

All of Everything: Todd Oldham Fashion, April 8, 2016-September 11, 2016

From 1989 to 1999, American designer Todd Oldham (b. 1961) blazed through New York's fashion landscape, producing meticulous, extravagantly embellished ensembles that were paraded down the runway by budding supermodels. *All of Everything: Todd Oldham Fashion* showcases a stunning array of pieces from this raucous, playful opus.

Oldham's approach to design is well described by writer Gertrude Stein's phrase "and then there is using everything." He draws meaningful inspiration from everything around him: the sewing skills taught to him by his mother and grandmother; memories of the bazaars in Tehran, where he lived as a teenager; thrift-store finds; vintage catalogue illustrations; narratives from *Three Stooges* episodes. Equally important, Oldham has tested the limits of technology and craft. His fixation on novelty has led him to embrace and explore traditional techniques that were starting to fade as fast fashion gained a foothold in the 1990s. The resulting garments are feats of imagination and technique that continue to defy boundaries and challenge definitions of propriety and excess.

Oldham served as the designer for this exhibition, and his voice is presented in the label texts. Arranged in the style of a formal French garden, the installation highlights ideas and techniques rather than strict chronology. The majority of the pieces on view come from Oldham's archives or from a large group of garments recently donated to the RISD Museum by the Todd Oldham Studio.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Mandarin Ensemble, Spring 1994
Vest and skirt with beads, sequins, and embroidery
Vest and skirt gift of the Todd Oldham Studio
Shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL1.20171

These embroidered motifs were taken directly from ancient Chinese designs. They look modern when created from silk thread and rough-cut bugle beads.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

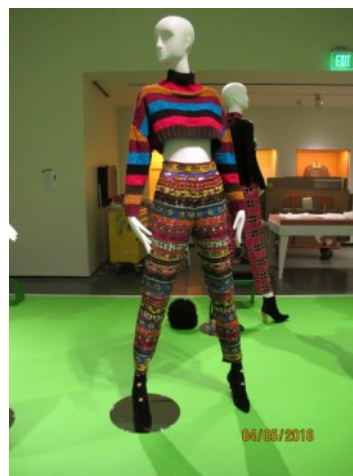
Fair Isle Ensemble, Fall 1994

Knit chenille sweater; pants with sequins, beads, and embroidery

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL10.20171

Preppy Fair Isle patterns were the starting point for the sequined and embroidered pants. I added spiders and webs and even my initials.

Manolo Blahnik made the boots for this collection using buttons we cast around clear glass marbles.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Harlequin Ensemble, Spring 1993

Jacquard-weave top with embroidery; skirt with beads, sequins, and embroidery

Courtesy Todd Oldham Studio TOL11.20171

The fabric used in the top here was woven for us in England by a company that had been weaving school ties for hundreds of years. We went into their archive and had them reweave select patterns. The fabric then came to Texas, where we made the patterns; traveled to India, where it was embroidered with 14-karat gold bullion that was hammered flat, locking it into the fabric; then back to Texas, where it was hand-sewn and embellished with buttons cast in our workshop. The skirt is a mix of glass beads, sequins, and thread embroidery in a harlequin pattern straight from the 1950s.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Trompe L'Oeil Tie-Dye Ensemble, Spring 1992 - Spring 1993

Top with beads; jacquard shorts with Swarovski crystals; jacquard purse with Swarovski crystals and metal chain

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL12.20171

Dyeing techniques are fascinating, and I have always liked tie dye. For this top, I had a classic tie-dye pattern made in silk, then sent to India to be translated into cut bugle beads. Queen Latifah wore this style in my fashion show.

The shorts are made from English tie fabrics that we had woven. Each harlequin was hand set with a prong-back crystal, which shrunk the fabrics a little with each application. We had to try this out a few times before we got the pattern to fit correctly.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Bracelet Ensemble, Fall 1994 - Spring 1998

Dress with Swarovski crystals, beads, faux pearls, and embroidery;
quilted coat

Dress and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL13.20171

Coat gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.28

I am fascinated with women's intense love of jewelry. Why not just strap on a giant pile of Bulgari bracelets?

Proper couture beading is laced together, as you can see in the seams of this dress. The pattern pieces were embroidered in India, then sent back to Texas to be sewn together. The beads were joined by hand-lacing one side to the other, so it appears seamless. Over time, I developed a relationship with two amazing sewers, Kay Robertson and Carol Hunter, who lived about 200 miles from us in a teeny town in Texas. They did all the meticulous joining of our couture beaded garments.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Choli Ensemble, Spring 1998

Top with Swarovski crystals, beads, and embroidery; skirt with
Swarovski crystals, beads, and faux pearls

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL14.20171

Traditional Indian clothing is so very beautiful, and it was the inspiration for the shape of the top in this ensemble. I wanted the sweetest, richest, most subtle embroidery possible, so we used real silver bullion with 100-year-old crystals to create these simple, lush patterns that shimmer and drape.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Chandelier Ensemble, Fall 1997

