

**André Studios:
1930s Fashion Drawings and Sketches in the Collections of FIT and
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André Studios was a sketch, or *croquis*, subscription service for garment industry professionals, with offices located at 570 Seventh Avenue in New York City. The company was founded by designer Pearl Levy and her business partner, salesman Leonard Schwartzbach, sometime during the year 1930. Prior to striking out on her own, Levy was employed as a designer by coat manufacturer Rubin Endler Inc., located at 226 West 37th Street in New York. Also in 1930, Levy married Albert Louis “A. L.” Alexander, a police reporter-turned-radio announcer who became a broadcast sensation in the mid-1930s with his NBC radio programs *Goodwill Court* and *A.L. Alexander’s Mediation Board*.¹ After her marriage, Levy became known, both personally and professionally, as Pearl Levy Alexander, Pearl L. Alexander, and Pearl Alexander. By the early 1960s, Levy, now known as “Mrs. Pearl Lipman” following her second marriage, was successful enough to live comfortably at 1020 Park Avenue, a new luxury apartment building located at the corner of 85th Street in Manhattan.

While it is impossible to say exactly how Levy and Schwartzbach conducted their business, the historic record indicates that André Studios was one of the many design services which relied heavily on copying and adapting existing models to supply sufficient up-to-date product for satisfaction of customer needs. The industry has from time to time attempted to self-regulate outright fashion piracy; nevertheless, it is one of the industry’s open secrets that for generations, the appropriation of designs has been *de rigueur* for any fashion company if it wishes to flourish and survive.

¹ Dunning, John, *The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 288.

Copying the dress of others is a human social process - it is how fashion becomes style, and the way style can identify an entire period of historic time. But the commodification of copying as a singular industry did not occur until the rise of the couture in Paris, and the concurrent growth of the garment industry in New York City.

The Rise of Paris Haute Couture

The French haute couture originated with Rose Bertin, the first milliner-dressmaker to be celebrated as a designer. As the personal dressmaker to Marie Antoinette and the French court in the late 18th century, Bertin used her association with the Queen to promote herself and her sartorial styles to women who desired the distinction and cachet of a royal connection. It was during this time that the first periodicals containing fashion plates appeared both in France and England, conveying copyable fashion information across European borders in an easily portable format.²

The business of haute couture was firmly established in mid-19th century Paris by Englishman Charles Frederick Worth. Offering clothing made of luxury fabrics and materials, displayed on live models, custom-fitted to individual customers, and utilizing the finest construction techniques, Worth brought an exclusivity to dressmaking on a scale which had never before existed, and made his basic design silhouettes the signatory looks of their time. With the assistance of his two best customers, the Empress Eugénie of France and Austro-Hungarian Princess Pauline von Metternich, who helped to popularize his clothes among the upper echelons of European society, Worth became famous as the style setter for women's fashions in the mid- and late 19th century.

The invention and development of the sewing machine in the 1840s and 1850s

² Laver, James, *Costume & Fashion: A Concise History* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1982), 146.

gave Worth the freedom to expand his dressmaking business at a hitherto unseen rate.³ Using standardized pattern pieces which could be quickly machine-sewn prior to custom-fitting and hand-embellishment, Worth's workrooms could produce gowns in a rapid manner in order to meet the enormous demand for his exclusive product. Worth made clothes for members of every royal court and noble family in Europe and, more importantly, for the wives and daughters of newly-monied American millionaires. Worth did not care about his customer's origins; if you could afford his prices, then a Worth gown would be yours. These deep-pocketed Americans used their Paris gowns from Worth as a kind of weaponry in their struggle to gain acceptance in society and notoriety in influential circles.

At the same time, other Parisian dressmakers, seizing on Worth's success, adapted his working methods and built their businesses along his lines, training employees who would later continue these practices. By the turn of the 20th century, all the great couture houses of Paris had become required stops for well-to-do American women who wished to be fashionable. For these women, owning a Paris gown afforded them an identity and public image in society and a place that mattered in American life. A Paris gown was a status symbol that conveyed a message: not only were you wealthy, you were also a woman of taste, culture, grace and style.

