



"THE THREADS OF TIME, THE FABRIC OF HISTORY"
 Profiles of African American Dressmakers and Designers, 1850 to the Present - An incredible book.

Background Information

Enjoy a talk by the author Rosemary E. Reed Miller, about her book, **THE THREADS OF TIME, THE FABRIC OF HISTORY, 22 PROFILES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN DESIGNERS AND DRESSMAKERS** from 1850 to 1950, 2nd Edition, T & S Press, 2003, Black and white photos, index, 192 pages. ISBN 0-970-9713-0

In the program, Ms. Reed Miller will combine history and little known facts such as

Did you know:

Ann Lowe designed the wedding dress for Jackie Kennedy, the most photographed wedding dress in American history. People's Magazine in 1999 voted the wedding dress as the most beautiful dress ever. The New York Times covered the 1953 wedding, wrote about the dress and did not mention the designer.

Today when Franklin Mint made a doll with a replica of the wedding dress, they List the artist as 'Oleg Cassini. A small detail, but typical of the problem of documenting the contribution of African Americans to American history.

Reed- Miller has spotlighted this small, but interesting area of achievement in her book which profiles 22 women in the fiber industry as well as their contribution to the fabric of history. The women are mostly from America, but two of the women, Claudia Robinson, and Pamela Botchway are from Jamaica, and Ghana, respectively.

Zelda Wynn, who ended her career designing costumes for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, is another interesting lady. She had a dress shop across from Carnegie Hall in the 1950's. Limos were lined up around the block. She designed for singers Dorothy Dandridge, and Joyce Bryant. Zelda talked about the fashion shows she did for the Playboy Club, and that she designed the Play Boy Bunny costume.

Rosa Parks is also profiled in the book. Many people did not know that she worked as a seamstress for a department store in Montgomery, Alabama.

Another special lady who was not lost in history because she wrote a book about her experiences is Elizabeth Keckley, who designed for Mary Lincoln. The dress she designed for Lincoln's inauguration is shown in the First ladies Exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution.

The book, which retails for \$24.95, is available in museums, libraries, Amazon.com, and from book stores. For further information: Tel. 202-723-9007, Fax. 202- 723-2246; E-mail: toaststrawberries@hotmail.com

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