Top with beads and sequins; skirt and boots with beaded fringe

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL15.20171

I love stripes, and I've managed to use them in every collection. The turtleneck top is embroidered and beaded on silk. It has five zippers so that it can be put on easily: at the back of the neck, at each wrist, and up both sides. The skirt is made from plastic bead fringe that we had made in specific patterns. When the fringe falls straight down, you can see flowers and geometric patterns. We tried to use glass beads, but the skirt would have weighed 50 pounds. The same



RISD MUSEUM

layered fringe appears on the boots, with the strips attached with Velcro to allow for proper cleaning.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Lite-Brite Suit, Fall 1991

Jacket and skirt with painted metal studs

Suit gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.8

Shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL16.20171

As a kid, I loved the toy Lite-Brite. I never used it as it was intended, but would spend many hours making psychedelic patterns and looking at them as closely as possible. This wool suit has thousands of anodized aluminum studs, all hand set in a random pattern. The fabric draws up with every stud application, making fit calculations algebraic and nightmarish in equal measure.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Après-Ski Ensemble, Fall 1994

Wool knit hat; top with sequins, beads, and embroidery; pants with beads and sequins

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL17.20171

Conservative classic design has always been a big inspiration to me, mostly because I can turn it on its ear so easily. The Fair Isle motifs on the turtleneck mirror those I saw often in the alterations department at Ralph Lauren, where I worked when I was eighteen years old for three months before being fired. I learned more about construction at that job than anywhere else. I am forever grateful to Ralph Lauren for hiring me and firing me.



The pants are just simple beaded plaid slacks.

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Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

At Home on the Ranch Ensemble, Fall 1990

Jacket with sequins, beads, and embroidery; shorts with sequins and beads

Jacket and boots courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL18.20171

Shorts gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.16

This jacket was from our very first collection for Bergdorf Goodman. It's embroidered on wool gabardine, a ground fabric I soon learned was ridiculous to use for embroidery due to the difficulty of working with it and the extravagant customs duties levied on it. I love the beaded wood planks with the nails exposed. The back was taken from a vintage paint-by-number painting from a Fort Worth flea market.

The same extraordinary workshop in India crafted every piece of beading I ever did. It's a 400-year-old wedding-sari business called Mystic Beading, run by Lalit Ghera.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Mosaic Ensemble, Fall 1991

Lamontage (felted synthetic fiber) jacket and skirt; copper-wire and resin-bead top

Courtesy Todd Oldham Studio TOL19.20171

This suit was made using a felting technique called Lamontage, developed by artist Liora Manné. I first visited Liora's studio in the early 1990s. There were beautifully hued rolls of what looked like dryer lint everywhere. Liora pulled and blended these fibers to create endless patterns and motifs.

Here, the tiles were layered in many colors, cut, and applied one by one—just as a tile mason would do—followed by multiple needle punches and binder baths. When this garment moves, it hinges at the grout lines. I am still amazed at Liora's ability to make an ancient technique new.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Tuft Print/Faux Fur Ensemble, Fall 1992 - Spring 1993

Faux fur coat; printed top with Swarovski crystals; pants with beads, sequins, and embroidery; cap with Swarovski crystals

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL2.20171

We had Tyber make a matching leopard faux fur from the printed leopard organza that we used for the shawl-collared chubby coat here. The matte and shiny sequins and cut bugle beads that embellish the pants are stitched in the same leopard pattern.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Holographic Ensemble, Fall 1994 - Fall 1996

Faux leather coat with faux fur trim; top with beads and sequins; silk velvet pants

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL20.20171

We had the gold holographic vinyl made in Germany, which worked perfectly for a classic trench coat with a collar of faux nuclear rabbit fur. The plaid sequined turtleneck has matte-jersey sleeves and back for comfort.

Etro made the fabric for the pants for us. It is pretty and luscious, made on hand-pulled flatbed screens. I just loved working with Etro. Nothing was too complicated for them. This fabric was probably close to \$200 a yard.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Window-Pane Plaid Dress, Fall/Winter 1994/1995

Hand-dyed velvet dress

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL21.20171

I met Helen in New York. I was driving by in a cab and noticed her in front of her wares, a bunch of exquisite hand-dyed t-shirts. I stopped and struck up a conversation with her, because I could tell from her dyeing techniques that this woman could do things that I had never seen before. I helped her set up dye-bed tables so she could produce yardage for us. We worked together for many, many years.

Helen was a complete genius, and she was up for doing anything. She tie-dyed argyles for me, stripes, polka dots, even zebra stripes.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Color-Thesis Ensemble, Fall 1996 - Fall 1997

Faux fur stole with Swarovski rhinestone brooch; hand-knit top; dye-sublimation-printed skirt

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL22.20171

This dye-sublimation print was created by photographing piles of layered hand-dyed swatches from my design assistant Angel Dormer's senior color thesis. I hand knitted the space-dyed wool-yarn bra during a short car trip, and the stole is made from Tyber's supernatural fake fur. The stole's clasp was made from recompiled antique findings.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Klimt Ensemble, Fall 1997

Lamontage (felted synthetic fiber) coat; hand-knit wool scarf

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL23.20171

We made this space-dyed yarn in our factory, which took an incredibly long time due to the number of colors we used. We had to air-dry the yarn in the hot, humid conditions of Dallas in the summer. After making thousands of yards of yarn, we sneezed wool puffs for months.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Scarecrow Dress, Fall 1997

Dress with embroidery and chiffon fringe

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL24.20171

I based this design on my assistant's color thesis from college. She let me disassemble it and then I paid homage to it by dyeing all of the chiffon. We tore all the swatches then did a scribble-stitch embroidery on the bodice.



