

The original documents are located in Box 38, folder “Ford, Betty - Fashion - Designers - Halston” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

NEW YORK — Halston has achieved the Impossible American Dream. He is the U.S. designer who has most successfully combined business with fashion, money and prestige. He is unique in this country. In Europe, possibly only Dior and Cardin have built such solid business structures.

Just seven years ago, 43-year-old Halston made the switch from custom millinery to ready-to-wear. Then in 1973, the Norton Simon empire acquired Halston in a deal that sources put at about \$11 to \$12 million. Today, Halston Enterprises, Inc., which is operated as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the giant conglomerate, has over a dozen divisions.

It's what every designer dreams about:

Your own store; your own custom salon — dressing some of the country's most fashionable women and superstars of films and stage; your own wholesale ready-to-wear operation — dressing Ms. America; separate firms making your own labeled luggage, perfume, furs, men's wear, separates, rain-wear, wigs, millinery; plus your own patterns (Halston's are for McCall's); your own bed linens (Fieldcrest); becoming the official designer for the U.S. Olympic team; and doing theatrical costumes (for the recent Martha Graham ballet, "Lucifer").

But what is Halston's "plus" that has made all these business ventures not only possible; but also profitable?

There's no doubt the experience, exposure and education he received at Bergdorf Goodman in the late-'50s to the mid-'60s started him on his way to fame. As the store's designer of custom millinery, in a time when every fashionable woman wore a hat, Halston became a big name. And it was here he got his introduction to ready-to-wear, since Bergdorf's was the biggest American buyer of the European couture. Each season, BG would buy about 200 models and Halston would buy about the same number of millinery originals. This way, he got to see and know every major designer's work in France, Italy, England and Spain. He not only knew their work, but learned how it progressed from season to season.

At Bergdorf's, he was involved with the store's large custom workroom, which turned out the furs, made-to-order clothes and millinery. It was one of the largest ateliers in the world. Here he learned how to cope with a demanding business consisting of 150 milliners, 12 sales women and six assistants.

Most importantly, he established contact with private clients, and he got to know what they needed, what they liked and they got to know him — Jackie O, when she was first lady, Babe Paley, Jane Englehard, Marella Agnelli, Brooke Aster, Doris Duke, Nan Kempner and lots more of the BP and CP.

But don't get the idea that Halston's success just happened. He worked at it and worked very hard. "You just don't get a group of chic clients; you develop them," he says. "You don't just get a Norton Simon to buy your five-year-old business; you produce all the time."

As Halston sees it:

"I've done the impossible American dream for a designer. I have an up-town custom business where I can do a major order on the most luxurious level for any woman in America. I've dressed the who's-who of the fashion world.

"I have my own store downstairs, because I found I really wasn't represented properly in the other stores. I wanted the customer to see what I was doing. Remember, I opened my own store, which is unheard of for any designer."

Enterprising

"I have a very healthy wholesale business, which is probably the most profitable better dress business on SA today, so they say. Also I have many franchises.

"My perfume was the most successful launch in perfume history. It didn't open up until last March, in really troubled times. Yet, in the first three months of business, we did \$1,500,000. Bloomingdale's did \$40,000 worth of business in the first week. And that's good. It's been so successful, we're going into the men's fragrance business for fall '76, which we're starting to develop right now. Then, we're adding other products to my perfume line for a complete collection. It takes a long time to do that.

My men's wear collection is very extensive, and it has been most successful, we expect the volume will be in the \$3-million range.

"Then, David Mahoney, Norton Simon chairman and president, asked me if I would like to do the official Olympic uniforms. I said I'd love to. I didn't realize, at the time, what an enormous business this adds up to. Montgomery Ward physically makes the uniforms and gives them to the 1,400 to 1,500 different performers. It is a major contribution. And through that donation, Montgomery Ward is able to merchandise the Olympic uniforms minus the insignias. It's always the same designs in the same fabrics, as the Olympic ones, merchandised in three or four different colors, sold through the catalog and I get a percent.

"It has really turned out to be a huge project. It involves three separate collections, including the Pan-Am Games this summer in Sao Paulo, the winter games in 1976 in Innsbruck, Austria, and the summer games of '76 in Montreal. This means doing every single thing a player wears — a parade uniform, dress uniform, a rain outfit, a leisure outfit, even his luggage. Just an idea of the scope of this project is the leisure outfit for members: It must be able to take them out to have a hamburger on the corner and still look right if they go to a black-tie party at night. It's also a very difficult job because of all the figure problems involved. You have very short persons doing gymnastics, very heavy persons who are weight-lifters, plus very tall athletes who play basketball. The Olympic team is also made up of persons of all ages, not just young ones. It's a major effort."

Then, he quickly ticks off other projects.

"Our fur business with A.C. Bang, a very substantial fur company, has been very successful.

"I have a loungewear business with Dorian. It is basically robes and at-home-wear things. I didn't want it to be what most of the industry does — clothes to be worn out. This is basically robes, hostess-type dressing, a couple of pajamas and that kind of thing. Very simple. It has been very successful.

"Then we have a new division called 'Halston Five' with Manhattan Industries. It's something I've wanted to do for years. It's basically shirts and blouses with a few skirts and a few pants."

Fashion Show

Women viewers who keep up with the jet-set know who Halston is and will undoubtedly be glued to their sets tomorrow morning (WRC-4 at 9) when "Take It From Here" pre-empts "Not For Women Only," to present a special one-hour show saluting the collection Halston has designed for U.S. athletes to wear in the upcoming winter and summer olympics. It's the first show in Washington for the designer who did many of Jacqueline Kennedy's clothes when she was in the

While Fischer-Dieskau is at the Kennedy, Page C-5.

POP: Jerry Garcia and his fine guitar. Page C-6.

Hash. Star 11/3/75

*Fashion -
Halston*

WELL, COULD YOU JUST TOSS US A CAVIAR SPUD? . . . The folks who bring you "Take It From Here" on WRC-TV are just mad with excitement over the Halston fashion show and luncheon they're tossing next week for the Big H's favorite Washington customers. Oatsie Charles will be there, and Eugenia Sheppard, and Mrs. Averell Harriman and Baroness Van Aerssen and Nicole D'Amecourt and maybe even Betty Ford, who wore a Halston the night she had a date with Woody Allen. Ridgewell's will

Jack. 10/24/75

The Ear

Sorry, dears, if Halston didn't put you on his list, you're out.

CHECK THE LIFEBOATS

and old novels by Vina del Mar. Ear will be happy to send its "Too Dull" file.

AND \$40,000 LEFT OVER FOR A NEW

said he did it for his image. A friend begged to know what a cheap knock-off could possibly do for his image. "\$10,000 worth of image I can afford," he said, "\$50,000 worth, I can't." Ear drives a Toyota knock-off.

EAR'S NOSE . . . Irene (pronounce it I-REE-NEE, please) Worth, the actress, claims she can't act at all unless she's wearing a scent she finds compatible with the character she's playing. Much of her image is built on her