oeuvres, including pates and terrines courtesy of our friends at Les Trois Petits Cochons.

Each tasting \$45. Space is limited! Reservations must be paid for in advance. Cancellations and full refunds up to 48 hours in advance.



THE HISTORIC HOUSE TRUST OF NEW YORK CITY

The Museum's public education programs are sponsored in part through the generous support of the Public Service Award program of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.



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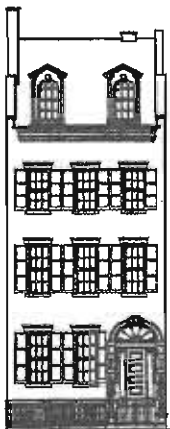
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June 5-16 (May 15-26 tour sold out!)
Travel Tour: 18th Century Sweden, The Golden Age of Gustavian Style
During his reign from 1771-1792, Gustav III transformed Sweden from a once-removed European country into the "Paris of the North." This 11-day tour includes lectures and guided tours of many of the magnificent palaces, castles, fortresses, and magnificent ancestral country homes, some private, that reflect Gustavian style. For information and a brochure, contact Thomas Hayes, Classical Excursions, P.O. Box 724, Stockbridge, MA 01262, (413) 298-3799.



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