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Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Color-Block Ensemble, Fall 1991 - Spring 1994

Ultrasuede patchwork coat and skirt; plain-weave ribbon top with bead trim and Swarovski Aurora Borealis buttons; patchwork handbag by Carlos Falchi for Todd Oldham

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL25.20171

We wove the satin ribbon used for the top in our factory and bonded the woven fabric to a tricot warp-knit interfacing to keep it from unraveling. The fringe is not applied, but made from unraveling the weft ribbons and tying a glass bead to the end of each warp ribbon. The coat's patchwork ultrasuede was hand-cut and embellished with zig-zag over stitching.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Love Ball Dress, 1991

Interlooped pipe cleaners

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL26.20171

I made this dress using only pipe cleaners for my friend Kachin to wear to the first Love Ball in New York City, the first AIDS fundraiser, held in 1991. The optimism of the bees buzzing in the flowers felt like a hopeful motif, a contrast to how scary and heartbreaking the early years of HIV discovery were.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Chinese Floral Suit, Spring 1995

Printed silk jacket and skirt

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL27.20171

This floral collection was very popular. The textile designs mixed traditional cowboy and Chinese motifs together. The individual garments were meant to fit very strangely. We shrunk them in ways that made them fit very badly on purpose. The jacket, for example, looks like it's for a child. It was really a new look. Everything was designed as though it was bent and warped.



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Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Pretty in Pink Ensemble, Fall 1991 - Spring 1995

Knit cardigan with chenille embroidery; airbrushed and painted top; shorts with beads and overprinting

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL28.20171

This shirt was all hand-airbrushed and painted. I did the drawing, then the piece would go through the airbrushing section to lay down the colors, and then I finished by hand-drawing on top. The shorts started out white, were beaded in India, and then painted when they came back to the Texas atelier. We made sure that they were beaded in cotton thread so that the dye would go through the beads and produce this weird opalescent sheen. We used clear and milk beads that were a little foggier. I don't think we sold much of this because people didn't really understand hand-painted beading.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Arizona Highways Suit, Spring 1994

Dye-sublimation-printed stretch-satin jacket and trousers; straw hat

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL29.20171

We worked with German and Italian ski companies to weave beautiful tech polyesters as the ground fabrics for our sublimation prints like this one from the Arizona Highways collection. Different people made different grounds for us, but the same company did all of the printing. The print design came from photographs taken from a magazine called Arizona Highways that was around for years. I have a massive collection of them.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Tuft Print Ensemble, Fall 1992

Printed and quilted coat; printed dress and purse with Swarovski crystals

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL3.20171

Vintage wallpaper was the inspiration for the Tuft print. We added prong-set Swarovski crystals to the center of each tuft motif for the gown. The pillow buttons on the reversible coat were cast in white metal and plated with 24-karat gold.



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Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Flame Ensemble, Spring 1994
Dye-sublimation-printed stretch-flannel dress and boots
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL30.20171

The design for this dye-sublimation print was made by setting wood chips on fire in a can and photographing the flames. We had the polyester velvet made by ski-fabric makers. The matching boots have jeweled spiders on the zipper pulls.

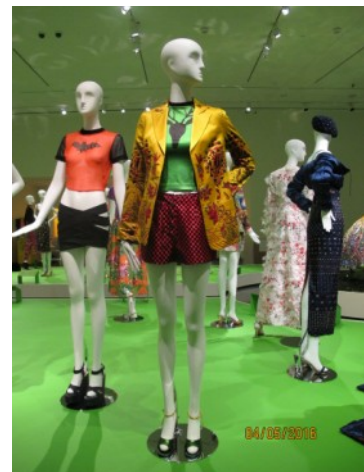


Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Bat Ensemble, Spring 1998
Printed top with knit collar; pieced skirt
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL31.20171

I found an image of a bat in a clip-art book from the 1950s and had it screened onto silk chiffon for the body of the t-shirt. The sleeves and collar were knit at an athletic supply company. The silk skirt is based on an unfurling turban. The fit was achieved through the piecing of the bands; it was done without darts.

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Antler Ensemble, Spring 1995 - Spring 1998
Printed jacket with crystal buttons; printed stretch-satin top with knit sleeves and collar; hand-woven ribbon shorts
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL32.20171

Off-register printing is fascinating to me, and I worked with a flat-bed drapery printer to mess the registration up on the silk satin jacket (lined in lime green silk with black dots). The stretch-silk t-shirt was screened with the antlers wrapping over the shoulder seams and down the back. The satin ribbon of the shorts was hand woven in my factory.



