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## Current Exhibit

### **Hawaii's Alfred Shaheen: Fabric to Fashion**

*Hawaii's Alfred Shaheen: Fabric to Fashion*, a new exhibition opening at the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles May 18, 2010, is a celebration of the legacy of textile designer and master fabric printer Alfred Shaheen, the origins of the Hawaiian print and the fusion fashion aesthetic it spawned. This is the first major retrospective exhibition of Hawaiian textiles and aloha wear manufactured by Alfred Shaheen on the island of Oahu over a 40-year period. The opening reception, free with admission, is Sunday, May 23, 2:00-4:00pm.

*Hawaii's Alfred Shaheen: Fabric to Fashion* is curated by Museum curator Deborah Corsini and Hawaiian textile scholar Dr. Linda Arthur, and will feature 100+ objects drawn from the collection of Camille Shaheen-Tunberg, Alfred Shaheen's daughter. Stunning yardage representing the textile designs Shaheen produced and key examples of the men's, women's and children's garments that visually conjure Hawaii's complex cultural history will fill all three Museum galleries. In addition to textiles, the exhibit will showcase archival photos and ads that illuminate how the textiles and garments were designed, manufactured and marketed.

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**Monstera.** Dress by Alfred Shaheen.

*These exhibitions and related programs are funded in part by WESTAF, Silicon Valley Community Foundation; the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; Arts Council Silicon Valley in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the National Endowment for the Arts; the City of San Jose; and the Santa Clara Valley Quilt Association. Media sponsor: The Mercury News*

## Fabric to Fashion

continued

Alfred Shaheen wed technological innovation to socially responsible business practices. He revitalized Pacific Island/Asian textile traditions to forge a fusion fashion design aesthetic now recognized worldwide as a visual marker—not only of a transnational Hawaiian culture—but of a West Coast “American” lifestyle that is informal, environmentally aware and multi-cultural.

A Lebanese immigrant/engineer, Shaheen pioneered a silk-screening method, professionally trained his employees who were Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese and other ethnicities as Shaheen’s City of Craftsmen, and mined the visual iconography of Hawaii’s multi-ethnic community to create a new design aesthetic.

“This show will transport you to a tropical paradise,” said Corsini. “Shaheen’s designs are an exuberant profusion of color, pattern and sophisticated compositions. They capture the lushness of a tropical climate and the spirit of exotic cultures of the Pacific islands.”

Added co-curator Dr. Linda Arthur, “Hawaiian textile art, especially designs from the 1940s and 50s, have a quality unsurpassed in other decades. Shaheen championed the idea of using Hawaiian textile art as a means of expressing ethnicity and, as an innovative businessman, employed artists as salaried employees and was the first to use modern fashion promotion and marketing on the Islands.”



**Tahitian Girl** dress by Alfred Shaheen.  
Photo by Camille Shaheen.

**Sunday May 23, 2010; 1-2pm**  
*East Meets West: Cultural Influence in Shaheen’s Textile Designs, with Linda Arthur, Ph.D.* Through textile art designed for clothing used in both Hawaii and the mainland US, Alfred Shaheen brought the art of Asia to the West by innovating Western-styled garments with ethnic textile designs. Tickets available at [www.sjqm.org/calendar](http://www.sjqm.org/calendar) or call 408.971.0323 x14. \$15 general public, \$10 members and students.

**Sunday May 23, 2010; 2-4pm**  
Aloha attire is encouraged for the opening reception for three exhibitions celebrating Hawaiian textile traditions. Gallery walkthrough with *Hawaii’s Alfred Shaheen: Fabric to Fashion* co-curator, Dr. Linda Arthur, at 2:30. No reservation required. Reception and gallery walkthrough are free with Museum admission.

In association with this exhibit, Eddie’s Quilting Bee is offering introductory Hawaiian shirt-making classes with sessions in June and July.

### *Secrets of the Aloha Shirt*

Make

your own  
Hawaiian  
shirt while  
learning  
efficient  
sewing  
techniques



that you can apply to other garments. Class includes serger techniques and other custom touches. Students must have taken Eddie’s Machine Basics and Beginning Sewing before taking this class or have equivalent experience with basic sewing and garment-making skill and be able to read a pattern.

