

Easton Pearson fashion archive gifted to Museum of Brisbane

The complete collection of internationally acclaimed fashion house Easton Pearson, comprising more than 3300 signature garments, has been gifted to Museum of Brisbane, in the largest textile donation to an Australian museum.

Easton Pearson, created by Pamela Easton and Lydia Pearson, is arguably Brisbane's most successful design company. From the launch of the label in 1989 to its close in 2016, Easton Pearson's eclectic, boldly patterned and embellished fashions graced catwalks and showrooms across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, America and Australia.

Museum of Brisbane Chairman Sallyanne Atkinson AO thanked philanthropist and contemporary art patron Dr Paul Eliadis for his gift, the largest in the Museum's history, which will allow generations of design enthusiasts to access this complete collection.

"Dr Eliadis is a passionate patron of contemporary art and his generosity and leadership has shown his commitment to the culture and history of our city," Mrs Atkinson said.

"Pamela Easton and Lydia Pearson are pivotal historic and cultural figures in the life of our city and Museum of Brisbane, as the city's story teller and historic keeping place, is the perfect home for the Easton Pearson Archive."

Museum of Brisbane Director Renai Grace said it was important that the full collection, including one-off, specially commissioned and prototype garments, of Queensland's most significant fashion house had stayed in Brisbane.

"Easton Pearson designs were at the forefront of creating fashion as art in Australia and we are delighted Museum of Brisbane has the honour of sharing their extraordinary design story and legacy with Queenslanders and visitors from across the nation and the world," Ms Grace said.

"Each garment is an exquisite design object, appealing to our sense of sight, sound and touch through a remarkable variety of colours, shapes, fabrics and embellishments. They are also works of art, as Easton Pearson collaborated with artists and artisans from across the world, particularly India and Brisbane, to source and create hand-crafted beads, buttons and other embellishments, evocative prints and unique fabrics.

"We have some exciting plans for the Archive. Beginning this month, we will showcase the collection by rotating the garments in a permanent display here at the Museum. We are also in discussion with fashion and design educators across Brisbane on how best to open the Archive up to inspire and educate the designers of the future and, of course, we are planning a major exhibition for 2018."

Dr Eliadis said he made the donation to honour the career and artistry of Pamela Easton and Lydia Pearson and to ensure the collection stayed together and available to the public.

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“I could not be happier that Museum of Brisbane will be the new custodians of the Easton Pearson Archive and that people from all over the city and visitors from elsewhere will benefit from their great work and the rare opportunity to view an archive of great Australian design,” he said.

Ms Easton and Ms Pearson are working closely with Museum of Brisbane in documenting and conserving the Archive.

“It is incredibly important to us that our collection has stayed together, charting our evolution as designers and also the evolution of fashion in Australia and internationally,” Ms Easton said.

“We have a long history with Museum of Brisbane, in fact the Museum guides wear a scarf we designed, and we are delighted it will be the permanent home of our designs,” Ms Pearson said.

Museum of Brisbane is a not-for-profit organisation that relies on the generosity of organisations and individuals who share our passion for telling Brisbane’s stories, and showcasing the city’s art, culture and history through exhibitions, workshops, tours, talks and children’s activities.

Dr Eliadis gifted the Easton Pearson Archive to the Museum through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program.

For more information visit museumofbrisbane.com.au

2017 Schedule of exhibitions

On show until 16 July 2017

Robert Andrew: Our mutable histories

On show until 30 July 2017

Sit. Pose. Snap. Brisbane Portrait Photography 1850 – 1950

18 August - 12 November 2017

Tastes like Sunshine

1 December 2017 - 20 May 2018

Mao’s Last Dancer the Exhibition: A Portrait of Li Cunxin

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About Museum of Brisbane

Museum of Brisbane brings our city's vibrant art, culture and history to life through our FREE exhibitions, workshops, tours, talks and children's activities.

Located in City Hall, the Museum is part of the living history of the city, examining how Brisbane and its people change over time and how our individual and collective stories reveal our character and create our identity. We are also the keeper of City Hall's rich heritage, and visitors can experience a bird's eye view of Brisbane from the top of the iconic Clock Tower on one of our popular tours, as well as learn the stories behind City Hall during an insider's tour of the 90-year-old building.

Museum of Brisbane is an avid supporter of the city's artists, designers and artisans. We are dedicated to transforming their artistic vision into a stunning reality through our exhibitions and artist-in-residence programs. The work of Brisbane's artists, designers and chefs can also be found at the Museum Shop which stocks a bespoke range of jewellery, fashion accessories, home-wares, design objects, books, artworks and gourmet food products.

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