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CRISTÓBAL BALENCIAGA MUSEOA

Fashion
and Heritage

Cristóbal

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and Heritage

Cristóbal

EXHIBITION
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M^a Angeles Aramendi
M^a Pilar Aramendi Egaña
Silvia Arburua Aspiunza
Enrique de Areilza Churruca
Juan de Areilza Churruca
M^a Asunción Arrieta Fuentes
Arantza Arruti Múgica
Juan Luis Balenciaga Arrieta
Julián Juan Balenciaga Arrieta
M^a Asunción Balenciaga Arrieta
Marta Balenciaga Arrieta
Cristóbal Balenciaga Arrieta
Manuela Balenciaga Eizaguirre
Julián Balenciaga Eizaguirre
Paloma Beamonte Cominges
Bibiñe Belausteguigoitia de Solano,
Palacio de Zubieta, Ispaster/Lekeitio
Anabel Buffet
Angélica Castresana
Gachucha Coiffier
Silvia de Cuevas
Antonio Diez de Rivera
Sonsoles Diez de Rivera
Josefa Eizaguirre
Isabel Esparza Viela
Adoración Esparza Viela
M^a Concepción Esparza Viela
Teresa Fernández de Henestrosa Arguelles
Rita María Fernández Rivera
Solange Fernández Ruffin
Alexandrine Fernández Ruffin
Joaquina García de la Mata Barcón
Hubert de Givenchy
Arancha Gorostola Barayzarra
María Luisa Gurruchaga Zamacona
Magdalena Gurruchaga Zamacona
Ana Gurruchaga Zamacona
Adriana Huarte Giménez
Cristina Huarte Giménez
África Huarte Giménez
Jose M^a Irigoyen Leclercq

Mrs Rachel L. Mellon
Elisa Lassala Bau
Marta López-Ibor Aliño
María José López-Ibor Aliño
Blanca López-Ibor Aliño
Alicia López-Ibor Aliño
Sofía López-Ibor Aliño
Patricia López-Wilshaw
Meye Maier Allende
Isabel Marsans Astoreca
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Dina Menéndez Bastioni
Fernando Morillo
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Amelia Otaduy Salcedo
Enrique Portocarrero Lequerica
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Berengere Ruffin Creuze de Lesser
Fuencisla Saavedra
Helena Salama
Patricia Sanz-Briz Klein
Mariano Sanz-Briz Klein
Alexandra Segurado Da Silva
Jesús Talavera
Concepción Tapia de Zumel
Alodia Torrente García de la Mata
Joaquín Torrente García de la Mata
Fernando Torrente García de la Mata
Gabriela Torrente García de la Mata
M^a Ángeles Urbano
Igor Uria Zubizarreta
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Elizabeth Valls Klein
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Cristóbal Balenciaga in his Paris *maison*
© Juan Gyenes. Biblioteca Nacional de España



Cristóbal Balenciaga is one of the most influential fashion designers in history, and for many the most important. He is, too, one of the Basques to have achieved greatest international projection in the last two centuries. Admired and recognised in his day by his professional colleagues, fashion experts and a faithful clientele, the creator from Getaria is often referred to as an example and source of inspiration for today's fashion, while his proposals are so deeply embedded in our aesthetic appreciation of clothing that we find it difficult to understand that they weren't always there.

But what do we really know about Cristóbal himself? He wasn't easy to become acquainted with, there are very few pictures of him, and even fewer interviews given during his professional life. That absence from public life has cultivated an image of inaccessibility and has, without a doubt, added fuel to the myth.

Since 2011, Getaria's Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum constantly reminds us of the figure of this universal Basque. It is our society's tribute to the fashion designer's career and work; a confirmation that his creations deserve to be kept, to be studied, to be interpreted, and to be enjoyed today and in the future.

On this 125th anniversary of his birth, the Museum invites us to define the outlines – always blurred – of Cristóbal Balenciaga's personality, prompting our interpretation with a selection of personal garments, objects, documents, images and testimonials representing the variety of references held in our Museum's tangible and intangible collections.

Bingen Zupiria Gorostidi
Minister of Culture and Language Policy
Basque Government

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Exhibiting Balenciaga

JUDITH CLARK — Exhibition-maker

In the third iteration of the series of exhibitions entitled *Fashion and Heritage*, the conversation that has been created between collection and installation, archive and museology, adds a new layer of biography.

Always present through his practice – the development of his iconic silhouettes and their construction – Cristobal Balenciaga is made newly present not only through rare photographic portraiture, but also via the small number of objects that remain that were in his possession, which appear almost talismanic. They raise the question of the difference between a name and a label, a legacy, and a brand that relies on a name for a special kind of associative value.

If garments remind us always of the lives of those who wore them, the museum carries within it already multiple associations. Special relationships have been studied by the museum (the collection of Balenciaga dresses belonging to Bunny Mellon for example, where his designs contributed both to her public and private style and how we remember her) and this year there is an opportunity to scrutinise the garments that he chose to wear and that are symbolic of aspects of his life: a cross, a medal for example are unmistakable signs, a note showing the intimacy of exchange with his clients, and of course his own clothing, unaffected by the fashions to which he so importantly contributed.

Installing the exhibition has meant re-imagining the relationship between the museum's fixed vitrine and exhibition props that has evolved over the past three years. My work has recovered spaces and objects recorded as photographic evidence of Balenciaga's practice: an architectural detail from the salon, a clock, that have required

us to look closely at the margins of fashion's documentation. These props have been wheeled out of the way, to make space for Balenciaga's belongings in order to acknowledge the opportunity for their analysis.

The series has acknowledged the accumulative research that goes into a legacy both academic and curatorial, so in turn I have asked Dr Ben Whyman (an expert on constructing masculinities – be it for men or women) to reflect upon Balenciaga's objects in the museum archive and which route he would choose to read them.

CBM 2000.93

Klein polo shirt in blue jersey belonging to Cristóbal Balenciaga

© Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa/Jon Cazenave



A Personal Wardrobe

BEN WHYMAN — Centre for Fashion Curation, University of the Arts London

Cristóbal Balenciaga held his life close to his chest. He was unassuming, humble, avoiding the press and social events. Finding out about him is about reading other people's perceptions and second-hand information (valuable nonetheless) of him.

People said of Balenciaga that he was charming, vulnerable, liked his food. That he was discreet (about his personal and public life). That he was the monk in the atelier, the builder of clothes, carefully evolving his designs over time, creating elegant constructions on the bodies of women who could afford his creations. That he had a rough edge to his personality at times in the atelier when under pressure, and that he was generous and caring towards his staff.

Other evidence about Balenciaga's life is revealed in the photographs of him. They suggest a dapper, sophisticated man. Always be-suited in public, always a neatly knotted tie or bow tie at his neck. In the atelier, a white smock with a neck tie was his uniform, hard-working and rigorous in his attention to detail. In private photos, a certain *dégage* attitude emerges, cravats loosely overlapped at his neck, at ease in looser tops (inspired by fishermen smocks of Spain) draped around his torso.

But what of the primary evidence? Other than the letters Balenciaga wrote, the personal photographs, and anecdotes of intimate friends and family, there is other evidence – the material culture he surrounded himself with, such as the clothes he wore.

Material culture is a detailed study of the things we surround ourselves with on a daily basis as individuals, as cultures and societies. Clothes are a prime example of material culture. We use clothes to express our personal, and our socio-cultural beliefs.

Material Culture Analysis (MCA) is one research method used by material culture researchers. Using slow looking, researchers

pay close attention to every construction detail and mark on clothes worn by a subject. This method reveals things about the clothes we wear, how and why we wear them. In this way, researchers can construct what has become known as the biography of an object.

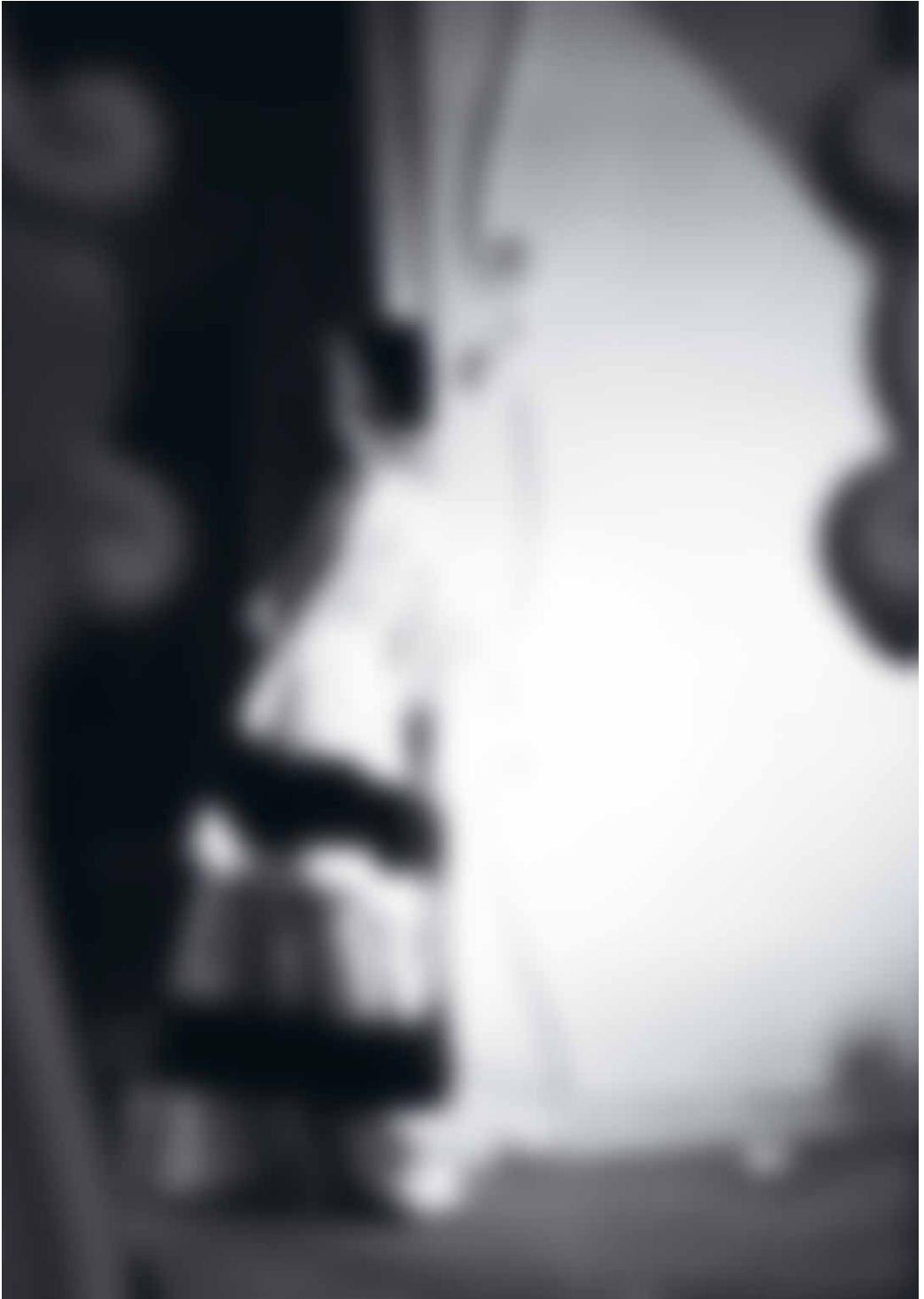
In this instance, by paying close attention to the clothes Balenciaga wore we are able to construct biographies of his garments. What do Balenciaga's own clothes reveal about him as a person?