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Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Zebra Dress Ensemble, Fall 1994 - Fall 1997

Quilted satin stole; tie-dye velvet dress

Dress gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.1

Stole and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL33.20171

We called this the Zebra Dress because of Helen's spectacular sheet-dyeing on the bodice and at the bottom of the skirt. The dyeing technique was quite complicated because it combines two techniques on white fabric, which is a nightmare. It had to be engineered perfectly. Otherwise it's a fairly conservative dress and it fits very beautifully. It has a breezy way about it, with a couple of support details like flexible horsehair sewn into the hem to give it a little extra weight that reacts beautifully with the velvet. It's also lined with black tulle and navy blue silk.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Foulard Mill Blanket Ensemble, Spring 1993 - Fall 1997

Satin-weave quilted jacket; jacquard-weave dress with Swarovski crystals; cap with Swarovski crystals

Jacket, cap, and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL34.20171

Dress gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.23

For this dress, we collaborated with a mill in England that made ties for schoolboys. This dress was made from a beautiful black warped silk that we punctuated with Swarovski prong-set crystals—a crazy thing to do with such a fragile fabric. We screened the lining of the dress in Dallas. We worked with a drapery printer who could do nine-foot repeats because their market was interiors, specifically curtains. We screened our linings without pigments, just with emulsions. In many cases our linings were more expensive than the exterior fabrics.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Fluttering Flower Ensemble, Spring 1997 - Spring 1998

Printed satin coat with applied floral decoration; knit cashmere hot pants

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL35.20171

This fabric was one of my favorite engineering feats we ever pulled off. First we had Chinese silk embroidered in India, then we photographed it and had it made into sublimation papers. We die-cut polyester organza flowers and stitched them onto polyester fabric before it was printed, so the transfer went right through and it ghosted. It's sheer enough that the gas was able to travel through.



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On the body, the pattern doesn't look disrupted; it shimmers. Because the pattern matches up, it doesn't become visual chaos. This was one of the few times I thought we did something that I had never seen before.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

"How to Decorate a Cake" Ensemble, Spring 1995

Dye-sublimation-printed jacket, top, and skirt

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL36.20171

For this print, I scavenged books on how to decorate cakes. I made a collage that was photographed and printed in reverse on heat resistant paper. We had 100% polyester ski fabrics made in Germany that, when heat pressed with the printed paper, turned the ink to gas and embedded it in the fibers. Dye sublimation was the first textile printing technique that allowed photographic printing. I used it for many years, to many different effects.

We were using polyester at a time when it was a serious cuss word. It wasn't in this market at all, but it was the only thing you could use for sublimation printing.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Tropical Strolling Ensemble, Fall 1992 - Fall 1996

Velvet top with beads and Swarovski crystals; skirt with sequins, embroidery, and beads on printed basket weave

Top and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL37.20171

Skirt gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.13

The skirt was completely re-embroidered on antique barkcloth upholstery using the tropical print as a guide, but I changed all of the colors. Vintage silk velvet was used to make the t-shirt, which was embroidered with antique silver beads and crystals.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Leopard-in-the-Living-Room Ensemble, Fall 1991 - Fall 1992

Printed top with crystal buttons; printed skirt; printed and quilted cap

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL38.20171

The blouse is made from our Living Room print, which was partially printed on thick silk organza in Korea and the rest was hand painted once the fabric arrived at our factory in Dallas. The button-front silk-organza skirt was made from a leopard print we developed by photographing fake leopard fur.

This was the leopard print we used over and over. The Metropolitan Museum called us when they were doing their Diana Vreeland tribute and they thought we made a lovely leopard print, so they covered the tribute book in it.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Blanket Ensemble, Fall 1994

Knit dress and hat

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL39.20171

I wanted to make evening dresses that you could wear while on a picnic and eat off your lap. I had classic wool picnic blankets knitted in Italy in elegant plaids; they're clean finished on one side and the loom threads were left untrimmed on the others to create a knit fringe of sorts. I draped four unique gowns, repositioning the edges in different ways. I love the matching knit ski cap with fringed mane.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Ancient Egyptian Ensemble, Spring 1994 - Fall 1994

Patchwork coat; shorts; dye-sublimation-printed stretch-satin jacket and boots

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL4.20171

I had a lovely panel of beading made of Egyptian tomb-painting motifs. I then photographed it and made it into the dye-sublimation print used on the jacket.

The patchwork coat worn over the jacket was produced from dozens of custom textiles I had made all over the world. The coat's pattern work was challenging, as there are no darts—only fit seams—and all the patching was contained within them. The cutting of the fabric took days.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Nude Dress, Fall 1996
Knit dress with Swarovski metal studs
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL40.20171

We commissioned Swarovski to make the iron-on nail-head panels for this dress. I wasn't interested in referencing vintage ideas here; I wanted to work with new technology. I needed something industrial for the ground fabric, because the metal panels are so heavy. We worked with a manufacturer of ice-dancing costumes that supplied fake nude panels. Even though people knew me for color, I really love nude clothes.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Turban Dress, Spring 1998
Dress with embroidery and beads
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL41.20171

This dress is from a series based on a taxi driver's turban that was coming undone.

It is as though you are wrapped in one ribbon and tied at the bust. The patterns are a hybrid of ancient Japanese embroidery patterns and preppy hair ribbons. The thread is silk and cotton. Many of the pearls and beads nestled in the thread work are hundreds of years old, as my embroideries were made at a 400-year-old Indian wedding-sari company that kept a supply of antique materials. This dress is 100% covered in thread work, very expensive and very time-consuming work not often done today.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
RISD Ensemble, 2015/2016
Knit top; printed skirt with embroidery and sequins
Gift of the Todd Oldham Studio TOL42.20171

I had the pleasure of working with students in RISD's Textiles Department during the Spring 2015 semester. They agreed to make a one-of-a-kind textile for me to construct into the first new intricate dress I have made in years. The sweater is knitted from strips of the printed fabric, and the strips are thinner at the edges of the sweater and wider over the bust.