Choose which of these sessions works best for you:

Jun 3, 17, 24 (Thu) 10:00-1:00

Jun 8, 22, 29 (Tue) 6:30-9:30

Jul 1, 8, 15 (Thu) 6:30-9:30

Class Fee: \$60.00; register by calling 408.830.9505 or stopping by Eddie’s Quilting Bee at 480 S. Mathilda Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. More details at <http://www.quiltingbee.com/classes.html>

*This exhibition is co-presented by: Hui’Ilima of Santa Clara County, Sak n’ Sak, Kawailehua Hula Ohana, Japantown Business Association, Halau Napuaokamo kihana’ohaikapolioluana, Yu-Ai Kai Community Senior Service & Sake San Jose, Nikkei Matsuri, Pacific Islanders’ Cultural Association.*

## A Conversation with Camille Shaheen-Tunberg

*Alfred Shaheen's daughter Camille owns and manages the rights to his designs and his official website, [www.alfredshaheen.com](http://www.alfredshaheen.com).*

### Did you understand growing up the cultural impact of your father's work?

No. I grew up in the midst of many different cultures and took the fusion of these cultures for granted. Because my family is first and second generation Lebanese, our home was filled with Arabic cooking and music. I went to school and worked with people who were Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese. Ethnic imagery and the fusion of cultures on textiles and garments seemed very natural to me.

### When did you realize the importance of maintaining a collection of his work?

In the late 1990s, my husband, Bill Tunberg, bought me a book on collectible Hawaiian shirts. As I went through the book, I was surprised by the vast number of Shaheen's. When I came across Shaheen prints with labels other than Shaheen, I called my father to ask about them. Although I had grown up in the business and remembered many of the prints, it was only then that I learned of the other labels he produced. My father rarely talked to his children about the business. The more I learned, the more I realized how important it was to document Shaheen history, which included collecting my father's work.

### In thinking of the impact of his work, can you comment on the effects of the social and economic changes that took place in Hawaii and the fashion industry as a result?

Historians say that my father globalized the use of ethnic imagery on textiles and in fashion,

**Joss Sticks.**  
Dress by  
Alfred  
Shaheen.



and much has been written about the social and economic changes in Hawaii as a result. These effects stemmed from very simple goals: to provide for his family and employees, and to produce culturally authentic, meaningful garments that were exotic and dramatic.

### Do you think of him as an artist, a businessman, or something else altogether?

I think of my father as a builder and a teacher. He loved the part of the business that involved building, whether it was planning a new plant, opening new stores, or trying to find a theme for one of the five lines he did each year. My father disliked the day-to-day "housekeeping" of the business and focused on the creative aspects: the art, designing equipment, figuring out how to produce the textiles and garments, and he loved marketing. He was happiest when inventing something new, for example, his metallic dyes—he came to life when talking about them, even in his later years. Whatever my father learned, he passed on to others. This can be seen in his work: he wanted every piece of cloth he printed to have importance, a historical background with a story that would preserve and communicate the history of cultural regions to others for generations.

### He's been called a visionary and a genius. Are there ways he imparted that to you and others?

I can only tell you how he imparted this to me: it was through his philosophies. My father was deeply spiritual, believing that God is the intelligence governing energy. He believed that there is no such thing as physical matter, only intelligent energy which makes everything we perceive appear as matter. He used visualization and prayer to help him build, whether it was his first print plant or his relationships. He believed that life is filled with dichotomies; for example, the ability to feel love is a wonderful gift, even though its counterpart is deep sorrow. He believed that our intuition is our Guardian Angel and tried his best to listen at all times. He believed in the power of the mind, that words and thoughts ultimately manifest themselves. He suffered these manifestations through bouts of profound, debilitating depression, which he ultimately overcame. My father was deeply grateful for his life, which helped him accept his disappointments. He worked hard at being true to his beliefs and tried to help others discover and understand theirs.

### Can you share any particular anecdotes that our members would appreciate?

For the longest time, my father wasn't aware of the impact his clothing had on women. His mother, Mary, told him often how women would fall in love with the garments. He was never confident about his women's clothing and he didn't believe her. One day she made him sit behind the scenes in the Waikiki store to watch the reactions of women as they tried on his clothing. He was amazed at the joy and beauty Shaheen clothing brought to women of all shapes and sizes.

May 2010

## President's Letter

Dear Members,  
Many good things have been happening at the Museum lately. The Joan Schulze retrospective was fantastic. May Day Market brought in 50% more than expected! More than 500 people came through the Museum on South First Friday night and store sales rose accordingly! Jane Przybysz, our Executive Director, received an ABBY Award from Arts Council Silicon Valley along with other nonprofit leaders in the community. AND... there are sunnier, warm days ahead!

