

**The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “1976/03/29 - Parsons Award, New York City” of the Frances K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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MRS FORD'S REMARKS  
1976 PARSONS AWARD PRESENTATION  
at the  
CRITICS AWARD SHOW  
Monday, March 29, 1976  
New York Hilton Hotel

- | -

THE PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN  
IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT CREATIVE FORCE  
IN AMERICAN FASHION AND THE ARTS,  
AND I AM VERY FLATTERED  
BY THIS HONOR.

THE MARVELOUS DISPLAY  
OF TALENT AND INNOVATION TONIGHT  
SHOWS WHY PARSONS DESERVES  
ITS "TOP OF THE LINE" REPUTATION.

- 3 -

BEING HERE TONIGHT

BRINGS BACK MANY EXCITING MEMORIES-----

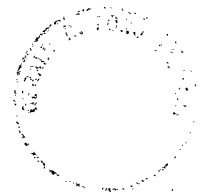
MEMORIES OF BUYING TRIPS TO NEW YORK

AS A FASHION CO-ORDINATOR

FOR A GRAND RAPIDS DEPARTMENT STORE

*Far too few*  
~~AND~~ OF THOSE ~~DAYS~~ *YEARS*

WHEN I LIVED IN THIS FABULOUS CITY.



1. *coordinator of Fashion*  
AS A (PROFESSIONAL) BUYER

AND NOW AS A CONSUMER,

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ENTHUSIASTIC  
ABOUT AMERICAN CLOTHES.

AMERICAN CLOTHES ARE FANTASTIC---

VERSATILE, PRACTICAL, AND EXPRESSIVE.

*Today*

- 5 -

WHEREVER I GO,

I SEE THE BEST FASHION SHOW OF ALL---

PEOPLE WEARING AND ENJOYING

AMERICAN CLOTHES.



- 6 -

THAT'S WHY I AM DELIGHTED YOU THINK

<sup>In some small way</sup>  
I HAVE HELPED YOUR INDUSTRY----

WHICH DOES ITS JOB SO WELL,

WITH MUCH IMAGINATION,

AND ARTISTRY. My compliments to

you the designers and craftsmen of today.

I AM honored <sup># # #</sup> to be with you tonight.

Thank you for this privilege.

PARSONS AWARD/Revised Draft  
March 29, 1976

The Parsons School of Design is such an important creative force in American fashion and the arts, and I am very flattered by this honor. The marvelous display of talent and innovation tonight shows why Parsons deserves its "top of the line" reputation.

Being here tonight brings back many exciting memories of buying trips to New York as a fashion co-ordinator for a Grand Rapids department store and of those days when I lived in this fabulous city.

As a professional buyer and now as a consumer, I have always been enthusiastic about American clothes. American clothes are fantastic---versatile, practical and expressive.

Wherever I go, I see the best fashion show of all---people wearing and enjoying American clothes. That's why I am delighted you think I have helped your industry, which does its job well with much imagination.



PARSONS AWARD/Revised Draft  
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Parsons Award, March 29, 1976

*more personal*

I am ~~very~~ flattered to be honored by Parsons School, which produces so many talented designers. It's

~~delightful~~ delightful to be back among members of the fashion ~~industry~~ industry, and it's a special thrill to be recognized for my <sup>*longtime personal*</sup> interest in American fashion.

The marvelous show we've just seen demonstrates why it is so easy to be enthusiastic about American fashion. The variety of styles and fabrics are in tune with our American commitment to ~~diversity~~ diversity and individuality.

American clothes are accessible, <sup>*versatile*</sup> ~~comfortable~~, sometimes whimsical, sometimes dramatic---but always expressive. ~~Where~~ ~~Wherever~~ Wherever I go, I see Americans wearing clothes ~~that~~ designed to move with the pace of their lives.