There is a staggering number of people involved in producing couture. More than 35 students participated in creating the print on



RISD MUSEUM

25 yards of truly beautiful, insanely detailed fabric that we then embroidered with custom-made sequins and paillettes in my New York studio. By the time the embroidery is finished, more than 60 people will have collaborated on this dress. I am donating it to RISD—its birthplace, after all.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Dream Dress, Spring 1994

Dress with embroidery, beads, sequins, and silver bullion

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL43.20171

The motifs on this dress came from a 1930s clip-art book for advertising. I made collages from images in the book, Xeroxed them, then laid them out into a pattern. I was thinking of Old Master still-life paintings, so I made flowers and vases out of everything but flowers and vases: clocks and watches and boat pulleys and flashlights with mini bulbs. I even put my name on the perfume bottle.



We also gave a shout-out to Yale locks. Once the design was completed, I sent an elaborate map with all the color notations, style numbers, and sequin sizes to the embroiderers in India.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Trashed Ensemble, Fall 1994 - Spring 1998

Jacket with embroidery; plain-weave bra top; plain-weave pants;
stretch-satin hot pants

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL44.20171

I found this jacket really funny. It's an organized mess. The hook closures, made black by enameling, are a bramble of copper wire. Everything on the jacket is in the wrong place. The pockets slide up under the arms. The lapel is stitched through the front. Every jacket in this collection was identically reproduced. It made me laugh then, and it still makes me laugh today.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Fringe Ensemble, Fall 1996

Pile-knit jacket; velvet dress with beads, Swarovski lochrosen crystals, and hardware straps with rhinestones

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL45.20171



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Tuxedo Ensemble, Spring 1997

Stretch-satin top; wool skirt

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL46.20171

I designed this collection in Florida, and everything got very simple because I spent so much time at the beach in a swimsuit. I added less and less and less. The designs in this collection showed very odd parts of your body and only came in banker's gray and navy blue in tropical-weight wool. I loved that they were sparsely tailored and made for travel. Tropical-weight wool is one of those classic rich-people things that most people don't live with, because wool is erroneously thought too hot for summer. Exploring sparseness, I wanted to make a tuxedo shirt, but ended up just going with the bib.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Peek-a-Boo Ensemble, Spring 1996

Dress with lace insert; stretch-satin hot pants

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL47.20171

The fabric for this dress was made in China using a traditional lace-making technique. It's hard to see, but it's woven into panels engineered for an exact fit; there's no darting, and the fit was flawless. The front is just a little black dress, so when you see the back it's a complete surprise.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Pearly Kings and Queens Suit, Spring 1991
Linen jacket and skirt with mother-of-pearl buttons
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL48.20171

The mother-of-pearl-studded suits of the eccentric Pearly Kings and Queens, an English working-class tradition dating to the 19th century, were the inspiration for this suit. I chose linen for the ground cloth because it wrinkles so beautifully and makes the buttons quake.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Chinchilla Dress, Fall 1997
Airbrushed satin dress with faux fur
Dress gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.2
Shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL49.20171

This "chinchilla" dress is completely hand painted. To make this design, we worked with a graffiti tagger named Mosquito who would wreak havoc on Dallas at night and then come to our factory during the day and work his airbrush magic. This dress was white satin to start. Mosquito would lay straight pins down on cardboard strips, airbrush into them until a little bit of ink got onto end of the pins, and then he'd flip it and pull it to create the hair streaks.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Trash Print Ensemble, Spring 1994 - Spring 1995
Dye-sublimation-printed coat; open-work top; skirt with Swarovski crystals
Coat, skirt, and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL5.20171
Top gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.20

The ingredients in the collage that was sublimation printed on the coat were collected from trashcans on my walk to work one morning. I found bingo cards, contact paper, gossip tabloids (from which I pulled images of Lady Miss Kier and Cindy Crawford), and loads more. I threw in a few ingredients from my desk and it was done. The skirt is entirely made from prong-set Swarovski crystals mounted on cotton mesh.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Librarian Ensemble, Fall 1992 - Spring 1995

Corduroy jacket with beads; stretch-satin top; twill-weave wool pants

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL50.20171

Miles of cut bugle beads nestled between the rows of this jacket's cozy seven-wale corduroy made the fabric heavy, scratchy, and very beautiful.

The blouse was made from a brand-new textile at the time, stretch silk charmeuse. The fabric was extremely narrow, making the fabric consumption about three times that of a normal blouse. I undercut the front panels so the buttons purposely gaped for a clingy, too-small look. The blouse looked ready to pop open at any moment, but good engineering made it stay closed.

