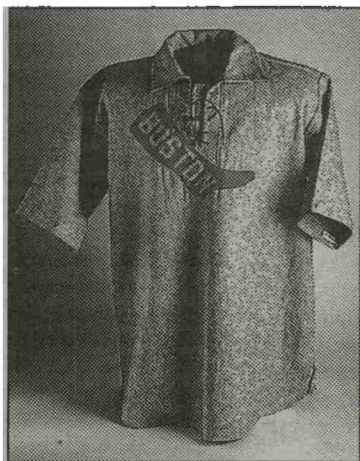


Baseball Jersey Exhibit Plays Ball At Worcester Art Museum

WORCESTER, MASS. — Over the course of 170 years, the baseball jersey has become an iconic emblem of American culture, extending well beyond a sports uniform to inspire fashion trends and serve as a means of everyday, individual self-expression. While the ubiquity of the American baseball shirt is undeniable, there has been little scholarly research on its importance to material and popular culture through time. On view at the Worcester Art Museum (WAM) through September 12, “The Iconic Jersey: Baseball x Fashion,” is the first museum exhibition to focus specifically on the design evolution of baseball jerseys and their impact on wider national culture. The show will feature 37 garments, including historic and contemporary jerseys as well as runway looks — from Jesse Tannehill’s 1908 Boston Red Sox Uniform Shirt to MIZIZI’s Black Lives Matter jersey — along with two, one-of-a-kind jersey chairs and other ephemera that capture the phenomenon of the baseball shirt, both on and off the field.

The exhibition coincides with and celebrates the construction of a new baseball stadium, Polar Park, in Worcester’s Canal District — just a short distance from the museum — and the arrival of the Boston Red Sox’s Triple-A affiliate to the city — the Worcester Red Sox or “Woo Sox.” Worcester has a long and storied history with



Wright & Ditson, Boston Red Sox uniform shirt, worn by Jesse Tannehill, 1908, wool flannel, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, B-176-61. Courtesy of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum/Milo Stewart Jr.

baseball, and the upcoming exhibition offers a singular opportunity to explore the sport’s most recognizable symbol as a work of art and design in its own right — and in doing so further collapse perceived boundaries between fine art and everyday objects.

The exhibition, which is organized by Erin R. Corrales-Diaz, PhD, WAM’s curator of American art, takes a broad view of the baseball jersey, illuminating equally its relationships to aesthetics and athletics and to collective and individual expression.

To orient the viewer within these different themes, the exhibition is divided into three major sections, including “The Modern Jersey,” which traces the evolution of aesthetic choices such as fabrics, typography, colors and patterns; “Experimental Design,” which examines sartorial decisions that deviate from the traditional jersey shape; and “Off the Field,” which explores the jersey as the ultimate articulation of fandom and its emergence in both luxury design and streetwear.

“‘The Iconic Jersey’ takes the ‘formal’ language and concepts that we typically apply to individual works of art and, by applying it to baseball jerseys, makes it possible to bring forward new ideas and ways of looking at an article of clothing many people take for granted,” said Corrales-Diaz.

“All of these jerseys, whether made for players or for fans, reveal an extensive design process in which a designer considers fabrics, fit, shape, colors, markings and logos. When we choose to put one on, we do more than just affiliate ourselves with our chosen team. We are also embracing design, a set of aesthetic choices that help to define who we are and how we look at the world.”

The Worcester Art Museum is at 55 Salisbury Street. For more information, 508-799-4406 or www.worcesterart.org.