There are a number of garments from his personal wardrobe in the Museum's collection. *En masse*, the wardrobe suggests someone who loved symmetry, order, texture and tactility (nubbly corduroy trousers, wrinkled, casual linen shirts, a particular style of knitted jersey polo shirt). Someone who liked materials, who purposefully chose the right cloth for the right garment for the right occasion.

Undertaking MCA of his clothes reveals the materiality (the wear and tear of cloth, the abrasions and marks) left behind as Balenciaga's body moved with and against the surfaces of his clothes. Individually, each of these garments skimmed the surfaces of his body. They took on his physical shape, the pattern of his movements. In this way, the re-forming of these clothes over time reveals clues, unspoken, of his life: of his gestures (hand across his chin or elegantly draped over his chest) or his way of working in the atelier (body slanting to one side as he assessed the line of a toile).

There is an organic quality to his designs for *couture* clients, and in his personal wardrobe that is revealed in the materiality of Balenciaga's clothing.





On the Tangible and Intangible

IGOR URIA — Director of Collections at the Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum

“The artist [...] remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent...”¹

The closure of the *Maison Balenciaga* in Paris in May 1968 was defined by some media outlets as the end of an era. The first exhibition in the curatorial series *Fashion and Heritage*, inaugurated in March 2018, came to be a short while before celebrating the 50th anniversary of the event and its surrounding circumstances. Under the European Year of Cultural Heritage, this series offers some insights into the transmutation of Balenciaga’s work, from fashion to a museum archive, to take on status as heritage, and also highlights chronologically the key events in his life and the evolutionary coherence through his contributions to the history of fashion, and even how his legacy changed over time.

The first exhibition in this series, subtitled *Conversations*, links the exhibited item to the visual references and previous research, with layers of interpretation that refer to the item itself and grant its status as heritage.

In *Contexts*, the second part of the series, the spotlight shines on the importance of surrendering to the concepts of space and time, both separately and together. It also highlights other aspects that envelop Balenciaga’s work, related to the specificity of fashion and the designer’s biography. In this way, it contributes to a progressive appreciation of the object as a cultural asset and the role that the museum itself plays in this process.

2020 marks the 125th anniversary of Balenciaga’s birth. For this occasion, the Museum seeks to simply evoke Cristóbal.

¹ James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 1916.

To shed light on the man who preferred concealing himself behind the curtain and working in the silence of his workshop; to catch a glimpse of the family member, friend or boss; to demystify and humanise the Master of *Haute Couture*.

In this attempt to shed light, catch a glimpse of, and humanise Cristóbal, we do not intend to make a biography in order to learn everything about him, to cast aside the curtain and interrogate him about his life. We seek to establish a vision, with the same discretion and politeness he enjoyed in his relations, through what has reached our hands.

“Reality is made of crossing fragments of life that come from many places, and no one knows where they are going”.² These fragments of life show us a reality far-removed from the fantasy and rumours he so abhorred, having travelled through time in other places, in other hands and through other experiences. These fragments show us the tangible and the intangible of Cristóbal.

The corporeal, the material, the tangible is what makes up a great part of the Museum’s collection, what’s preserved after having been designed, created and taken through different moments and spaces. The context of the life cycle of these objects is always very important to us, since it provides value and diverse interpretations, as can be seen in the exhibitions where they have been shown.

Balenciaga’s legacy mainly consists of his creations, his stylistic evolution and his perception of beauty and elegance. In turn, the Museum has collected from the beginning other objects and documents related to him. In this commemoration they are exhibited with the aim of portraying his presence.

Cristóbal Balenciaga’s public persona was always neat but elusive. This is how he was described in press features such as the article published in March 1940 in the magazine *Harper’s Bazaar*, photographed by Man Ray. From the designer’s perspective, what mattered were his creations, not the creator. Therefore, few pictures of him exist in comparison with the public profile of other designers from his time, more at ease with a society of visibility, appearance, elitism and narcissism.

The images that are with us here today have been engraved in our minds, and in the mind of a large portion of the

² César Aira, *Continuación de ideas diversas* (Continuation of Diverse Ideas). Pub. Universidad Diego Portales. 2014

public. However, in daring to speak of him, from my own personal perspective, we must consider the context in which these images were taken. Some photographic portraits were designed to advertise perfumes, such as those made by Louise Dahl-Wolfe and Madame D'Ora.

Throughout a lifetime, circumstances of a personal (moves, travels, accidents) and general (social, political, economic events) nature may lead to the loss, neglect, destruction or censorship of images. This gives an added value to each of these images, where they were taken and the information they provide to us.

In this regard, the warmth and approachability conveyed by Luis Corbella's picture is highly significant. This photographer worked in the same building where Cristóbal's shop-display room was located (9 Avenida de José Antonio, ground floor, right-hand door).

Also of note is the series of photographs taken in 1967 by Henri Cartier-Bresson, which reveal the hidden creative process of Cristóbal Balenciaga in his shop on Avenue George v in Paris. We see, for example, the chair where Cristóbal sat, impassive, impervious to the hustle and bustle.

With great care and interest, those closest to the designer (family, collaborators and friends) have kept these items, weaving them into their everyday lives to finally share them in this exhibition.



Cristóbal Balenciaga
photographed by Man Ray
© *Harper's Bazaar*, 1940

Ranging from the workshop chair, kept for years by his great admirer Hubert de Givenchy before donating it to the Museum, to his work tools, donated by collaborator Ramón Esparza, and awards that Cristóbal was given while living, loaned by the Balenciaga family...all these items provide us with a brushstroke of his life, bringing us closer in a symbolic and emotional way to the person he was.

“The world is the collection of events, occurrences and, lastly, states of existing things”.³ In this state of existing things, meaning the state of tangible, material things, we must mention the clothing belonging to Cristóbal that is still with us here today.

Most of the pieces preserved were given by Cristóbal himself to the next owner. This is a demonstration of the generosity which, in some cases, led him to bequeath garments from his own wardrobe to help others. In the 1960s, for example, he gave Antonio Diez de Rivera e Icaza, son of the Marchioness of Llanzol, while visiting in Paris, an impeccable tuxedo made in 1945 by a Spanish tailor, so that he could attend an unexpected social event.

With the information provided by all these items that we still have today, we can suppose that from the 1950s on he only completed his daily outfit with ties bearing the label “Balenciaga. Paris Cravates”, untying them from his neck at certain times and giving them to different people as a sign of affection: Jesús Azcárate, Miguel Cardona, etc.

In his impeccable wardrobe we can find commissions made by tailors from Paris (Opelka), Barcelona (Sastrería Bel y Cía.) or Madrid (the Camisería Burgos, overseen by San Sebastián-born Santiago Olave and still open today on Cedaderos Street, near the Gran Vía).

All this tangible material, the garments he wore, take on an added value with their immaterial, intangible contribution. In short, they bear witness. Because, even though there is nothing to tell us who his main tailor was in Spain, the oral testimony of an employee of Sastrería Mogrovejo, at Plaza de la Independencia in Madrid, reveals the closeness he shared with these Bilbao-born tailors relocated to Madrid, and gives details of commissions made during the employee’s time with the company.

³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, 1921.



CBM 2000.9
White shirt
Bel y Cía. Barcelona
©Cristóbal Balenciaga
Museoa/Jon Cazenave

Thanks to the well-versed contribution of those who can still tell their stories, or those who shared experiences with the designer, we have an immaterial archive that brings us closer to Cristóbal the friend, to Cristóbal the boss, to Cristóbal the family member, and even Cristóbal the customer.

The Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum not only holds the designer's oeuvre. The preservation, knowledge and growth of his legacy also means collecting all testimonies, conversations and experiences of anyone who had a relationship with the master of *haute couture*, in all his facets.

In the year 2014, the Museum launched the research project *Las manos que cosen* (The Hands that Sew), which aims to collect, preserve and share all the intangible material that is also a part of Cristóbal Balenciaga. This material consists of all the verbal and written testimonies from employees and staff at his different homes.

Similarly, we were also interested in compiling all the experiences shared with us by people who belonged to his world: clients, friends, neighbours, relatives, etc. All this intangible material, extracted from their generous testimonies, show us the importance of his constant, lifelong values, and the silence reigning over them.