The plaid wool oversized pants were inspired by Fred Mertz in *I Love Lucy*. Fred's pants were enormous.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Convertible Dress, Spring 1994

Knit dress with Murano glass beads

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL51.20171

I wanted to explore silhouettes that you could change to suit the occasion. This dress adjusts with long braided straps that are weighted on the ends with glass beads from Murano.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Feline Ensemble, Fall 1994 - Fall 1997

Faux-fur coat; faux fur top with beads; lamé shorts

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL52.20171

Faceted seed beads are nestled in the faux ocelot fur we used for the turtleneck, and an unadorned version was used for the matching boots. To achieve the turtleneck's sleek fit, five zippers were used.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Lochrosen Ensemble, Fall 1995 - Fall 1996

Hand-knit intarsia sweater; pants with Swarovski lochrosen crystals and beads

Sweater and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL53.20171

Pants gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.10

The hand-knit sweater was based on classic prepster designs, but shrinking it turned it sexy.

The pants are made from wool and were hand embroidered with 200-year-old prong set lochrosen crystals and antique gold seed beads in a hybrid wheat pattern. We only made a very few pairs of these pants, due to the extremely limited ingredients.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Sketchbook Ensemble, Spring 1994 - Fall 1998

Hand-knit hat; hand-knit cashmere sweater with safety pins; top with embroidery; skirt with freshwater pearls

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL54.20171

For the skirt, we hand-stitched freshwater pearls to create a ridiculously opulent pinstripe on four-ply silk satin. Artist Ruben Toledo allowed me to render pages from his sketchbooks in thread on the silk t-shirt. The eight-ply cashmere sweater was handmade in Scotland.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Garage Sale Ensemble, Spring 1992 - Spring 1998

Jacket with embroidery; pants with beaded fringe

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL55.20171

The coat is made from a knit rayon yarn that always reminded me of a dirty dog. On the back of the fabric it is easy to see that there is a huge houndstooth pattern.

The silk velvet dress has hundreds of handmade glass-bead tassels and ancient lochrosens. The jewelry straps were cast in my factory.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Comb Suit, Spring 1994
Printed jacket and pants
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL56.20171

The comb artwork came from a vintage clipart book I mined often. I love conservative fashion, and pinstripes are classic. It made sense to me to blow the combs up and make the stripes from combs placed end on end. We printed them on white silk twill.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Clip-Art Print Ensemble, Spring 1993
Printed jacket, top, pants
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL57.20171

This ensemble nearly killed a few folks in my factory. The prints in this collection were unspeakably complicated, because they were engineered to insane degrees. I used a vintage clip-art book for the motifs, bending and warping them to follow darts, seams, and hems. We had to make new screens for every size, which required six printing screens per style, and there were multiple styles.

On the vest, the arm decoration looks like blood dripping where your arm got hacked off, a gesture I think the factory technicians wanted to do to me.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Blue Sky Ensemble, Spring 1994
Top with embroidery, beads, and sequins; shorts with embroidery;
straw hat
Top gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.21
Shorts, hat, and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio
TOL58.20171

Arizona Highways magazine is full of the breathtaking landscape photography that was the source material for the scenic motifs on the embroidered t-shirt. The shorts are completely embroidered with real 18-karat gold bullion, making them stiff and scratchy but oh so very beautiful.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Persian Rug Ensemble, Fall 1991 - Fall 1997

Hand-knit sweater; skirt with embroidery, metallic-wrapped-yarn fringe, and beads

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL59.20171

We dyed the yarn used in this sweater in our factory, which took an incredibly long time due to the number of colors we used.

The skirt is one of the most astonishing embroideries I have ever seen. The coiled 18-karat gold bullion was pulled like a Slinky and had multiple threads laced through the coils to create the subtle colors. That same bullion was hammered into a crunchy look around the ornaments. We used two different traditional Persian rug designs for the front and back, wrapping the borders to accommodate the fit lines. The thread work is not padded, but was created by layering the stitches dozens of times.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Pantone Dress, Spring 1996

Printed dress with sequins

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL6.20171

Pantone color books were very expensive in the 1990s, and I was thrilled to find a dog-eared copy at a thrift store. The dye-sublimation print on this dress has no color repeat—it's got 1400 different colors in each 26-by-40-inch panel.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Ice Skating Ensemble, Fall 1992 - Fall 1996

Intarsia-knit sweater; skirt with sequins, embroidery, and beads on printed basket weave

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL60.20171

To make this skirt, we embroidered an upholstery fabric from the 1940s. We were buying small lots of vintage fabric and reconsidering them by covering the original design with sequins, beads, and embroidery. Working with the Indian artisans just blew me away every time. The skaters depicted here sort of ended up looking like dancers by the time we were finished with it.



RISD MUSEUM

We presented the skirt with a very simple sweater. At this point, most formal clothes were very uptight—there was no ease or lifestyle stirred into them. We liked the idea of beaded clothes that were actually comfortable and beautiful.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Off-the-Grid Ensemble, Fall 1994 - Fall 1998

Hand-knit sweater; pants with sequins and beads; faux fur purse

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL61.20171

Hand-knit cable sweaters are technical marvels and effortless for the wearer — a perfect combination. The classic plaid layout on these pants is punctuated with very peculiar opalescent sequins that look like oil slicks.