The Rise of the New York Garment Industry

In 18th century America, as in Europe, most clothing was homemade. Only the wealthy could afford to hire private tailors or dressmakers to make their suits and gowns. The production of garments on an industrial level began with the mid-19th century

³ de Marly, Diana, *Worth: Father of Haute Couture* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1990), 102.

invention and development of the sewing machine, and the electrification of the industry in the latter part of the century greatly enabled large-scale production and efficiency. While these commodities, machinery and power, were vital to the industry's growth, it was the arrival in New York in the late 19th century of a large wave of Eastern European immigrants which changed the way American clothing was produced.⁴ This vast pool of inexpensive labor – mainly Jews, who brought with them tailoring skills – fueled the rapid expansion of the garment industry as an economic powerhouse, propelling both New York City and the United States into the 20th century as a dominant force in western fashion.

Cutthroat, freewheeling and unregulated, the American garment industry was, for more than a century, the kind of business in which a dedicated entrepreneur with “some know-how, a little capital, and plenty of fortitude [could] enter business with reasonable hopes of success.”⁵ Early on the industry began to shape itself around the functions performed in large-scale apparel production, with divisions based chiefly on whether or not a business ran its own factory production plant. By the 1920, three separate types of employers had emerged: manufacturers, who maintained both a showroom for garment design, sales and fabric purchase, as well as their own factory for garment construction; jobbers, who maintained a showroom for garment design, sales and fabric purchase; and contractors, who maintained a factory premises for garment construction only and were responsible for work contracted to them by manufacturers and jobbers. These distinctions nurtured specialization and flexibility, qualities vital to an industry based on

⁴ Helfgott, Roy B. et al., *Made in New York: Case Studies in Metropolitan Manufacturing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 48.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

a shaky foundation of marketplace uncertainty.⁶ While labor unrest and shifts in retailing patterns were ever-present foes of business stability, the actual process of garment design was directly affected by the seasonal nature of the business, which necessitated perpetual change, and the unknowable quality of style.

This elusive concept, *style*, could make or break a manufacturing firm. Unlike French fashion, a charmed craft with its ties to royalty and luxury, American clothing was burdened by its connection to industry and commerce, and lacked an aura of style, or reputation for elegance. Style was what made clothes desirable to customers, or gave them singularity as status symbols. The competitive nature of the industry, with its everlasting demand for new products, made the acquisition of style the most important element in clothing manufacturing. In an effort to replicate – or appropriate – the magical nature of French fashion and relieve business anxiety, it was always easier for a firm to copy a successful current style or a new style cloaked with the name cachet of a designer or department store. Achieving style by any means necessary lay at the heart of the industry.

Copying in Paris

By the late 1860s, Charles Frederick Worth was so successful that fashion and women's periodicals published illustrations of his gowns with regularity, making it simple for anyone with the price of a magazine to reproduce his clothes.⁷ Worth was initially horrified by this fashion piracy. Besieged by copyists, in 1868 he founded the *Chambre syndicale de la haute couture parisienne* as a means of protecting his designs. This, however, proved no deterrent to American dressmakers and department stores,

⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

⁷ Op. cit., de Marly, p. 95.

physically distanced from Worth by an ocean and intent upon their own success. By the 1870s, Worth's lucrative solution to this problem was to sell copies of his patterns and *toiles* directly to foreign dressmakers and to export his own finished dresses to foreign department stores.⁸ The exorbitant prices Worth charged for these items reflected his effort to maintain the exclusivity of his work: the dressmakers and stores would then demand higher prices from customers to cover their outlay for their Worth reproductions.

During a 1913 visit to the United States, the Parisian couturier Paul Poiret was outraged to discover that American department stores were copying his designs and using his name without his permission. A former Worth employee, Poiret was famed for his orientalist aesthetic, for liberating women's bodies from corsetry and changing the nature of dressmaking. The pages of his self-published art volumes, *Les Robes de Paul Poiret* and *Les Choses de Paul Poiret*, as well as the magazine *La Gazette du Bon Ton*, were filled with beautiful colored sketches of his fashions, and offered easy, tempting targets for reproduction. A difficult, often impractical man, Poiret's disdain for Americans was boundless, and upon his return to France he helped to organize *Le Syndicat de Defense de la Grande Couture Française* to shield French designs from American thievery. While the association, headed by couturiers and textile manufacturers, may have seemed like a fine idea, Americans thought it merely an expedient way for the French to mask their potential loss of business at the outbreak of the First World War.⁹ Poiret and his *Syndicat*, it was felt, were more an absurdity than a real threat, since cooler business heads in Paris had no desire to lose their heavy-spending American customers.

⁸ Ibid., p. 103.