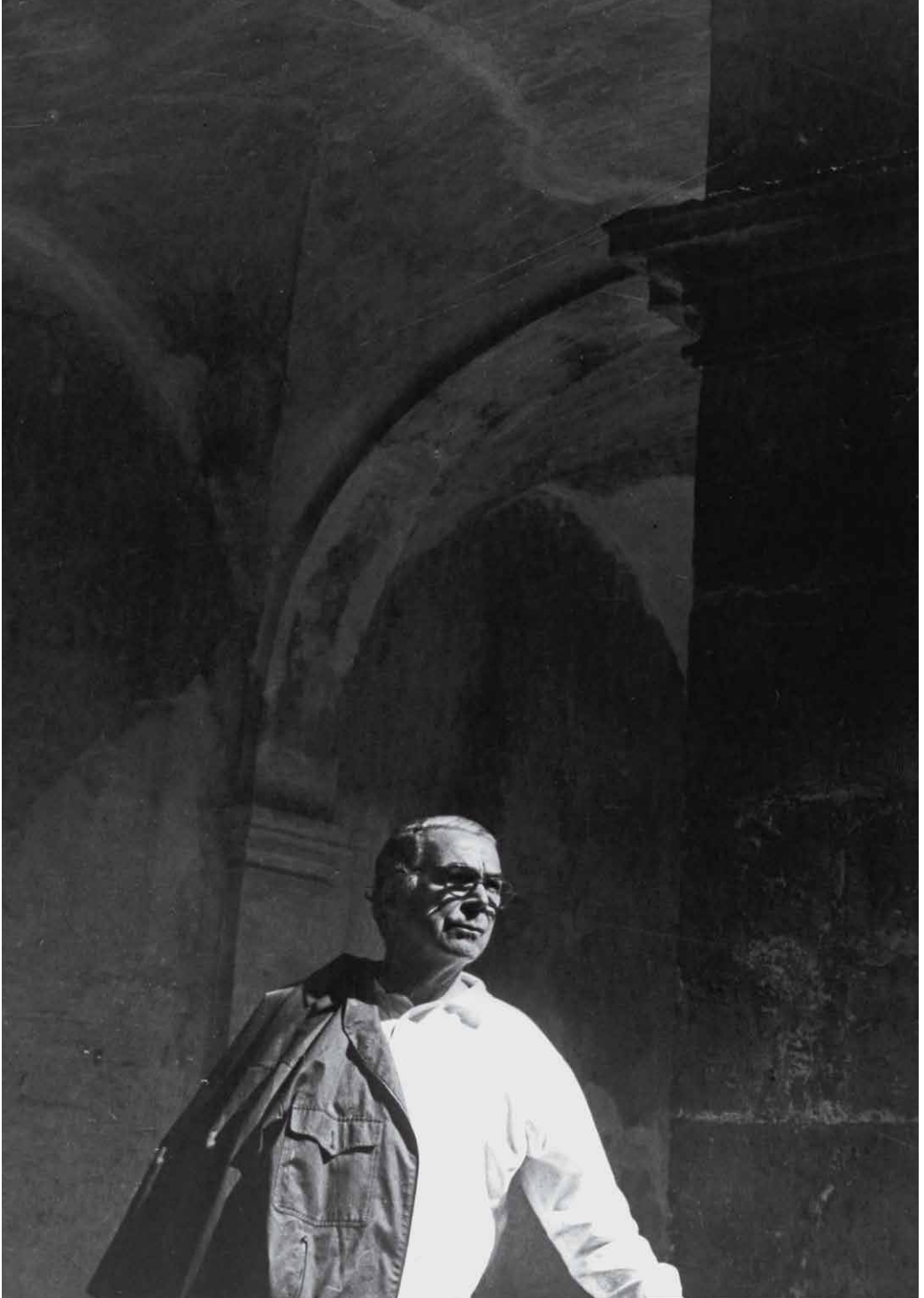
The creative silence, the discrete silence of his presence and his statements, which remind us of the Spanish saying “*uno es dueño de sus silencios y esclavo de sus palabras*” (we are owners of our silence, and slaves to our words). This intangible material is made up of *conversations* offered by the people who had the privilege of sharing personal experiences with the designer. We must not forget that they all took place within a *context* which, with the passage of time, may be nuanced by each character’s own journey.

On this occasion, we have direct memories from people who experienced him as a family member, as a friend, as a work partner in the profession that was Cristóbal’s life.

CBM 2000.155-158
Work tools belonging to Cristóbal Balenciaga
Metal awl, wooden awl, tracing wheel and thimble
© Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa/Jon Cazenave







Conversations about Cristóbal Balenciaga

In the year 2014, the Cristóbal Balenciaga Museum launched the research project *The Hands That Sew*, an initiative to collect, house and disseminate all of the intangible material inherent to Cristóbal Balenciaga.

The project endeavours to identify and highlight the contribution of those who worked over the years for Cristóbal Balenciaga, to preserve the techniques of the trade used in his ateliers, while revealing information about the personality of the fashion designer from the perspective of his family members, friends, workers and collaborators.

The testimonials appearing below are a small sample of this work and have been chosen both because they have never been published before and because they belong to three different areas of Cristóbal's life.

Natalia Figueroa

I met Cristóbal Balenciaga at the Cigarral de Marañón, in Toledo. I can't remember the date, but I must have been thirteen or fourteen years old. He was a friend of my parents, and when we went to Paris, there was always dinner at his house and other get-togethers with mutual friends.

Time passed, I grew "older" (eighteen, nineteen...) and Cristóbal took me in, he invited me and "paid attention" to me. It was a *coup de foudre*. I stole his friendship from my parents. We began corresponding, and never stopped. Mobiles, emails and texts didn't exist. We had letters.

During the summer, Cristóbal settled into his lovely home in Igueldo, in San Sebastián. Like all his houses, it was a veritable lesson in good taste. He himself was a lesson in good taste in all aspects, an example of physical and spiritual elegance, refinement, sensitivity. Paris, San Sebastián, Madrid... Our friendship grew ever larger, ever deeper.

The last time I saw him was at his flat in Madrid on Álvarez de Baena street, where I had lunch with him whenever he came. It was 1972. He had discovered Jávea. He had come from there and was going back to the Parador. That enclave, the calm, the sea and the climate were the best medicine for his arthrosis. I hadn't been to Jávea, and we made plans to meet for the following weekend.

– I'll pick you up at the Manises airport – he told me.

I was to marry Raphael four months later. The date and location of the wedding were a carefully-kept secret.

– In Jávea, I'll tell you everything – I promised him.

But that wasn't possible. There was no weekend at the Parador. His gigantic heart did not wish to keep walking.

Cecil Beaton wrote of Balenciaga: “He gives the fleeting impression of a great, placid bird, descending from its branch to dry its plumage before resuming flight, alone.”

His greatest publicity was evading publicity. Journalists and photographers sought after him. He fled from them, big parties and the sparkling social life that yearned for him. He was happy amongst his friends, the real ones. I never heard him speak ill of anybody. He understood and justified everything. “Live and let live” could have been one of his mottos.

I keep as a treasure the letters he wrote me while preparing his last collections in Paris. He was constantly considering the idea of ending, of closing his couture shop. But he couldn’t make up his mind. “My people... So many depend upon me... How can I tell them I do not wish to continue...?”

Five days after he left, I published an article in the newspaper *ABC*, *Letter to Cristóbal Balenciaga*.

“My dear Cristóbal. Forgive me. Because for the first time, I am disobeying you and failing to keep my word: I’m writing about you. But today (it still seems impossible) I can’t ask you for permission or hear your prohibition. I no longer have you.”

Almost 48 years have passed. One of the greatest gifts of my life was knowing, being with and loving him. His photo remains on my table, his voice, his smile, his serenity. I have him.

His absence is always presence.

Natalia Figueroa Gamboa is a Spanish journalist and writer.

Rosa Medina Balenciaga

When I was seventeen, my uncle Cristóbal invited me to his home in Paris, and that's where I truly began to get to know him. He was a magnificent, sombre and affectionate person, self-taught with exquisite manners.

Sometimes he asked me to pick him up at the workshop. On one occasion I went there and he told me to wait for a moment while he finished. Then he asked me to come near. He unrolled a piece of fabric and, with some pins, improvised on my body a dress that became a model the next day. I couldn't feel prouder of my uncle's creativity.

One day he noticed a Scottish-tailored outfit I had had made for me at the Madrid shop. He asked me who had done it, and I answered timidly, because I knew he wasn't always pleased with how this tailor made some of her garments. But this time he asked me to congratulate her the next time I saw her, because it was perfect. He knew what it might mean to that lady that my uncle acknowledged her work.

He never had a relationship with his clients, except when they were his friends. I thought it was amusing to see him behind the partition during his fashion shows. He never let himself be seen at them. He didn't even greet people when it was over. In fact, there was a rumour that he didn't even really exist.

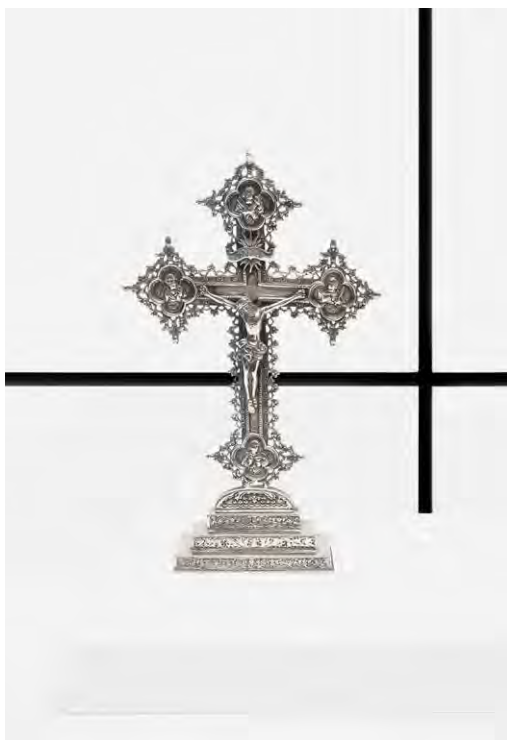
Another thing that would be surprising today was his selection of models. He didn't look for beauty in the girls; what mattered was that they knew how to walk. Attention had to be focused on the dress. On one occasion, when the collection was about to be presented to a hall filled with clients, a model's boyfriend passed away in a motorcycle accident. Given the circumstances, and under the astonished gaze of my mother, it was decided that I would go out in her stead. I knew the clients would really be looking at the dress, so I was quite calm.