I used Sculpey to make the model for the high heels on the boot, embedding Swarovski crystals into the form without precision to create a visual paradox of gleaming gold jewelry made by unskilled workers. Of course it took exquisitely talented technicians to pull off this folly. Despite such extravagance, we always wanted to make the wearer comfortable. Why not have everything work? Everything counts.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Doodle Ensemble, Fall 1992 - Spring 1997

Dye-sublimation-printed coat; top with Swarovski lochrosen crystals; skirt with sequins and beads on printed basket weave

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL62.20171

We used charming pencil drawings by my design assistant, Angel Dormer, for the dye sublimation doodle print on the trench coat. I cut up an old London Fog trench coat from the 1970s and copied the pattern pieces almost exactly. The jacket is entirely covered in faceted lochrosens (not sequins!) and cut simply so that the sparkles fall in sheets.



The skirt is embroidered barkcloth fabric from the 1940s. I bought odd lengths of vintage textiles, so the quantity of production pieces was limited to how much yardage we had. I think we made only four of these skirts.

RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Lei Ensemble, Spring 1991

Crocheted top with embroidered applique and Swarovski Aurora

Borealis rhinestones; skirt with embroidery, sequins, and beads

Top and skirt gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.23

Shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL63.20171

The hand-crocheted rayon bra is covered in hand-embroidered thread flowers that were trimmed and finished as patches, a feat that would have been easily achieved for 1/20 of the price by machine but without the magic that handmade objects have. I used the same edge-binding technique for the lei that wraps around the skirt and dips past the hem.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Sunset Ensemble, Spring 1994 - Spring 1995

Tie-dyed coat with printed lining; top with sequins and beads; knit shorts

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL64.20171

The traditional tie-dye patterns on this trench coat were executed on silk dupioni by genius dyer Helen, and it is lined in a print by the artist Kenny Scharf. The artwork on the sequined and seed-bead embroidered t-shirt is by Michael Economy. I had the pleasure of working often with artists like Kenny and Michael, whom I greatly admire.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Shredded-Paper Dress, Spring 1998

Dye-sublimation-printed dress with embroidery, beads, sequins, and

Swarovski lochrosen crystals

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL65.20171

I received a present from my mom and it was packed in beautiful shredded paper, so I photographed it and turned it into this print design. The pretty paisley bra cups are embellished with 100-year-old lochrosen crystals.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Aviary Ensemble, Spring 1992 - Fall/Winter 1994/1995

Top with sequins, embroidery, faux pearls, and beads; tie-dyed and painted skirt

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL66.20171

This top is among the earliest embroidery patterns I designed. Straightforward but sweet, the motifs are embroidered on Irish linen, which created wrinkled sequins. I have not seen this before or since, probably because no one wants wrinkled beading. I stand by my ground-cloth choice.

The skirt was hand-tie-dyed and painted in a bias plaid on crushed rayon velvet by the late great Helen, who dyed many fabrics for me.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Three-Ply Ensemble, Fall 1998

Hand-knit cashmere sweater with beads; skirt with sequins and beads
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL67.20171

This skirt was from one of our last collections. The layers in the skirt have three different beaded patterns on silk chiffon: the innermost has starburst patterns, the next stars, and a multicolored one is on top. When you have it on, you see ghosted beading. What's more beautiful than beading three layers deep? We staggered the hems just a little bit so that in motion the hem will show more. I love that all this decoration was underneath, as hidden opulence. The sweater, however, is overt opulence, hand knit in eight-ply cashmere and embellished with faceted jet beads.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Brooch Dress, Fall 1996

Dress with hand-molded Swarovski crystal jewelry

Dress gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.26

Shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL68.20171

During a trip to a flea market, I came across a huge pile of rubber centrifugal casting molds. Without knowing what the castings were, I bought them and had them all recast at my studio. My best guess was that the molds were from a jewelry caster and probably from the 1950s. We recombined the castings in new combinations, then hand set thousands of Swarovski crystals. Here we chose a very thick wool crepe for the ground, so it would be able to hold up the hundreds of jewelry pieces that cover the entire dress.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Dashiki Ensemble, Fall 1991

Stole with embroidery and sequins; stretch-satin top; trousers with embroidery, beads, and sequins

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL69.20171

Dashiki patterns from West Africa were the inspiration for the hand-beaded and embroidered pants and stole. The elegant thread embroidery contrasted beautifully with the hand-woven slubby-silk dupioni ground fabrics. The motifs punctuate the fit seams instead of avoiding them.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Fragonard Meets African Trinkets Ensemble, Spring 1993

Jacket with beads and buttons; skirt with embroidery and sequins

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL7.20171

The jacket is based on African trinket panels in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution. The panels combine plastic buttons with semiprecious stones, so here we've got cork and wood and old glass mixed with gold-plated items. We had the embroiderers in India comb junk stores for antique Indian buttons and jewelry. It's a mix of everything, including African beads.



The skirt is based on Fragonard paintings, as seen through the filter of the Indian embroiderers. It's still very refined, but I love how odd the rough work and weird sequins look with the classic motifs. They used rose-gold bullion that is really old.