⁹ "Paul Poiret Assails American Buyers," *The New York Times*, December 19, 1915, I: 17. Accessed January 19, 2011. <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F20F16FB3E5F17738DDDA00994DA415B858DF1D3>.

Despite the presence of these organizations and their promises of protection, the copying of French fashion continued unabated. What Worth, Poiret and their fellow designers found difficult to accept was the idea that once a fashion is made public, the creator's right to exclusivity vanishes, and it becomes fair game for anyone who wishes to copy it. Whether seen at a society ball, a dressmaker's fitting room, or in a store window, the intangible nature of a visual image becomes an irresistible offering to the acquisitive, to lesser artists, or those incapable of originality. The promise of financial reward for selling copies is too powerful a lure for this practice ever to cease.

While couturiers like Worth and Poiret might complain about being copied, they themselves were not above buying the work of others to pass off or adapt as their own. There was a longstanding practice in the couture to purchase sketches from job-seeking aspiring designers who wished to learn the business; yet curiously, the French did not view this as artistic theft. Since they were paying for these sketches, drawn by potential employees, they felt the designs naturally would belong to them. In the early 20th century, these same couturiers were often hard pressed to create the hundreds of original designs needed to fill their large collections, which they showed three or four times a year. To solve this problem, they purchased original sketches from freelance designers and artists who simply welcomed the extra cash.¹⁰ Many of these freelancers were young American artists eking out a precarious living in Paris, and for years afterward tales of their youthful Parisian adventures made for colorful background in their biographies. Among them was Chicago-born Main R. Bocher, later famous as couturier Mainbocher, who supported himself as a student of art and music in Europe by selling sketches to

¹⁰ Chambers, Bernice G., *Fashion Fundamentals* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947), 213.

designers like Molyneux as well as to the Paris office of *Harper's Bazaar*. Another young American, the future Hollywood costume designer and custom dressmaker Howard Greer, recounted in his autobiography how he happily sold a "stack of sketches" to Paul Poiret at his shop on the Riviera.¹¹

One of the most informative of these designers was Elizabeth Hawes, then a young Vassar graduate eager to learn the business of couture in Paris. In 1925, Hawes found initial employment as an assistant at a Parisian copy house. "Copying, a fancy name for stealing," she lamented in her memoir, *Fashion is Spinach*.¹² Describing her employer as "a small dressmaking establishment where one buys copies of the dresses put out by the important retail designers," Hawes offered detailed information about her job, which at first consisted of nothing more than purchasing new couture clothing for her employer to copy. She later supplemented this work by sketching new couture fashions for buyers from American manufacturers. The sole responsibility of these buyers, visiting Paris for the collections, was to purchase original gowns for reproduction back home. "As a buyer of expensive French models for American mass production, you stole what you could and bought what you had to."¹³ Sketch artists, she discovered, would accompany buyers to fashion shows, then race home and draw from memory the designs they had seen. Hawes said that a good illustrator could average 15 accurate sketches per collection and receive \$1.50 per sketch.¹⁴ With 10 to 20 collections shown in any given season, an artist such as Hawes might produce 300 sketches and receive \$450 in payment from a buyer (approximately \$5,400 today). What's more, buyers and employees from

¹¹ Greer, Howard, *Designing Male* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1951), 170.

¹² Hawes, Elizabeth, *Fashion is Spinach* (New York: Random House, 1938), 38.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

other manufacturers, as well as department stores, were just as eager to obtain copies of these new sketches and would match the prices paid by their competitors. “It was possible,” Hawes said, “to make as much as a thousand dollars in the three weeks of the openings” (\$12,000 today), and openings occurred three or four times a year.¹⁵ Sketch artists always ran the risk of being caught and banned from couture houses, but the financial rewards were so great that they learned to hone their skills in order to avoid detection. The drawings they produced were like golden treasure, a pirate’s booty in the Americans’ race for style, and the more enterprising of these artists quickly realized that here was a business opportunity too lucrative to be ignored. The American sketch subscription services were born in Paris during this tumultuous era between the two world wars, and for the next half century provided their services without public fanfare to the industry back home.