He was as demanding in his work as he was in his personal life. Poor manners especially irritated him. On one occasion, he asked my aunt and me to come greet some guests. One of them didn't stand up when we were introduced, and my uncle was shocked; this sort of thing was beyond him.

When *prêt-à-porter* emerged, he always said he wouldn't do it. But one day he saw me wearing a *boatiné* robe purchased at a large department store in Madrid. He asked if he could examine it and remarked that the pattern was quite good. The reason I mention this is because, although he did not wish to work with it, he was not against it and knew how to value a well-made item.

My memory of Uncle Cristóbal is that of a believer, and a demanding, restrained, affectionate person who was always very attentive to his friends and relatives.

Rosa Medina Balenciaga is
Cristóbal Balenciaga's great niece.



CBM 2015-55
Silver cross belonging to Cristóbal Balenciaga
© Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa / Jon Cazenave

Fernando Martínez

I first met Cristóbal when I reached Paris, through mutual friends from Barcelona. I went to *Vogue* magazine and explained to them that I was very interested in *couture*. They told me: “You must go see Cristóbal Balenciaga”. So, I went to see him, and he welcomed me in the most wonderful way, which was a huge surprise. He said to me: “Let’s find out if you’re any good for this profession.” And after a trial period of two or three days, I started working for him.

I had knowledge about cutting fabrics, because my mother was a wonderful designer. She mainly worked for the most important family in Barcelona. I lived in that environment and soaked it up, which helped me a great deal later on.

Cristóbal wasn’t a cold person in how he treated others, but his intuition immediately told him how people really were. If you see his photographs, look at his eyes. He applied that intuition to everything, including his work, how he looked at fabrics.

He was not easy to pin down – on the one hand he appeared to be a very formal person, but he was also able to laugh his head off. You may be wondering: How can that be? I think the best definition of Balenciaga is that he was undefinable.

The atmosphere in the atelier was rather strict. People used to panic in his presence, and the place was very quiet. There were twenty-five of us, and when *monsieur* Balenciaga arrived, total silence reigned. He treated everyone with his heart on his sleeve, but everyone treated him with the utmost respect. Anything that distracted him from his work, he deemed unforgivable. He was like a surgeon.

He very rarely dealt with his clients. But if he was driving in his car and saw a lady wearing a coat designed by him that he considered not-quite-right, he asked the driver to stop and told her to go to his workshop. She would take off the coat and it would be sewn up again. He was a perfectionist, but always within certain limits.

More than once, he called a model who was wearing a finished dress. He suddenly removed something and added something else as we all stared in awe. Because what was already perfect became something even more special. And those were the models that fascinated people like Diana Vreeland. There was the genius, the artist.

When he was deep into the process of creating a new collection, the only people around him were Hubert de Givenchy, Ramón Esparza and me. The creative process was very simple: the first fifteen or twenty days, we made many drawings and sketches that later went often unused. While making the sketches, we received all the fabric providers. That was some chaos! Fabric providers from Paris, Italy and England came to the studio... everything perfectly scheduled beforehand. And Cristóbal, looking at the fabrics, sometimes said: “*coup*” (“cut”), and others, to avoid annoying the provider, said “*echantillon*” (“sample”). Then, he cut a small piece of each and prepared a palette with different colours and materials, it was marvellous.

After selecting the fabrics, he went to San Sebastián, Madrid or maybe London. When he returned, we began working with the drawings, and he would paste small samples of fabric on each drawing, making lists with the dresses and names of models. Those drawings were sent to the workshops to prepare the patterns.

It's not that he spent twelve months a year locked up in his shop. He went to Igueldo, to his house in Orleans, to Italy, he invited friends home for dinner... but when he began a collection, he didn't stop. He was very rigorous. And at the same time, he loved travelling, going to the theatre and the cinema.

But more than anything, he liked going to San Sebastián. He had his circle there, like he did in Paris with the Maeghts and Marc Chagall. He appealed to artists, because he appreciated them. When he was with them, he spoke simply and with admiration, which truly surprised them. How could a monster designer be such a humble man? He was a man of contrasts.

Fernando Martínez was an illustrator and Cristóbal Balenciaga's collaborator since 1956.

Miguel Cardona

It was the Marchioness of Llanzol who suggested that Balenciaga come to Jávea. He was suffering from a terrible bout of depression. “The climate is quite pleasant, the people are charming, there’s a beach and fishing port, which is something you very much like because it reminds you of Getaria.” So he came to spend a few days. It was the year 1972. He came with Ramón Esparza and one of his nieces. One day, they were taking a stroll and suddenly it started to rain. A taxi driver colleague said to them: “Get in, it’s raining. You’re going to the *parador*, aren’t you?” “How do you know?” People like them were clearly lodging at the *parador*.

My colleague gave them a card, in case they needed his services. They wanted a full-time driver and he wasn’t interested, so he recommended me. I went to see him, and he said: “Are you willing to come with us without knowing us?” “Well, you don’t know me, either.” “But we have references from the manager of the *parador*, who tells us that you’re a good person. How much do you earn right now?” I told him what I earned, and he said to me: “Well, don’t worry about the money.”

My first job was to take Ramón Esparza’s niece to the airport. That’s when I started driving the Rolls Royce. We regularly travelled to Madrid, Paris and Igueldo. The house in Madrid had a very different style from the one in Paris, which was typically French, and the one in Igueldo, which was more sombre and rustic. In the dining room there was an old table and some very valuable chairs. It wasn’t a luxury home, but rather lordly instead. The lamps were beautiful. I remember that I once fixed one that wasn’t working. In Madrid, I said to them: “The next time we spend four or five days here, I’ll paint the walls of these rooms.” And *monsieur* said: “Wonderful, this is what I’ve always wanted: someone who can take care of things around the house.”

During the last months of his life, we travelled to all his houses and he explained to me everything I needed to know about

them. It was as if he had received notice that he was to bid them farewell and leave them in good hands. He intended to purchase a house in Jávea, but that's when he fell ill.

The journey to the hospital in Valencia was difficult, ...because the road from Jávea wasn't good and the ambulance ride was bumpy. So we switched to the Mercedes 280 and resumed the journey with the ambulance behind us. He said: "When I leave the clinic, I'll call my lawyers and draw up a will". We entered the clinic around seven in the evening. The doctor told us: "Say your goodbyes, because he's going into intensive care and you can't go inside." That was the last time we spoke to him.

The next morning, a hospital nurse woke me and told me that Ramón Esparza wanted to see me. When I arrived, he said to me: "*Monsieur* has died. I'm sorry. He was very pleased with you." And that's true, because we got on splendidly. He liked me. I had always dreamed of being a driver for a great person, and my dream came true. I only spent two months with him, but it was like winning the lottery.

Ramón Esparza, the Marchioness of Llanzol's daughter, the priest and I went to the burial in Getaria. Ramón said to me: "Miguel, I know working for me isn't the same as working for him. But if you don't want to return to Jávea, you can stay on with me. I'm returning to Paris to work for Chanel." So I went to Paris with him. But I felt lonely and decided to return to my home. Mr Esparza understood it, because he was also a wonderful person.

Miguel Cardona was Cristóbal Balenciaga's personal driver in 1972.



Conversations with Cristóbal Balenciaga

Cristóbal Balenciaga preferred to stay away from the limelight. His figure has always been shrouded in a halo of mystery sustained by his absence from public life and his image of inaccessibility. Always focused on his creations, his best publicity was without a doubt to avoid publicity.

“Why do they need to take my photograph? I’m not a sage or a victorious general”, he justified himself. In fact, he only gave two interviews during his lifetime: to *Paris Match* in 1968, and to Prudence Glynn for *The Times* in August 1971. His figure continues to arouse great interest today, and reading these interviews, whether for the first time or re-reading them in the context of this exhibition, may help us to talk with Cristóbal.

Balenciaga Becomes a Face

VIRGINIE MERLIN

The biggest event of the couturiers' "season" is an absence: that of Balenciaga. That's nothing unusual in itself. Just like the sovereigns of the East, the master of Avenue George V reigned by his invisibility. Even in his own salons he would never appear in public. And scarcely three or four photographs were known to have been taken of him. But this time Balenciaga's absence also means that of his collection: a disappearing act. The mystery, the *beau* Cristóbal, the queens' couturier, has decided to shut up shop.

Our reporters were the first members of the press to find the missing man, deep in a park on the banks of the Loire, in a country pile with pink plastered walls, *La Reinerie*, his ultimate secret. He had bought the property more than thirty years previously, but had never found the time to go there, having preferred to stay in Paris on weekends, working in the silence of his deserted ateliers. Today, in corduroy trousers and blue canvas jacket, Cristóbal Balenciaga finally breaks the silence of a lifetime. A life which, like that of so many of Spain's famous poor people – from Goya to El Cordobés – will have been nothing but a long and painstaking grapple with their turn of fate.

"My father was a fisherman, and my mother a village seamstress. I was lucky in that the village of Getaria, near San Sebastián, was the summer residence of a great lady, the Marchioness de Casa Torres, great-grandmother of the future Queen Fabiola. I only had eyes for her when she would arrive at Sunday mass, climbing down from her tilbury carriage, with her long dresses and her lace parasols. One day, mustering up all my courage, I asked her if I could visit her wardrobes. Amused, she accepted. And those months were marvellous: every day after school, I would accompany the women working for the marchioness in the ironing room, on the top floor of her summer palace, caressing the different fabrics, examining every fold, every stitch of those masterpieces."