I think there's something else important about ~~selecting~~ <sup>*selecting clothes to*</sup> clothes and that's the personal moment of ~~choosing what~~ <sup>*express*</sup> the way we feel about ourselves. Our American clothes show how <sup>*good*</sup> ~~good~~ we feel about ourselves and our freedom. <sup>*to be individuals.*</sup> ~~That's~~ That's why I'm very pleased that you think I've helped this ~~the~~ special industry.



SUGGESTED REMARKS -- Parsons Award, March 29, 1976

I am flattered to receive an award from the Parsons School of Design. Parsons has made such a unique impact on American fashion and the development of many different kinds of artistic expressions. It's really delightful to be back among members of the fashion industry in this exciting city. I can remember when my twice yearly visits to New York from Grand Rapids were eagerly awaited and savored. With my personal background, it is truly a special thrill to be recognized by the leaders of American fashion.

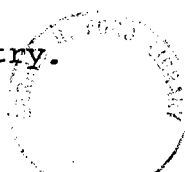
The marvelous show we've just seen demonstrates why it's so easy to be enthusiastic about American fashion. The variety of styles and fabrics are in tune with our American belief in diversity and individuality.

American clothes are accessible, versatile--sometimes whimsical, sometimes dramatic--but always expressive. Wherever I go, I see Americans wearing clothes designed to move with the pace of their lives and to match their varying needs.

I think there's something else important about clothes, and that is how the selection of clothes helps us express our personal feelings. Our American clothes show how good we feel about ourselves and our freedom to be individuals. That's why I'm very pleased you think I've helped this special industry.

# # #

*Need  
expressed  
in our  
clothes*



Parsons Award, March 29, 1976

I am flattered to receive an award from the Parsons School of Design. Parsons has made such a unique impact on American fashion and the development of many different  <sup>kinds</sup> ~~of artistic expressions.~~ ~~art forms.~~ It's really delightful to be back among members of the fashion industry in this exciting city. I can remember when my twice yearly visits to New York from Grand Rapids were eagerly awaited and savored. With my  <sup>personal</sup>  ~~professional~~ background, it is truly a special thrill to be recognized by the leaders of American fashion.

The marvelous show we've just seen demonstrates why it's so easy to be enthusiastic about American fashion. The variety of styles and fabrics are in tune with our American belief in diversity and individuality.

American clothes are accessible, vers<sup>a</sup>tile---sometimes whimsical, sometimes ~~drxxx~~ dramatic---but always expressive. Wherever I go, I see Americans wearing clothes designed to move with the pace of their lives and to match their varying needs.

I think there's something else ~~very~~ important about clothes, and that is how the selection of clothes helps us express our personal feelings. Our American clothes show how good we feel about ourselves and our freedom to be individuals. That's why I'm very pleased you think I've helped this special industry.



PARSONS AWARD  
MARCH 29, 1976

I am flattered to receive an award from the Parsons School of Design. Parsons has made such a unique impact on American fashion and the development of many different forms of artistic expression.

It's really delightful to be back among members of the fashion industry in this exciting city. I can remember how eagerly I awaited and how much I enjoyed my twice-a-year visits to New York from Grand Rapids, when I was fashion co-ordinator for a department store. With my personal background, it is a special thrill to be recognized by leaders of American fashion.

The marvelous show we've just seen demonstrates why it's so easy to be enthusiastic about American fashion. The variety of styles and fabrics are in tune with our American belief in diversity and individuality.

American clothes are accessible, versatile--sometimes whimsical, sometimes dramatic--but always expressive. Wherever I go, I see Americans wearing clothes designed to match various needs and lifestyles.

For craftsmanship, creativity and class--American clothes are the top of the line. That's why I'm very pleased you think I've helped your very special industry.