Like the manufacturers and department stores, the sketch services did not rely solely on the purchase of pirated artwork. As long as there were Americans willing to spend large amounts of cash, methods of procuring copies of new designs always could be found. Foreign buyers would breach the couture houses where they were weakest, offering low-salaried employees like seamstresses much-needed money for copies of dress patterns. Another good source, according to Elizabeth Hawes, were the mistresses of employees, who would rent their personal couture garments to anyone for copying.¹⁶ Buyers for American department stores permitted their colleagues to examine and sketch their new couture purchases before they were loaded onto ships leaving for the United States. Though the couturiers were well aware of the pirating going on behind their

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 45.

backs, they were hesitant to do much about it, since the instigators often were the very customers making large, legitimate purchases of gowns from their current collections (usually for copying back home). And everyone involved in this buccaneering was more than willing to sell copies of what they had obtained to anyone else for the right price. For American business, style was a commodity to be bought and sold rather than an aesthetic to be cultivated. In the struggle between art and commerce, commerce was a powerful adversary.

The subscription services offered books, or portfolios, of sketches to their customers periodically throughout the year. They appeared at intervals following the Paris showings reflecting the amount of time necessary for the new sketches to make their way across the Atlantic. During the 1920s, the only method of transport between continents was by boat, usually requiring less than 10 days' crossing time from Paris to New York. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic signaled a new era in commercial aviation, and in 1935 the Associated Press began transmission of photos by newswire. Technical advances such as these meant the subscription services could convey copies of sketches between continents far faster than before. A New York-based service such as André Studios would have maintained staff or agents in Paris to facilitate the gathering and purchase of sketches and their subsequent dispatch across the sea. "Within days of the Paris showings, salesmen for the sketch services . . . [were] making back-door visits along Seventh Avenue with portfolios of photostated sketches."¹⁷

Copying in New York

¹⁷ Roshco, Bernard, *The Rag Race: How New York and Paris Run the Breakneck Business of Dressing American Women* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, Inc., 1963), 163.

As the once-chaotic New York garment industry began to stabilize in the late 1920s and early 1930s, a group of successful high-end manufacturers emerged to raise the level of quality and originality in American clothing. Named for their businessman-founders, each “name” manufacturing firm developed its own look, making their clothing creations distinctive and identifiable. Since these names at the top of the company mastheads – such as E. L. Mayer, Ben Reig, and A. Beller – often had no design background, they employed their own anonymous in-house designer, or design staff, to create original styles and establish an image of exclusivity around the corporate name. While never admitting that these original styles were probably copies of new French fashions, bought and paid for during seasonal showings in Paris, they explained that their adaptations of Paris couture were more in line with what American women desired for their busy lives, and at better prices than the French originals. As wholesale manufacturers, they could not offer the luxury and personal service of French couturiers or American custom designers, yet they still prided themselves on the quality of their merchandise. Protecting their professional reputations was vital to them, and they managed to set the industry standards for the finest American ready-to-wear. Their lines were offered for sale around the nation in the top department stores and retail shops of the time, including Bonwit Teller, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale’s, Filene’s, Strawbridge & Clothier, Bullocks Wilshire, and I. Magnin.

Despite their own fashion piracy, these better manufacturers would react badly when they discovered their exclusive lines had been “knocked off” (copied at lower prices) by the hungry mid- and low-level firms in New York. Edward L. Mayer, founder of the firm E. L. Mayer, declared, “I spent almost as much time, money, and energy in

attempting to protect my designs, and my customers who had purchased my originals in good faith, as in assembling the material and putting them together.”¹⁸ One of the best-known of the high-end manufacturers was Maurice Rentner, whose namesake company specialized in fine dresses and suits. In 1933, in an effort to stem the tide of low-priced copies of his designs, Rentner became the driving force behind an organization of manufacturers known as the Fashion Originator’s Guild of America. Unlike earlier French protectionism, the Fashion Originators Guild sought to control design piracy not through restraints on creation or manufacturing, but through restraints on retailing. Guild members would register their original designs with the organization, and department stores agreed not to purchase or sell garments deemed to be copies of these clothes. Retailers who refused to follow the rules or sold questionable goods were financially penalized and denied business.

For three years, the Guild was successful at exercising control over copying in high-end retailing, and manufacturers became eager to produce more original styles, confident that their work would be protected. Problems arose when the Guild sought to control copying among the lower end manufacturers, and later tightened restrictions on retail associations who bought in groups. In 1936, the retailers fought back against the stranglehold on their business and filed suit against the Guild, alleging conspiracy in restraint of trade.¹⁹ The case made its way through the court system until it reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 1941 found the Guild in violation of antitrust law. The Guild ceased existence, and manufacturers at all price points were once again free to

¹⁸ Crawford, M.D.C., *The Ways of Fashion* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1941), 114.