Balenciaga and *la vie d'un chien*

WORLD EXCLUSIVE: PRUDENCE GLYNN
TALKS TO THE GREATEST COUTURIER

Every arena has its names which capture the popular imagination and at the same time its names which those who care very deeply about the particular metier prefer to admire. In postwar fashion Dior became a household word through the influence of the New Look, but for the purists there was only one proper direction in which to bow, Cristóbal Balenciaga.

Balenciaga, at 76, is not in the least as I expected him to be, even though my expectations were of the vaguest. He has an intense dislike of publicity and is virtually never seen, never photographed and never quoted. Even people who have been in fashion for many years cannot tell one what he is like as a person, they just remember seeing him or meeting him once or twice, like Royalty. Because of his overwhelming influence on fashion and his position as arguably the greatest practitioner of the art of *haute couture* ever, Balenciaga has long been the most sought after quarry for journalists, but you need a remarkable stalking horse to get near him. There are endless stories about attempts to corner the elusive Spaniard, dedicated quote-hunters have eaten day after day in his favourite restaurant, expanding their waistlines and eroding their wallets in the hope of just a glimpse of him, but he never came, probably preferring to starve that meet them. It is said that the woman at the paper stall opposite his front door used to wave her feather duster when it was all clear for him to dodge out.

This obsessive dislike of publicity is in no way caused by the feeling that he is too grand to bother. It is caused, he told me passionately, by the absolute impossibility he finds of explaining his metier (the word he always uses) to anyone. Another reason why he will not discuss *couture* is that he feels he cannot do so without discussing other designers and criticizing them. I had expected Balenciaga small and cassant, but he is tall, handsome, and moves with surprising grace, as when his secretary told him that the Collections were on television and he crouched on a low stool to watch André Courrèges explain his latest creation. The effect of Courrèges's intense toffee-eyed face was somewhat

spoiled by a sudden infusion of pink lines across the middle, for the Master's television set, one must admit, lacks the perfection of one of his *tailleurs*. Balenciaga allowed himself a smile. Courrèges was his pupil.

Actually, he smiles regularly, his long upper lip stiff with amusement as he relates with great humour and delicacy stories of the fashion world. The one thing I had never imagined this great austere figure to be was funny, but he is, and his eyes twinkle with spirit. He is not waspish and he tells stories against himself equally easily. His flat in Paris, where he lives when he is not in Spain or in the French countryside, is cool and calm, the hall decorated with a ravishing mural and a beautiful simple Fernández picture of a nude woman in the drawing room. In the dining room there are sketches by Giacometti and the most enchanting bronze duck, a present from Coco Chanel.

It is about Chanel that Balenciaga is most evocative. He considers that there have been three great designers, Chanel, Madeleine Vionnet (still alive, aged 90) and Louiseboulanger [sic], of whose work he treasures a Drian Drawing. Chanel was the most commercial, not a *couturier* but a *modiste*. From the time when she borrowed a blue dress to go to the ball at the Opera, cut out the front, took off the ruffles and all the bits and appeared looking totally different to any other woman there she set style — her style — on the whole world. She did not know how to cut or sew, she never finished a dress without thinking "would I wear this myself". All her work was intensely personal.

"Chanel took all the chi-chi and fuss out of women's clothes" says Balenciaga, himself the master of simplicity, but, unlike Chanel, able to do every single action required by *couture* himself, from revolutionary design through pattern cutting to making buttonholes. As a young man in San Sebastián he conceived a passion to meet Mlle Chanel, who with her sister could be found every night playing baccarat in the Casino. The director of the Casino refused to allow Balenciaga in, but nothing if not determined even then, the youthful Cristóbal engaged the help of a well-known Jesuit priest who, after a due mention of the possible perils associated with "that woman", provided in the way that Jesuit priests seem able to, the necessary *entrée*. Balenciaga showed me a photograph in his album of himself, at this date, when he was in his early twenties, deck chaired upon the beach at San Sebastián, very animated in two-tone shoes, flannels, blazer and felt hat.

If Chanel inspired herself, it is pointless to ask from whence Balenciaga got his equally great and more numerous ideas. Balenciaga is an artist and you might just as well ask Picasso what inspires a painting as ask the man who made clothes into

an art form how he stumbled upon a collar. He finished the idea of the classic English tailoring at a coup by cutting down the neckline so that the collar stood away (everyone said it did not fit, now it is a classic). He did the first sack dress, the three-quarter sleeve, the skirt with pockets on the front showing below the jacket, the harem skirt, the patrician evening dress which made the most elegant women in the world clamour to be dressed by the son of the fishing boat captain of Guetaria. A complete record of his contribution to fashion exists in the colour films made by Kublin of every collection from 1960 to 1968. These are lodged in Balenciaga's personal archives and are very definitely not on general release.

Completely the master of his craft, he remained humble enough to know his limitations. "I love it", he said to Zika Ascher when the latter showed him silk Giselle, "but I do not know how to make it." Soft fabrics were not his forte, he always preferred something a little more crisp, and another time he saw an Ascher innovation and said "But what shall I do with it?" "You must tell me that" said Mr. Ascher, "I made the fabric because I wanted to." "Ah", said Balenciaga. "you also do what you want to do." Incidentally he still believes that the only woollens are those from England.

So why did it all come to an end in 1968? Balenciaga was getting old "but not too old". "The life which supported *couture* is finished. Real *couture* is a luxury which is just impossible to do any more. Givenchy still does it because he knows, he has seen what the real thing is like, but he has to do ready-to-wear and the boutiques too and the work is killing. No sooner has one finished one collection that you must start another, no rest, no respite. There were ten work rooms at Balenciaga, four for tailoring, four for dresses and two for hats. The Social Security payments were some incredible sum like \$200 per day about — Chanel never had to pay those in her heyday — and the overheads and the insurance and everything just became overwhelming."

"Then the textile people who used to be so active and used to keep stocks of rare fabrics became enervated. I could never rely on deliveries. This meant that when I was preparing the collections in July and January- I started to work two months before- the work-rooms could do nothing else and if the fabrics failed to arrive on time, they had to work day and night and I had to pay them double. Then if a woman saw the collection and wanted something within, say eight days and we could not get the fabric immediately, either we had to say we could not take the order or we again had to work day and night, which is not commercial."

“In the end I could do it no more. Yes, Paris used to have a special ambiance for fashion because it contained hundreds of dedicated craftsmen making buttons and flowers and feathers and all the luxurious trimmings which could be found nowhere else.” (When the Master went to New York once there was not a single hand-made artificial rose to be found, explains Balenciaga’s secretary, eyebrows properly raised at such barbarity.)

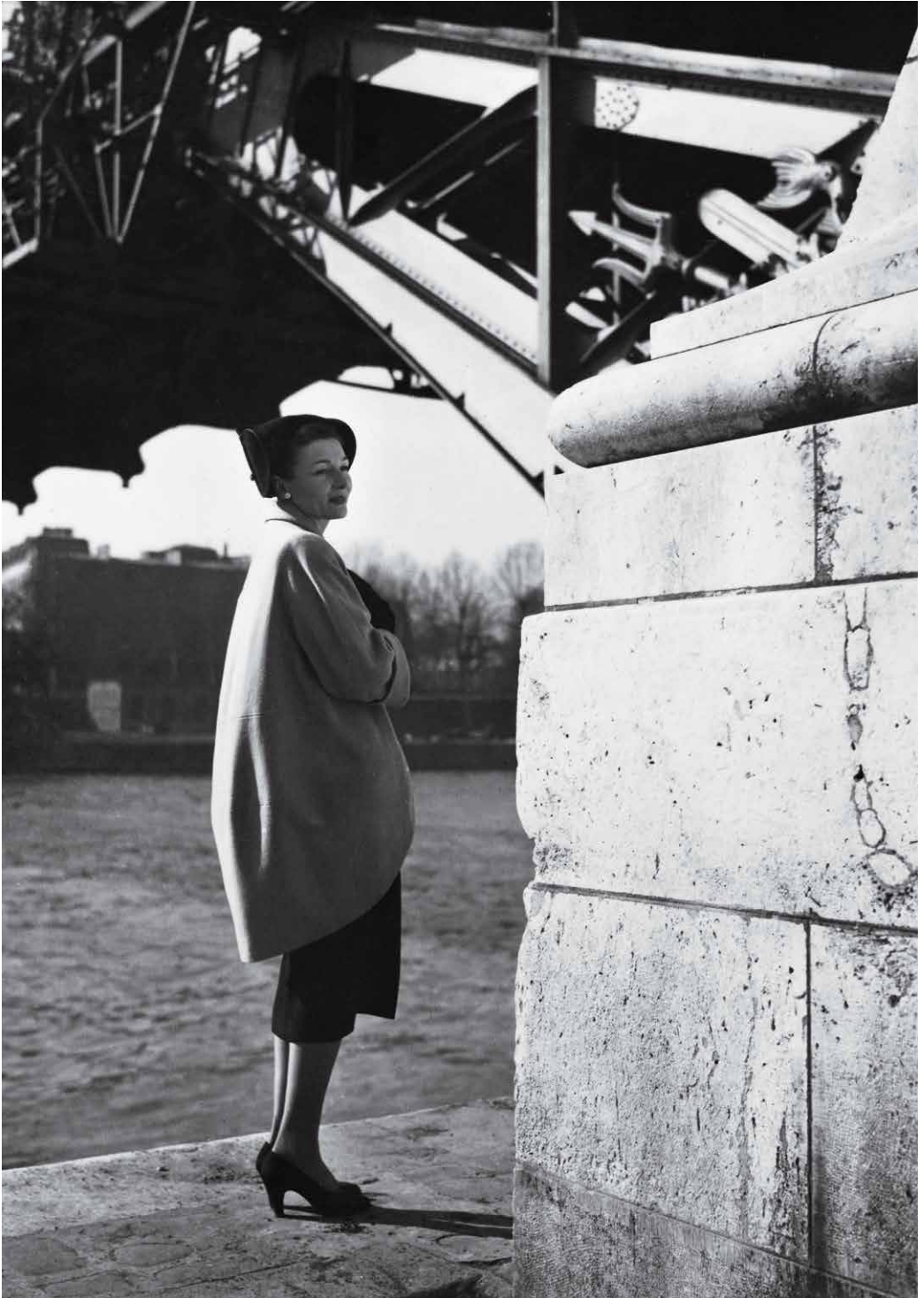
“Now there are just a few survivors. You know that Hitler wanted to transfer the French *couture* to Berlin. He sent six enormous Germans to see me -much taller than I- to talk about it, I said that he might just as well take all the bulls to Berlin and try and train bull-fighters there.”