# # #



Not for Release  
Sept 1975

Designer Labels in Mrs. Ford's Clothes

- ✓ Luis Estevez
- ✓ Frankie Welch
- ✓ Albert Capraro
- Chessa Davis (2) Comp. informal
- Mel Mortman
- Jo Jr. (Dallas)
- Dorian by Lowell Judson
- Diane VonFierstenberg
- Claire Dratch
- Najla (New York)
- ✓ Oscar de la Renta
- ✓ Glen of Michigan - spots
- Maruja Gulias
- Fred Perlberg
- Ole Borden
- ✓ Mollie Parnis semi (
- ✓ Joan Leslie by Kasper
- Richilene (New York)
- Chester NOW
- Vera Maxwell
- Giorgini
- Gartenhaus (Shel)
- Constantino Christie (Chr)
- Fisherman's Cross of Maine
- Nelly de Crab
- Roffe - ~~st~~
- Aileen
- Sally Gee
- The Desert Squire (Scottsdale)
- Jones (New York)
- Halston jacket
- Vera Maxwell
- Pierre Cardin
- ✓ Gloria Sachs
- Tanner of North Carolina
- Nina Ricci
- Anne Fogarty
- ✓ Papillon

Bay

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 15, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: PETER SORUM

FROM: SUSAN PORTER

SUBJECT: Action Memo

Mrs. Ford has accepted the following out-of-town invitation:

EVENT: Receive 1976 Parsons Award

GROUP: Parsons School of Design

DATE: Monday, March 29, 1976

TIME: 6:00-7:00 Reception  
 7:00-8:30 Show and Presentation  
 8:30 Dinner Dance

PLACE: New York Hilton Hotel, New York City

CONTACT: Mr. Edwin Cohen, Director of Development  
(212) 741-5662

COMMENTS: On Monday, March 29th, Mrs. Ford will accept the 1976 Parsons Award at the annual Critics Awards Show sponsored by the Parsons School of Design. The Parsons Award "is conferred annually on distinguished men and women who not only advance the cause of American fashion, but in so doing serve as an inspiration for students who are about to assume professional and citizenship roles in American society." The Parsons School of Design is the preeminent American institution in the field of fashion design. The tribute to Mrs. Ford is attached.

Because the evening precedes a State Dinner, Mrs. Ford would like to return to Washington as early as possible and Mr. Cohen has been very flexible in stating that Mrs. Ford need not stay for the dinner if she needs to return early.



The file is attached.

At the time of her visit to New York on the 29th, Mrs. Ford would also like to see the exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art entitled "American Women of Style". Mrs. Ford was Honorary Chairman of the Costume Institute Ball sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Fashion Designers of America held on December 10, 1975. The evening launched the opening of the exhibit. Although the Museum is closed to the public on Mondays, Mr. Thomas Hoving, the Director, told me that this is the best possible day for Mrs. Ford to visit. Your contact should be Mr. Richard Morsches, Chief of Operations, (212) 879-5550.

Thank you.

c: BF Staff  
Red Cavaney  
William Nicholson  
Kathleen Ryan  
Dick Mastrangelo  
Rex Scouten  
Staircase



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

RE:

Metropolitan Museum of Art

Mr. Thomas Hoving  
Director  
5th Avenue and 82nd Street  
New York, New York 10028  
(212) 879-5500

"American Women of Style" thru Aug.

Tuesday: 10-8:45

Wed.-Sat: 10-4:45

Sunday: 11-4:45

Monday: Closed

CONTACT:

Mr. Richard Moriches  
Chief of Operations

(MR. HOVING OUT OF TOWN)  
SWN





*to Mrs. Johnson*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

6-7

COCKTAIL RECEPTION

(800)

OR: SMALLER  
RECEPTION

(150)

7-8:30

SHOW + PRESENTATION  
IN BALLROOM

8:30

DINNER / DANCE IN BALLROOM

- RUNWAY STYLE
- AWARDS TO STUDENTS
- SWEET PROGRAM
- PRESENTATION TO BE
- BRIEF BE RESPONSE

BE FINISHED / DINNER  
BEGINS



Parsons School of Design  
cordially invites you to attend the

FASHION CRITICS

AWARDS SHOW

AND

DINNER DANCE

honoring

MRS. GERALD R. FORD

Monday, March 29, 1976  
The New York Hilton

Cocktails 6:00 P.M.  
Fashion Show 7:00 P.M.  
Dinner Dance 8:30 P.M.