¹⁹ “Business & Finance: Dress War,” *Time Magazine*, Monday, March 23, 1936. Accessed January 23, 2011. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,930861,00.html?iid=chix-sphere>.

copy what they liked.

In New York, no one would admit to copying, though everyone acknowledged its importance. “If there were not copying, we would have no industry,” said Tobé Collier Davis, the 20th century fashion consultant and forecaster.²⁰ The speed at which an exciting new design could be reproduced was astonishing, and hampered only by a firm’s access to the original model. Once a manufacturer had its hands on an original dress, photo or sketch, copies might be ready to ship to stores in 24 hours. A *Life* magazine article of August 9, 1937 described the rapid “descent” of the dress worn by the American socialite Wallis Simpson for her marriage to the Duke of Windsor, formerly King Edward VIII of England, the man who abdicated his throne to marry her. In about a month’s time, her \$250 Mainbocher Paris couture “Wallis blue” original had been copied and sold at every price level in New York City, finally hitting a rock bottom \$8.90 at “cash-and-carry” discount retailer S. Klein.²¹

Manufacturers used any means possible to obtain information about new styles. As in Paris, bribery always brought results. Young women were sent to New York’s custom dress shops to buy exclusive fashions for the wholesalers to copy, receiving the clothes as a reward once the patternmakers were finished with them. Firm employees would haunt the racks of department stores, buying dozens of dresses to take back to the boss. In-house models were paid for information about the new fashions currently being fitted to them. Delivery boys pulling racks down Seventh Avenue were stopped and bribed before they reached the retailers.

²⁰ Op. cit., Roshco, p. 25.

²¹ “The Descent of the Wally Dress,” *Life Magazine*, August 9, 1937, 57-58. Accessed January 15, 2011. http://books.google.com/books?id=oUUEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA15&source=gbs_toc&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false

The sketch subscription services were a boon to manufacturers during this frantic time. The Great Depression of the 1930s killed off many garment industry businesses, while the survivors struggled to remain solvent and competitive. Business owners needed to know what the opposition was doing in order that they might do it first. Purchasing a sketch subscription portfolio of the latest Paris styles could give a manufacturer the edge necessary for a successful season. Financially, it was far more prudent for a cash-strapped business to buy sketches by subscription than it was to travel to Paris for original fashions several times a year. An annual subscription to André Studios might cost \$200 or \$300. Coat and suit manufacturer Dan Millstein stated that trips to Paris for himself and his staff cost between \$10,000 to \$40,000 each season.²² The sketch services reaped the benefits from these anxious customers; one firm allegedly “grossed more in one season than all the couturiers made from their sales of models for export.”²³

During the Second World War, Paris and the rest of the European fashion markets were cut off from the United States, and the American fashion industry was forced to stand on its own. While the practice of copying did not abate, it was now American custom designers who sat atop the fashion hierarchy, as well as the department stores and exclusive shops that carried their lines, and they became the coveted targets of manufacturing piracy. After the war, the French couturiers quickly returned to the full-time business of making clothes, and the advent of Christian Dior’s “New Look” in 1947 sent American manufacturers racing back to Paris to resume their cat-and-mouse games of buying and copying.

²² Op. cit., Roshco, p. 160.

²³ Op. cit., Roshco, p. 164.

The fate of the sketch subscription services was tied to that of the garment industry. Just as increased labor costs drove manufacturing from New York City, and then from the United States, innovations in global communication and easy conveyance of information eventually made the services obsolete. Most seem to have vanished by the 1980s. While the work they performed - copying and adapting styles - remains an important element in the business of clothing manufacture, it can be accomplished today without the shadowy aid of sketch piracy. Omnipresent cameras and digital imagery allow for instantaneous style reproduction by anyone with an electronic device. As couturier Charles Frederick Worth long ago discovered, anyone with the means to reproduce a new design will do so if they wish it. No longer confined to nations or continents, the fashion industry has broadened to become a borderless, global business, still growing, still insatiable for style. It is only the mechanics for acquiring that style that have changed.

André Studios Collections and Significance

While there are no surviving business records pertaining to André Studios or its later incarnations, the company's output is well documented in the many extant volumes, or portfolios, of sketches produced during its five-decade existence. The contents of these volumes are varied, and all hold detailed information regarding the original design source material as well as the André design process. Some volumes represent the firm's completed seasonal design sketches for suits, outerwear and children's wear, which were packaged and sent to subscribing manufacturers and other businesses. These sketches are colored, dated, and show every garment in at least two views, front and back. Often there is a third view, or a close-up view, of an important design or construction detail.