Ready-to-wear has never interested Balenciaga, because it is machine dominated and it is the antithesis of the high art of the hand-made which he brought to such perfection. He is involved in a fashion project with friends in Spain, but he is diffident in the extreme about it and it sounds more in the nature of a philanthropic gesture. At any rate, the man who could make all the journalists and buyers come back a second time to Paris, just to see his work is not by any means planning a return to the fashion stage, however sad that the news may be to the hoteliers of the city. All the same, his involvement with clothes is still very evident in his manner, and perhaps the old thoroughbred still hankers at the moments for the race.

He certainly does not admit as much in words. “When I was a young man, I was told by a specialist that I never pursue my chosen metier of couturier because I was far too delicate. Nobody knows what a hard metier it is, how killing is the work. Under all this luxury and glamour. Now, *c’est la vie d’un chien!*”



Interview given by Cristóbal Balenciaga to *The Times* August 3, 1971



Biographical Milestones

Fashion and Heritage, Cristóbal is arranged in chronological order over five themed areas. These biographical milestones are related to the discourse and characteristics of the Museum's collection.

BEGINNINGS AND INFLUENCES (1912-1936)

- 1895 Cristóbal Balenciaga is born in Getaria, a small fishing village located in the north of Spain. The son of a sailor and a seamstress, in his hometown he had access to the thriving context of the summer regal vacation that was common at the beginning of the century on the Basque Coast.

- 1906 Cristóbal Balenciaga makes his first dress for the Marchioness of Casa Torres, his mentor, who employed his mother as a seamstress during the long summer seasons that the family spent in Getaria.

- 1907 Balenciaga moves to San Sebastián – according to the municipal census register, he resided in the capital of Gipuzkoa from this year on. He probably trained in some of the important fashion houses in existence at the time: surely Gómez House, New England, and Au Louvre, all of which had ties to the fashion of Paris and operated in the city of San Sebastián.

- 1917 Cristóbal Balenciaga starts his business and creative adventure. The designer established his first fashion house known as “C. Balenciaga” at 2 Vergara Street of San Sebastián. Seven years later, in 1924, he moved his operations to 2, Avenida de la Libertad of the same city under the name “Cristóbal Balenciaga”.

- 1918 He founded “Balenciaga y Cía” together with the Lizaso sisters, creating a limited-term company.
- 1924 The aforementioned company was dissolved and he moved operations to the first floor of 2 Avenida de la Libertad in the same city, under the name “Cristóbal Balenciaga”.
- 1927 He founded “Martina Robes et Manteaux” as a second brand (Martina was the name of his mother). In October of that same year, he changed the brand to “EISA COSTURA”, once again related to his mother (whose surname was Eizaguirre), located at 10 Oquendo Street in San Sebastián.
- 1933 Balenciaga opened a fashion house in Madrid at 42 Caballero de Gracia Street, under the name “EISA B.E.”.
- 1935 He set up a second location for “EISA B.E.” at 10 Santa Teresa Street, Barcelona.
- 1936 With the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, he abandoned Spain and settled in Paris. He temporarily stopped normal business activities at his fashion houses of Madrid and Barcelona.
- 1937 He moved “EISA COSTURA” to the second floor of 2 Avenida de la Libertad, under the name “EISA B.E.”.

Main Street. Getaria, 1919

© Archivo Casa Torres. Ayuntamiento de Getaria



Invoice made out to the
Marchioness of Casa Torres
© Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa



EXPLORING NEW LINES (1937-1951)

- 1937 In July he registers with the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture* and opens, together with his partners Wladzio d'Attainville and Nicolás Bizcarrondo, "BALENCIAGA" Ltd., a *haute couture* fashion house that would leave its mark on the history of fashion.
- 1939 Balenciaga presents a collection with strong historicist influences, clearly reminiscent of fashion styles of the Seventeenth Century and the Second French Empire. The success of his "infanta" dresses was overwhelming.
- 1947 In February, Balenciaga presents the "tonneau" or "barrel" line, which departed from the dominating aesthetics of confined figures and emphasized fluidity in its design. In the same year Dior introduces its "bar suit".
- 1949 Balenciaga opens his first street-level boutique, designed by Christos Bellos. The decoration is austere but not lacking in elegance or luxury, with the furniture and decorative elements suggesting its Spanish origins.

Votre Beauté, december 1941
 Photograph: Lucien François
 © *Votre Beauté*



Balenciaga Boutique in Paris.
 Janine Janet window display, 1952
 © Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa



INNOVATION (1952-1959)

- 1951 Cristóbal Balenciaga introduces the “semi-fitted” suit (February), the “sailor” (February), and the “*midi*” (August). These models were reminiscent of the blurred waists of 1920s silhouettes, with Balenciaga using the shoulder line as a focal point and placing emphasis on the lower part of the dress.
- 1952 From this year on, the shop windows of the boutique would be designed by Janine Janet. Special sculptures were created that integrated the displayed garments, sometimes rendering them invisible to the passer-by due to the materials employed and their markedly artistic nature.
- 1955 The “tunic” is introduced, a two-piece dress with straight, clean lines that cover the body without constricting it – an evolution of the “*midi*” line.
- 1956 Balenciaga decides to showcase his collections one month after the official start of the high-fashion shows, alongside Hubert de Givenchy.
- 1957 The designer presents the “sack” dress, a further step in terms of formal experimentation, this time with the “sailor” style. Along with the fabric creator Gustav Zumsteg (Abraham), gazar was developed – a fabric with sculptural properties suitable for creations that were increasingly conceptual in nature.
- 1958 Cristóbal Balenciaga introduces the “baby doll” dress, characterized by the simplicity of a trapezoidal silhouette that dispenses with the waistline, and the “peacock tail” dresses, with the back longer than the front. The French Government awards him the title of *Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur* for his service to the fashion industry. He is often referred to in the international press as the “Master of High Fashion”.

PURIFICATION AND ABSTRACTION (1960-1967)

- 1960 Cristóbal Balenciaga designs the wedding gown of Fabiola de Mora y Aragón, the granddaughter of the Marchioness of Casa Torres and future Queen of Belgium.
- 1962 Balenciaga gradually introduces more pure and abstract forms. The conceptual and technical minimalism that defined his work becomes evident in those garments made of fabrics with a certain degree of rigidity, such as gazar silk, zagar silk, and ciberlina (a soft wool fabric).

FINAL YEARS (1968-1972)

- 1968 Cristóbal Balenciaga accepts the task of designing and producing the uniforms for Air France, his only experience with *prêt-à-porter* garments. He grants the first ever interview of his life to *Paris Match* magazine.
- 1969 Closure of his last fashion house in San Sebastián.
- 1971 The Bellerive Museum in Zurich (Switzerland) presents the first retrospective exhibition devoted to Balenciaga, which would be followed by many others that continue to this day.
- 1972 Balenciaga passes away on the 24th of March, at the age of 77, in Valencia. He is buried in the small cemetery of his hometown, Getaria.



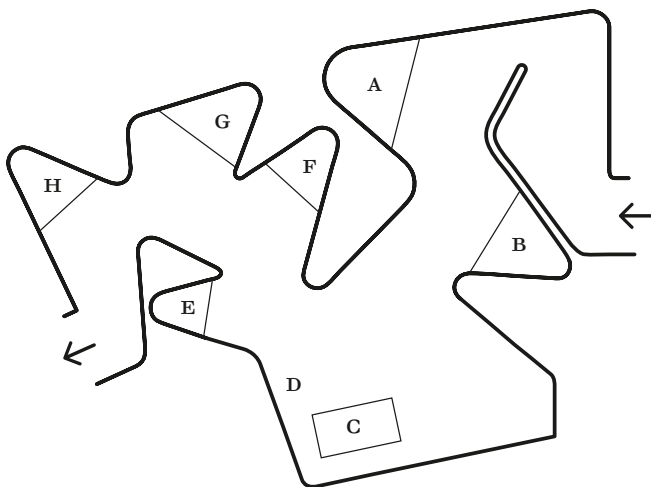
Vogue, July 1, 1967
 Photograph: David Bailey
 © Condé Nast

Uniform for Air France
 hostesses, 1968
 © Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa



Hall 1

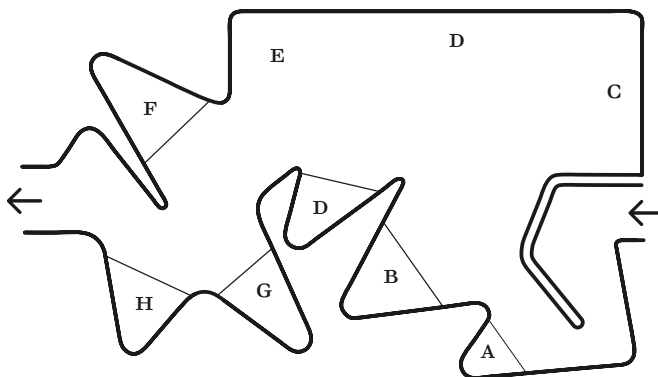
- A**
 - 1927
 Bridal gown in satin crêpe with a train decorated with silver sequins.
 CBM 2005.15
- B**
 - 1912
 Skirt suit in black wool bengaline and blouse in black silk with tucks and lace.
 CBM 1998.01bd
- C**
 Sketches
 - 1930
 Model 184.
 1930E184D0001-CC01
 - 1930
 Sketch model 186.
 1930E186D0001-CC01
 - 1932
 EISA COSTURA.
 1932H000D0001-CC01
 - 1932
 BALenciAGA coat.
 1932H000D0003-CC01
 - 1932
 CRISTÓBAL BALenciAGA.
 1932H000D0054-CR01
 - 1934
 Model 99. EISA B.E. COSTURA.
 1934E099D0001-CC01
 Archives Balenciaga, Paris
- D**
 - Ca. 1930
 Portrait of Cristóbal Balenciaga.
 Ricardo Sarria, San Sebastián.
 CBM 2017.94
- E**
 - Ca. 1928
 Cocktail dress in black crêpe with a tuxedo collar and shawl-style back and hemline.
 CBM 17.2013
- F**
 - Ca. 1926
 Dress in black lace with floral *appliqué* at the hip.
 CBM 2011.61
- G**
 - Cotton reproduction of an evening coat with wide sleeves from 1935.
 CBM STC.2006.85
- H**
 - 1930
 Evening ensemble made up of a gown and short jacket in iridescent green embroidered with black sequins.
 1930X000V0003-PA01
 Archives Balenciaga, Paris

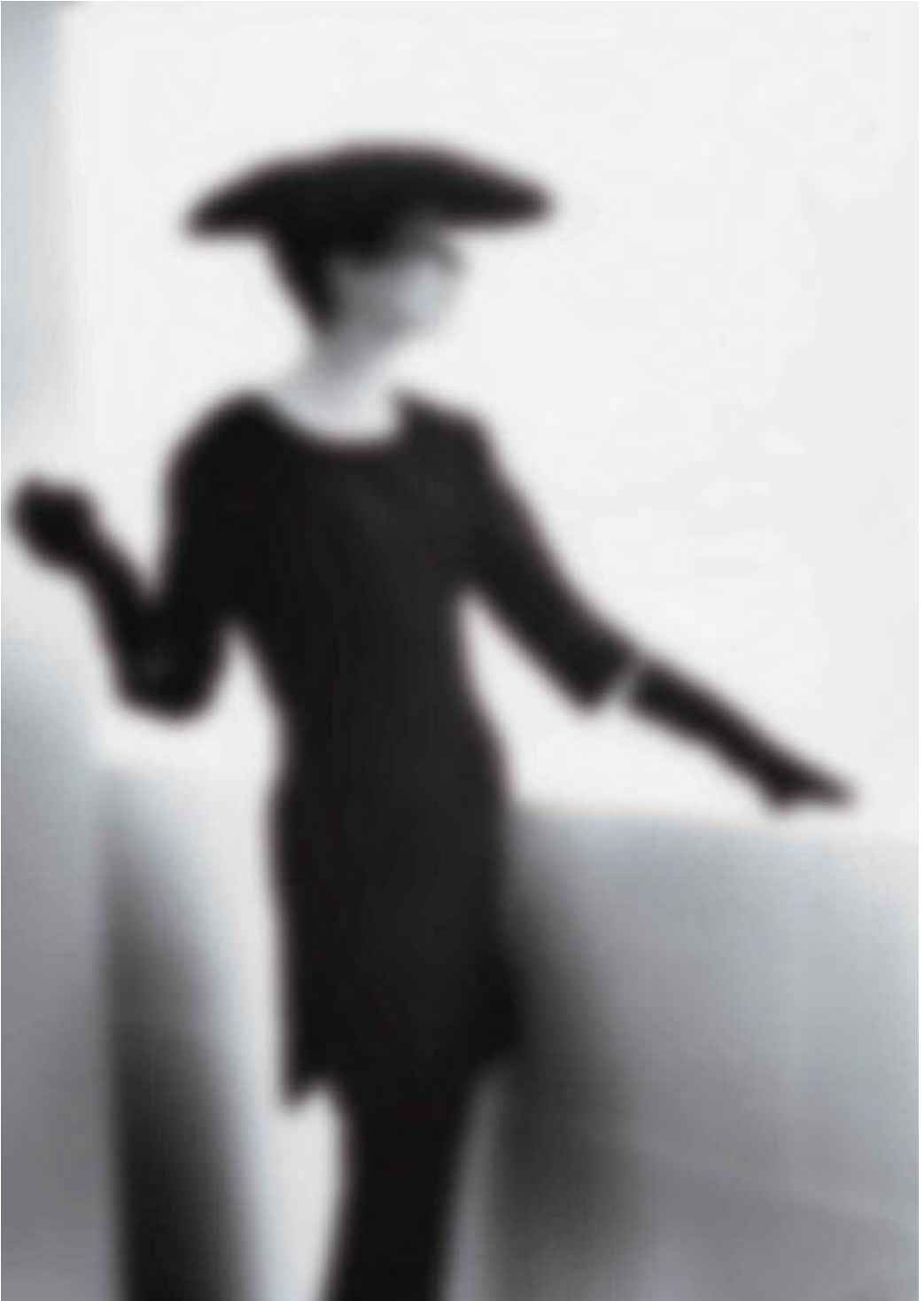




Hall 2

- A**
- 1939
Evening ensemble made up of a gown and jacket in white silk muslin with navy blue broderie *anglaise*.
1939E031V0001-PA01
Archives Balenciaga, Paris
- B**
- 1945
Bridal gown in ivory silk satin with a lace collar and round train, draped at the hip.
CBM 02.2002
- C**
- Fabric samples.
CBM STC 2018.01-32
- D**
- Ca. 1942
Portrait of Cristóbal Balenciaga. Corbello, Madrid.
CBM 2017.94
- E**
- 1947
Skirt suit in black satin embroidered with a white floral motif.
CBM 2016.57
- F**
- 1947
Bolero in red ottoman with black velvet and jet passementerie.
CBM 2017.101
 - 1947
Bolero in black velvet with embroidery and fringe.
CBM 2002.26
 - José Ortiz-Echagüe
Tipos de Aldeadávila de la Ribera
© José Ortiz-Echagüe
Museo del Traje-CIPE,
VEGAP, Gipuzkoa, 2020
- G**
- 1949
Evening dress in black taffeta with black velvet overlay
CBM 2019.130
- H**
- 1952
Balloon dress in black silk taffeta.
CBM 2000.204

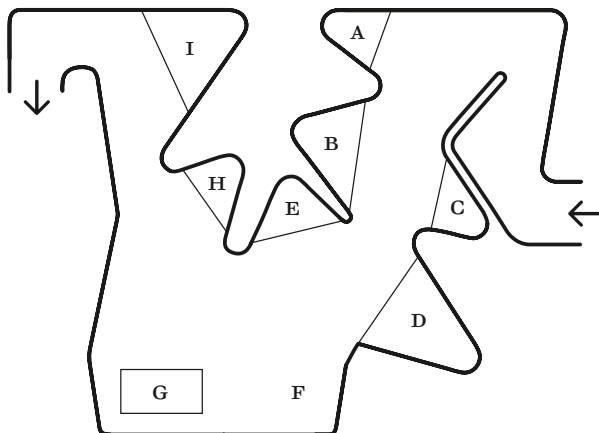




Hall 3

- A**
- 1955
Tunic dress with a small train and pencil skirt in black wool crêpe.
CBM 2019.214ab
- B**
- 1953
Yellow linen skirt suit fitted at the hips.
CBM 2011.43ab
 - 1955
Day ensemble in grey jersey with patch pockets.
CBM 2006.45ab
 - 1963
Tunic dress in emerald green double-faced fabric by Abraham with a straight underskirt.
CBM 2002.11ab
- C**
- 1957
Semi-fitted sack dress in ivory wool.
Bibiñe Belausteguioitia de Solano Collection. Palacio de Zubietta, Ispaster/Lekeitio
- D**
- 1956
Day ensemble in moss green wool jersey.
CBM 2001.09ab
 - 1955
Loosely fitted day ensemble in black linen.
CBM 2006.41ab
 - 1961
Semi-fitted cocktail gown in gauze printed with fuchsia floral motifs.
CBM 2019.77
- E**
- 1953
Cocktail dress in black taffeta with a white ikat print.
CBM 2011.70
- F**
- Portrait of Cristóbal Balenciaga. Tom Kublin, Paris, ca. 1958.
CBM 2017.91
 - Jacket in black wool for fisherman from Getaria.
 - Jacket in flecked brown and beige wool for fisherman from Getaria. Aramendi Mancisidor Brothers Collection