Black tie  
\$150 per person  
\$1500 per table of ten



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## THE PARSONS AWARD

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### MRS. GERALD R. FORD

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The Parsons Award is conferred annually on distinguished men and women who not only advance the cause of American fashion, but in so doing serve as an inspiration for students who are about to assume professional and citizenship roles in American society.

In this year of the American Bicentennial, there can be no more fitting, and indeed no more deserving recipient than Mrs. Elizabeth "Betty" Bloomer Ford, First Lady of the United States.

Refreshingly forthright, independent and enthusiastic, Mrs. Ford has by word and deed emerged as a symbol of what is best in our national heritage and character—our devotion to family, our dedication to helping the less fortunate, our passionate belief in the promise of the future.

Not only in the way she thinks and acts, but in the way she looks as well, Mrs. Ford is as unabashedly American as the house she lives in. Possessing her own distinctive style, she has selected a wardrobe that is designed and manufactured exclusively by American talent. Thus, whether at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue or on visits to foreign capitals, she imparts to all American women her deep conviction that the highest standards of taste and craftsmanship are to be found not thousands of miles, but a few blocks from home. The American fashion industry and the young student designer who may one day provide its creative impetus can find no greater encouragement and support.

This charming and beautiful First Lady was once an active member of New York's arts community. Parsons is proud that it will have the opportunity to welcome her back for the conferral of this high and well-deserved honor.



## THE FASHION CRITICS PROGRAM

For almost half a century, Parsons School of Design has been the preeminent American institution in the field of fashion education. Most of the nation's foremost fashion designers and about one-half of all professionals in the field are Parsons alumni.

This year fifteen of the country's foremost fashion designers, most of them Parsons alumni, will regularly visit Parsons to participate in a unique activity which contributes to the institution's unparalleled achievements in fashion education.

That activity is called the Fashion Critics Program. Its function is to offer Parsons' second and third-year students the rare opportunity to submit their work to the critical scrutiny of leading designers. The response of the designer-critic represents for these undergraduates a significant part of their training. The professional's criticism or approval, the helpful suggestion that modifies concept or shape or color—these become signposts that provide the student with the insights and sophistication of a full-fledged professional designer.

At the 1976 Critics Awards Show, you will have the opportunity to observe the results of this unique education program.

### THE 1976 CRITICS ARE:

DONALD BROOKS    ALBERT CAPRARO

LIZ CLAIBORNE    PIERRO DIMITRI

ELINORE FISHMAN    DONNA KARAN

KASPER    CALVIN KLEIN

ANTHONY MUTO    LEO NARDUCCI

SHANNON RODGERS    ANN WEBSTER

CHESTER WEINBERG

---

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Jerome A. Siegel  
Joseph B. Williams

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Bruce Hausman  
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Oscar Kolin  
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Jack Lazar  
Richard deY Manning  
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Mrs. J. C. Penney  
Richard J. Schwartz  
Mrs. Jerome A. Siegel  
Jerry Silverman  
Chester Weinberg

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**FASHION CRITICS AWARDS SHOW SPONSORING COMMITTEE**

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Andrew Goodman  
Melanie Kahane

Oscar Kolin  
Jack Lazar  
Richard J. Schwartz

Jerry Silverman

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Mildred Custin  
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Sidney S. Good, Jr.

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Franklin M. Jarman  
Allan R. Johnson  
Matt Kallman  
S. Peter Kamins  
Richard Kaplan  
Kasper  
Robert Kaufman  
Clarence J. Kjolrien  
Calvin Klein  
Martin S. Kramer  
Lawrence Lachman  
Eleanor Lambert  
Kenneth Jay Lane  
Leonard Lauder  
Ralph Lauren  
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Edith Raymond Locke  
Thomas P. Losee, Jr.  
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Richard deY Manning  
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Lee Mellis  
Henry S. Moss