Minimal text describes the important detail, the garment style and fabric selection.

Virtually every sketch is signed “André” or features the reproduced signature of André Studios’ business owner Pearl Alexander as well as the firm address and telephone number.

Other volumes offer a combination of sketches. The finished colored sketches for subscribers, on sturdy stock paper, are bound together with sketches on a different, lighter stock. These sketches, as well-rendered and detailed as the others, are uncolored and do not bear the Alexander signature nor firm contact information. They may be marked “Import” and bear letter codes corresponding to those listed on a key, found elsewhere in the volume. According to the key, these letter codes indicate the name of the Paris designer or couture house where the style originated. It is possible that these sketches represent the firm’s reproductions of the original pirated sketches from Paris, and as such, document the original couture fashions. In addition, the fashions illustrated on these uncolored sketches, and their important style details, can be spotted and identified on the colored sketches throughout the volume, reworked with other details to form new garments. This indicates exactly how the André firm could produce so many designs each season.

This method of “styling” – cutting and pasting important new style details to blend into garments featuring a basic silhouette – is a traditional method for spreading popular fashion trends. A firm like André might mix and match enough details in quantity and with enough variations to lessen accusations of design theft. In comparing the André colored sketches to the original monochrome Import sketches, it becomes clear how many variations on a single style theme Alexander and her design staff could craft

each season. With approximately 100 new Import sketches, the designers could more than double that number in adaptations, each featuring an important new design element presented in a different way. These important elements were clearly illustrated in the sketches and noted in the text as well.

To underscore this method of designing, the collection also contains volumes of scrapbooks of design details. Bursting with clippings culled from newspapers, magazines, and original sketches, these are illustrations of diverse garment types (for example, fitted suits, fitted coats, loose coats) organized by specific treatments (back belts, side slits, horizontal seaming). They furnished the André design staff with a kind of encyclopedic reference for styling ideas. Sharp-eyed fashion scholars will be able to identify the work of designers such as Dior, Adrian and Mainbocher among the fashion photos clipped for these volumes.

Other scrapbooks in the collection feature “André Advertisements,” clippings of department store newspaper ads of fashions produced by manufacturers based on André designs. Each newspaper ad is juxtaposed with the garment’s original André colored sketch, making it possible to trace the journey of a design from Paris original, to André, to department store sale, within the bounds of one or two André Studios volumes.

As a successful commercial enterprise for approximately five decades, André Studios must have maintained a very large customer base. While it is impossible to know exactly where the firm’s sketch portfolios may have traveled over time, it seems likely that the materials formerly held by Walter Teitelbaum, owner of the firm’s last descendant company, represent the largest collection of André Studios sketches to be found anywhere. These materials were donated by Mr. Teitelbaum in the 1990s to

the three New York City institutions (The New York Public Library, Fashion Institute of Technology, Parsons School of Design) which maintain them today. In addition, the Yeshiva University Museum Center for Jewish History in New York holds a large collection of sketches by André Studios and several of its related firms (Berley Studios, DuBarry Fashions). The Library of the University of California at Irvine has a collection of Berley Studios fashion sketches from the 1930s, and André Studios sketches can also be found for sale on the internet by art galleries with limited knowledge of the artwork and its origins.

With provenance from the firm's owners, the New York City institutional collections of André Studios sketches are major resources for important primary source materials for scholars, students, and researchers of fashion and garment industry history. The sketches copied from original French couture models may be the only representations of these garments to be found anywhere, and sketches of fashions by New York custom designers and department stores are just as vital. These images may provide a hitherto-unknown source of documentation for important and significant 20th century fashions. The sketches created for subscription distribution to customers are important artifacts for technical analysis regarding design creation, coupled with the encyclopedic volumes of clippings, as well as other portfolios of sketches representing interim steps in the design process. The scrapbook collections of André advertisements are particularly unique as primary source documentation of the procedures and practices of the American fashion industry.

Importantly, this project may represent the first time the work of the sketch subscription services has been examined in any detail or with an objective toward

veracity. The true nature of the services as major players in the history of fashion piracy should not be overlooked or sidestepped. Their work in commodifying the practice of copying was vital to the success of the industry they served, and taken in context, may help illuminate aspects of American commerce which still exist today. The sketch collections are important artifacts from a time when American industry powered the world and the garment industry powered America. As such, they offer a tangible window into the workings of a great American business at its 20th century zenith.

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