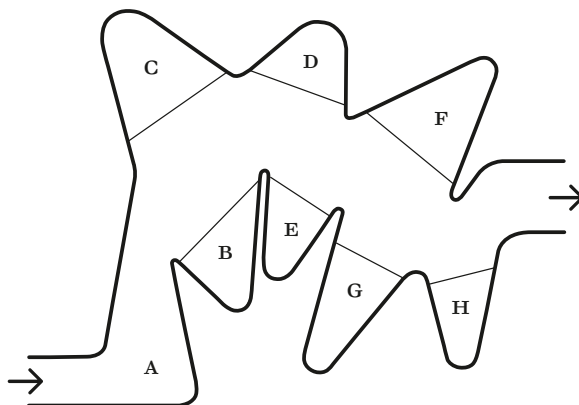
- G**
- Uniform worn by sales assistants at the Casa EISA. Madrid, ca. 1957.
CBM 2014.12
 - BALENCIAGA perfume sample bottle.
CBM 2019.125ab
 - Scarf by Sache in printed silk twill with a dedication to Mlle. Renée Tamisier. Private collection, Toulouse
 - Red box lined in red leather with gold lettering.
CBM 2019.81
 - Paper box in imitation piqué for stockings.
CBM 2015.11ab
 - White paper box in imitation piqué for lipstick
CBM 2018.1115
 - Concave ruby and pearl brooch, made by Roger Jean-Pierre, 1962.
CBM 2019.84
 - Starfish-shaped brooch with strass crystals.
CBM 2019.86b
 - Mother of pearl flower-shaped brooch with strass crystals, made by Roger Jean-Pierre, 1966.
CBM 2000.175
 - Concave brooch in golden metallic thread and rhinestones, made by Robert Goossens, ca. 1961.
CBM 2004.20
- Heart-shaped brooch with coloured crystals and pearls.
CBM 2011.25
- H**
- 1955
Hat in blue felt with two decorative loops.
CBM 2019.133
 - 1955
Picture hat in synthetic raffia with folded brim.
CBM 2010.01
 - Ca. 1952
Pillbox hat in black velvet with leather and jet appliqué.
CBM 2007.39
 - 1951
Pillbox hat in black suede.
CBM 2011.59
 - 1957
Pillbox hat with a curved brim in natural straw and finished in ivory satin.
CBM 2012.38
 - Ca. 1955
Headpiece in red velvet
CBM 2011.75
- I**
- 1956
Evening dress in black *point d'esprit* tulle with a cape-skirt in pale green gros de Tours.
CBM 2000.89ab





Hall 4

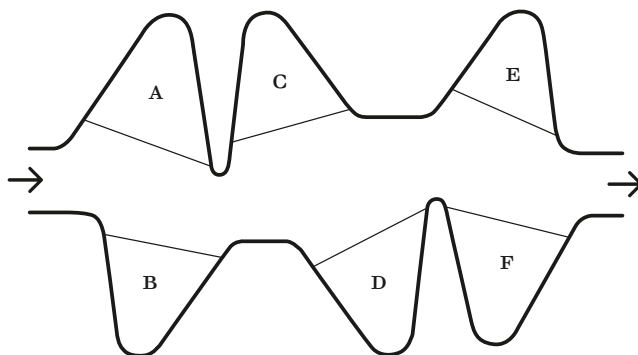
- A**
- Ca. 1957
Cecil Beaton.
Cristóbal Balenciaga. Paris.
The Cecil Beaton Studio
Archive at Sotheby's.
- B**
- 1957
Cocktail dress in ivory silk
taffeta with a pink ikat floral
print by Staron.
CBM 2003.04
 - 1957
Cocktail dress in ivory silk
taffeta with a pink ikat floral
print by Staron.
CBM 2003.03
- C**
- 1958
Babydoll coat in fuchsia satin.
CBM 2006.06
 - 1959
Bernard Buffet.
Portrait of Annabel Buffet.
Oil on canvas.
CBM 2001.02
- D**
- Ca. 1962.
Cocktail coat in red gros de Tours
silk with braided buttons.
CBM 36.2013
- E**
- 1957
Cocktail coat in ikat printed silk
with bow at the nape of the neck.
CBM 2019.78c
 - 1957
Tunic dress in ikat printed silk
with a loose back and straight
underskirt.
CBM 2019.78ab
- F**
- 1957
Robe in orange satin with silk
and black lurex brocade.
CBM 2000.70
- G**
- 1956
Cocktail dress in black *point
d'esprit* tulle.
CBM 2002.14
- H**
- 1961
Evening gown in pale green
silk shantung.
CBM 2000.131





Hall 5

- A**
- 1963
Evening gown in fuchsia moiré taffeta with two ruffles.
Sonsoles Díez de Rivera collection
CBM 02.1999
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown, model 142 from the 1963 summer collection.
1963H142D0001-PC01
Archives Balenciaga, Paris
 - Sketches and photograph of model 142 from the 1963 summer collection.
1963H142D0001-CC01
Archives Balenciaga, Paris
- B**
- Ca. 1962
Coat in red ribbed knit.
Arancha Gorostola & Enrique Portocarrero collection
CBM 04.2017
 - 1962
Coat in thick emerald green wool twill with jet buttons.
CBM 2003.22
 - 1963
Coat and capelet in navy blue wool twill and mohair.
CBM 2018.1145ab
 - 1967
Coat in coral bouclé wool.
CBM 04.2012
 - 1967
Double-breasted coat in pink wool twill with jet buttons.
CBM 2013.26
 - Ca. 1962
Portrait of Cristóbal Balenciaga. D'Ora, San Sebastián.
CBM 2000.256
- C**
- 1961
Cocktail dress in emerald green lace with a rectangular stole.
CBM 2013.139
 - 1966
Cocktail ensemble composed of a dress and capelet in navy blue lace. Colección Elena de Astoreca.
 - 1962
Cocktail dress in black lace with a flounce collar gathered with a pink satin ribbon.
CBM 2012.35
 - 1960
Cocktail dress in blue printed gauze.
CBM 02.2013
 - 1965
Gown in fuchsia printed silk surah with draping at the back.
CBM 37.2012ab
- D**
- 1966
Fourreau gown in black crêpe with a band of pink satin on the bust. Elena de Astoreca collection
 - 1966
Evening gown in yellow gazar with a scalloped hem.
CBM 2019.03ab
 - 1964
Princess cut evening gown with a stole in green gazar.
CBM 2013.120ab
 - 1963
Fourreau gown in embroidered coral gauze.
CBM 37.2013
 - 1963
Evening gown in pink *faille* embroidered with sequins and metallic thread.
CBM 2019.08
- E**
- 1966
Bridal gown in open-worked ivory gazar with an asymmetrical hemline.
CBM 2003.30
- F**
- 1967
Dress in black wool crêpe.
CBM 63.2012
 - 1967
Sack dress in grey silk crêpe with a black satin bow.
CBM 75.2012



Photographs with samples of fabric for various models made in the 60s
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Hall 6

Archive and Legacy

- Cotton *toile* for an evening gown,
model 109 in the 1963 winter collection.
1963H109D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown,
model 76 in the 1965 winter collection.
1965H076D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown,
model 209 in the 1963 summer collection.
1963E209D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening coat,
model 213 in the 1965 summer collection.
1965E213D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown, model
122 in the 1963 winter collection.
1963H122D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown,
model 124 in the 1966 winter collection.
1966H124D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening cape,
model 102 in the 1961 winter collection.
1961H102D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown,
model 82 in the 1960 winter collection.
1960H082D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown and cape,
model 141 in the 1961 winter collection.
1961H141D0001-PC01
 - Cotton *toile* for an evening gown,
model 128 in the 1967 winter collection.
1967H128D0001-PC01
- Archives Balenciaga, Paris

28, AVENUE MARCEAU, VIII^E

12 Julio 68

Chere Bunny

merci pour le

sofie dessin de

votre lit avec

la croix je ne savais

pas que vous me

Personal Objects

BOUND ALBUMS OF MAGAZINES

- *La Moda Elegante* (1874).
- *Vogue* (1916-1919).
- *Les Idees Nouvelles de la Mode / Art. Gout. Beaute* (1922-1924).
- *Femina* (1925).
- *Blanco y Negro* (1930).
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Collection

TOOLS

- Metal awl.
- Wooden awl.
- Tracing wheel and thimble.
CBM 2000.155-158
- Chair from the atelier at 10 Avenue Georges v in Paris.
CBM 2000.228
- White porcelain ashtray from the EISA salons.
CBM 1998.250
- Magazine rack in metal and walnut wood from Cristóbal Balenciaga's office.
Balenciaga Arrieta Collection
- Dinner ensemble in navy blue wool, Opelka, Paris, 1939.
CBM 2000.128ab
- White shirt, Bel y Cía. Barcelona.
CBM 2000.95
- Neckties in silk
CBM 2012.12-CBM 2012.61-62
- Letter handwritten to Sonsoles de Icaza.
Sonsoles Diez de Rivera Collection
CBM 2010.04
- Letter and note handwritten to Rachel Mellon.
CBM 2014.537a-CBM 2014.535d
- Telegram of condolences to the wife of the fabric supplier, Labbey, 1968.
CBM 2011.145a
- Membership card of the Royal Yacht Club of San Sebastián, 1954.
CBM 2000.272
- Driving licence, 1963.
CBM 2000.273
- Leather-lined suitcase with the Louis Vuitton house monogram.
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Collection
- Medal: Knight of the Légion d'honneur, 1958.
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Collection
- Medal: Order of Isabella the Catholic, 1966.
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Collection
- Medal: Order of Civil Merit, 1968
Agustín Medina Balenciaga.
Collection
- Diplomatic pouch which contained the certificate for Balenciaga addressed to the Spanish Ambassador in Paris.
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Collection
- Silver box marked with the initials c.b. A gift to the house models in Paris when the Maison closed, 1968.
Agustín Medina Balenciaga
Collection
- Klein polo shirt in blue jersey that belonged to Cristóbal Balenciaga.
CBM 2000.93
- Sterling silver cross which was placed on Cristóbal Balenciaga's coffin.
CBM 2015.55

Fashion and Heritage

Cristóbal

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EXHIBITION

CURATIONSHIP

Igor Uria

DESIGN AND CONCEPTUALIZATION

Judith Clark
Benjamin Whyman
Alessandra Grignaschi

MANNEQUINS

Berenguere Ruffin
Ruth Valentín

RESTAURATION

Ruth Valentín

STUDY COLLECTION

Javier Martín

WEARABLE REPLICAS

Nati Ortiz de Zárate

TISSUTHEQUE

Catherine Kouliche-Goldman

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Charlie Smith Design
Joaquín Gáñez

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Xabier Lozano

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CRISTÓBAL **BALENCIAGA** MUSEOA

Aldamar Parkea 6
20808 Getaria - Gipuzkoa - España
T +34 943 008 840
info@crislobalbalenciagamuseoa.com
www.crislobalbalenciagamuseoa.com