Ira Neimark  
Mrs. Samuel I. Newhouse  
George E. Parker, Jr.  
Mollie Parnis  
Martha R. Phillips  
Fred P. Pomerantz  
John J. Pomerantz  
Thomas B. Price  
Lew Prince  
Oscar de la Renta  
Shannon Rodgers  
Matthew N. (Chip) Rubinstein  
Kalman Ruttenstein  
Arthur Samuels Jr.  
Abe Schrader  
Malcolm A. Shults  
Morton Siegenfeld  
Bernard R. Siskind  
Ben Sommers  
Herbert E. Strawbridge  
Geraldine Stutz  
Ruth Sublette  
Julio Tanjeloff  
Gustave Tassel  
David M. Tracy  
Marvin S. Traub  
Jerome Uchin  
Diane Von Furstenberg  
Diana Vreeland  
Elmer L. Ward, Jr.  
Paul Woolard

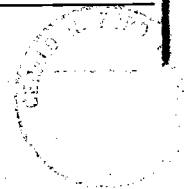
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**PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN AFFILIATED WITH THE NEW SCHOOL**

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66 WEST 12TH STREET NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10011 (212) 741-5662

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PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN

66 WEST 12<sup>TH</sup> STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y. 10011

OREGON 5-2700

741-5662

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

February 18, 1976

Ms. Susan Porter  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

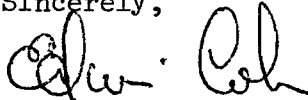
Dear Ms. Porter:

I am enclosing twelve (12) sets of the invitation to the March 29th Parsons Fashion Critics Awards Show honoring Mrs. Ford.

Please let me know if you need additional copies of this invitation, or if there are any other people to whom I should send them.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Edwin Cohen  
Director of Development

Enclosure



PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN

66 WEST 12<sup>TH</sup> STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y. 10011

~~OREGON 5,2200~~

741-5662

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

November 17, 1975

Mrs. Susan Porter  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. Porter,

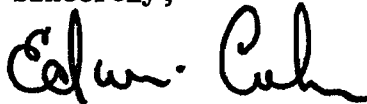
Pursuant to our telephone conversation, I have reserved  
The New York Hilton for Monday, March 29, 1976 for the Parsons  
School of Design Critics Awards Show, at which Mrs. Ford will  
receive the 1976 Parsons Award.

The tentative schedule for that evening calls for a cocktail  
reception at 6 P.M., fashion show and awards presentation at 7 P.M.  
and dinner dance at 8:30 P.M.

I will, of course, be in touch with your office at a later  
date to discuss plans for that evening in greater detail.

Thank you for all of your wonderful cooperation.

Sincerely,



Edwin Cohen  
Director of Development



**PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN**  
66 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10011  
~~212/243-8910~~ 741-5662  
AFFILIATED WITH  
**THE NEW SCHOOL**

October 17, 1975

*- mailed on  
- working Wednesday  
- will need address*

Miss Susan Porter  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Miss Porter,

On October 9, Mrs. Ford met with Albert Capraro at The Waldorf Astoria in New York. At that meeting Mrs. Ford graciously consented to accept the 1976 Parsons Award from the Parsons School of Design, at its Annual Critics Awards Show.

This event will be held early Spring, 1976.

Mrs. Ford asked that I write you with some suggested dates for her consideration. We would like to schedule our 1976 Show on Tuesday, April 20, Wednesday, March 31, or Monday, March 29.

Please let me know if any of these dates are acceptable to Mrs. Ford, or any dates that would be more convenient for her.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

*Edwin Cohen*

Edwin Cohen  
Director of Development

*Easter is April 18.*

*66 W. 12th St.  
NYC.*

*(212) 741-5662*





Kay -  
JMS -  
Liz

copy

Dear Mrs. Ford:

I just want to thank you for being so kind and letting me do the interview.

As you know, at the-Parsons Dinner, you were acclaimed by all my industry friends who found your speech stimulating, honest, and inspiring to all---young and old in the fashion business. Thanks again. I shall treasure the memory of my Betty Ford : exclusive.

With warm affection...

Eleni