Building on these trends, the spirit of Aloha is invading the Museum. You just have to come and see *Hawaii's Alfred Shaheen: Fabric to Fashion* opening May 18. You'll want to wear your hula skirt and flower leis as you walk around the exhibit, and imagine the sand beneath your toes as you see the beautiful fabrics and fashions of Alfred Shaheen. I think this exhibit will bring back memories for some and create dreams for others. It has for me.

Mahalo, that's Hawaiian for thank you, to all of our members who help us to make the Museum a big part of the San Jose/Silicon Valley community.

To celebrate our community we are participating in the SJ01 celebrations with our first juried exhibiton, ITAB: International TECHstyle Art Biennial, and various programs and workshops. Be sure to check out our website at [www.sjqm.org](http://www.sjqm.org) for

more details and other places in this newsletter for information.

Come and enjoy your Museum. It's great! Show it off to your visitors this summer. I brought my friend from Switzerland and she was blown away by the uniqueness of our Museum, and the wonderful selections in our gift shop. Share this treasure with all of your friends, too.

Aloha and Mahalo,  
Connie Tiegel  
*President, Board of Directors*

## Two More Hawaiian-Inspired Exhibitions Debut

*Grand Appliqué: Hawaiian Quilts*, features traditional Hawaiian quilts made and designed by master quilter Carol Kamaile and her students. Quilting was introduced to Hawaii in 1820 by missionaries who brought appliqué quilting to the islands. The familiar Hawaiian appliqué quilt style, known for its graphic, symmetrical designs, nature-inspired imagery and unique construction methods, soon evolved.



**Pink Hibiscus**  
Designed by Carol Kamaile  
Appliquéd & quilted by Linda Orion

The tradition is still very much alive today as illustrated by Kamaile's inspired interpretations of this form.



**Waipuhia: The Upside Down Waterfall**  
by Wendeanne Ke'aka Stitt  
Courtesy of Snyderman Works Gallery

Also opening May 18 is *Wendeanne Ke'aka Stitt: Contemporary Kapa*, a selection of contemporary works by the Santa Cruz artist Wendeanne Ke'aka Stitt that draws inspiration from the Hawaiian kapa cloth tradition. Kapa is a native Hawaiian textile made from the bast fibers of certain species of trees and shrubs. Wendeanne Ke'aka Stitt's contemporary work keeps this labor-intensive tradition alive in her cloth made of pounded bark from the paper mulberry tree which she combines with quilting to create unique graphic textiles pieces. Also on view will be a selection of traditional kapa cloths from the Museum's permanent collection.

## fusionwear sv—Design and Define the Iconography of Silicon Valley

In a new project, fusionwear sv, the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles and ZER01 ask the question: What does the Silicon Valley experience look like to you?

Beginning on May 1, the community is invited to submit images that represent the Silicon Valley experience in all its cultural, geographic and technological diversity. The images submitted will provide inspiration to artist Corinne Okada Takara who will bring our diverse, dynamic region to life in a series of fusionwear sv Silicon Valley printed fabrics.

The fusionwear sv project is designed to create a visual vocabulary for a region that struggles to articulate its identity beyond its role as high tech mecca. The fusionware sv fabrics will represent the Silicon Valley experience in the same way the Hawaiian print captures the spirit and cultural iconography of Hawaii.

The public is invited to upload their own images and view the images in the visual vocabulary pool at <http://fusionwearsv.sjqiltmuseum.org> beginning on May 3. The public is also invited to get involved in person by wearing garments or bringing items that represent their Silicon Valley experience to the Museum during the SubZero/ South First Friday street party and gallery crawl on June 4, 2010 from 6-11pm.

All during the evening on June 4, artist Corinne Okada Takara and others will be on hand to photograph the garments and objects and add them to the image repository. Finally, everyone is invited to unleash their own inner

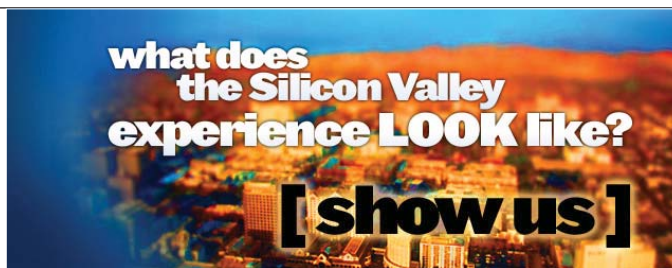
textile designer and submit their own fabric designs inspired by the image pool into a design contest. Winning designs will be selected through an online voting process and digitally printed on fabric. See complete contest rules.

Fabric digitally printed with the fusionwear sv designs created by Takara, and the winning designs submitted by the public will be used by couture fashion and artwear designer Colleen Quen in collaboration with Takara to create a sculptural installation that represents the Silicon Valley experience. This TECHstyle/ SoftWear sculptural installation will be on view at the Museum of Quilts & Textiles during the 2010 01SJ Biennial to be held September 16-19.

Everyone who submits images to the Silicon Valley experience image repository will be entered into a drawing to win a pair of shoes made with a fusionwear sv design from [www.zazzle.com](http://www.zazzle.com). Fusionwear sv fabric will be available to order in several products including shoes, bags and shirts. Yardage will also be available for people to make their own Silicon Valley SoftWear creations.

The 2010 01SJ Biennial, produced by ZER01, is about how powerful ideas and innovative individuals from around the world can make a difference and come together to build a unique and distributed city-wide platform for creative solutions and public engagement.

*This project was funded by ZER01 through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Applied Materials and Arts Council Silicon Valley.*



## May Day Market Exceeds Expectations

Our Second Annual May Day Market was a resounding success, generating \$12,000 to support the Museum. More than 100 people came through in the first hour we were open, so be prepared to shop early and often next year.

A very special thank you goes to Jude Guardino who organized the event, and her tireless team of volunteers—Marie Strait, who took the lead recruiting volunteers from SCVQA, and the following: Brenda Croak, Trisha Nass, Jessica Paulin, Geri Patterson- Kutrass, Tom Snell, Betsy Shoup, Faith Barba, Rosemary Green, Nancy Pyeat, Pat Hunter, Shawn Sasaki, Michael Yiu, Berit Cattolico, Ann Dietz, Rita Gonzalez, Sandra Fraser, Martine Yingling, Alice Gosak Gary, Joyce Schellenberg, Darcy Fowkes, Patsy Campos, Wendy Hornstein, Ilan Hornstein, Irene Baker, Colleen Alley, Joyce Kim, Merlinda, Bonnie Montgomery, Terri Micene, John Chavez, Jane Hegrat, Jenn Vickers, Teri Hamma, Pat Havey, Carol Donovan, Mary Ruth Green.

And thanks to all of you who came by for the fun, purchased items, and made the event a success.

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May 2010

## Director's Corner

I am proud to announce that the jurors for the Museum's first International TECHstyle Art Biennial (ITAB) have selected 41 works by 28 artists from six countries—including Canada, China, Germany, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. On view from August 17 through October 31, this exhibit will run concurrent with San Jose's third signature 01SJ Art & Technology Festival, September 16 to 19, 2010.

Our 2010 ITAB surveys a moment in time when the majority of artists submitting works for consideration are using digital technology more as a tool in their creative processes than as the medium for their message or as narrative content. Hence, most of the work featured in ITAB speaks to how contemporary fiber artists are using image transfer technologies—be they digital printers or digital jacquard looms—to explore a wide array of subject matter. This makes the works that do incorporate electronic components (or relics of our technological age) and that do specifically address how new

technologies impact our lives in their narrative content really stand out.

Art quilts by Pam RuBert and Kathy Weaver, who address how technology impacts our lives, will be immediately recognizable to audiences that stay tuned to Quilt National. Then you have a significant number of artists preoccupied with language in one way or another. Woven textile artist Cynthia Shira mines the connections between texts on traditional samplers and computer code. Conceptual knitter Rudiger Schlomer creates text-riddled scarves born of the interface with a flash-based program. With text printed on fabric used to create a garment titled  *Holding It In* , Noel Paloma-Lovinski lets it all hang out about how she feels about her marriage and parenting.

Repurposed audio cassette tape made obsolete by new technology finds its way into the elegiac and elegant vessels of Alicia Woods and 3-D sculptural work of Jennifer Ferre. On a lighter note, Rachel Beth Egenhoefer invites us to have fun with custom built software for Wii that allows you

to interact with knitting motions. And in their  *Homage to Joseph & Anni Albers* —legendary Bauhaus artists—Nora Marshall and Ligorano Reese have hand-woven fiber optic thread and customized electronics and software that ties to tweets.

Many thanks to pioneering artists Lia Cook, Professor of Textiles and Fine Arts at California College of Arts, and Victor De La Rosa, Assistant Professor of Textiles at San Francisco State University, for serving as ITAB advisors when we were first incubating the idea of launching a biennial of our own, and to Dian Magie, head of the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, for her help in getting the word out about this juried show to the community of artists it is meant to serve. Most of all, however, I want to thank our jurors—Carole Colette, Steve Dietz, Dr. Narinder Kapany, and Matilda McQuaid for the expertise and thoughtfulness they have brought to this inaugural exhibition.

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