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Positano Tile Dress, Fall/Winter 1994/1995 - Spring 1996

Dress with embroidery, sequins, beads, and Swarovski rhinestones; stole with gold thread and faux pearls

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL8.20171

My friend Francesco Graffei grew up on Italy's Amalfi coast, where his great-grandfather was a tile mason in the 1800s. Francesco had his original tile catalogs, and I used almost all of them in the dress's embroidered motifs, rendering them in thread, glass beads, and micro sequins. The gold thread and pearl stole was made in the exact same manner as a fisherman's net.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Crewel Embroidery Ensemble, Fall 1997

Coat with embroidery, sequins, and beads; faux fur dress with sequins and beads

Coat gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.7

Dress and shoes courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL9.20171

We were endlessly trying to find new ways to simulate fur, as in this beaded faux sealskin dress. It was always tricky referencing fur, because I'm a longtime vegetarian. I don't wear leather and don't involve myself in any animal harm. I love ultrasuede, but not everybody does, so we had to find ways to make it more wonderful than the stuff that should be left on the animals. One route we took was working with a great German company called Tyber. They were the most advanced in creating fake furs.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Jewelry Wedding Dress,

Dress with embroidery, beads, Swarovski crystals, and silver and gold bullion

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio, in memory of Alisa Bellettini
TOL70.20171

I made this wedding dress for my friend Alisa Bellettini, who was my producer at MTV's *House of Style*, a show I was on for four years. I loved Alisa, and the fanciest embroiderer possible was perfect for her. Alisa passed away in February, a few days after she returned this dress to us.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Persian carpet dress, fourth quarter 20th century

Silk, plastic

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Todd Oldham Studio, 2002 TL38.2016.3

In 1972, when I was 12, my family moved to Tehran. I was there for four years, and it was pure magic. I got to see great beauty in the world, ancient beauty. We would go to the bazaars, where there was a hexagonal room full of enormous burlap sacks turned down with spices in them, sitting on elaborate Persian rugs. A prismatic cutout in the ceiling allowed the sun to stream through. You couldn't have art-directed something so beautiful: the mingling colors of cumin next to curry next to paprika was intoxicating. This dress is made up of motifs from five Persian rugs.



Todd Oldham, American, b. 1961

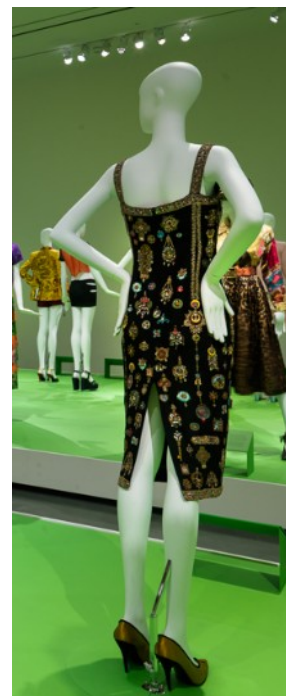
Byzantine jewelry dress, Spring/Summer 1992

Silk

Center back length: 89.9 cm (35 3/8 inches)

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Todd Oldham Studio, 2002 TL38.2016.1

During a trip to the Metropolitan Museum, I was intoxicated by the Byzantine jewelry. I decided to replicate that jewelry by embellishing four-ply silk crepe with 18-karat gold bullion, faceted glass, and semiprecious stones. This was the most expensive dress we ever made and it now lives permanently in the Met, which makes sense.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham, American, b. 1961

Old Master–New Mistress Ensemble

Lamé shirt (Fall 1992); skirt with embroidery, sequins, and beads (Fall 1992)

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Todd Oldham Studio, 2002 TL38.2016.2.ab

This ensemble is presented as it was shown in 1992 in a collection called *Interiors*. It was inspired by a *Three Stooges* episode I saw as a child; the Stooges, who were builders mistaken as fashion designers, put on a show.

The front of the skirt is very heavy thread embroidery of the Mona Lisa, while the back is a sequin version of a thrift-store painting I bought in the 1980s and still have hanging in my living room today. The blouse is made from fabric whose weft is silk and warp is copper metal. The buttons are plated in 24-karat gold.



Todd Oldham

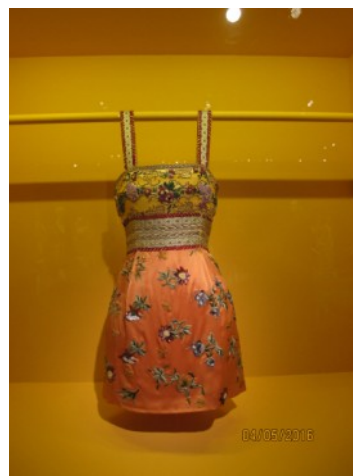
American, b. 1961

Flowers and Insects Dress, Spring 1998

Dress with embroidery, sequins, and beads

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL71.20171

I like everything about this tiny dress. I considered each of the three main bands differently. The embroidery is astonishing and microscopic. The base cloth of silk charmeuse added a supple casualness and a perfect contrast to the chenille embroidery.



Todd Oldham

American, b. 1961

Ribbon Suit, Fall 1995

Plain-weave ribbon jacket and skirt

Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL72.20171

Chocolate and apricot-colored satin ribbons were hand woven in my factory. Each pattern piece was woven to size on top of a tricot warp-knit fusible lining, which helped lock the ribbons together but allowed the edges to move and hinge. The pattern sequences mirror those of the Bauhaus weavers.



RISD MUSEUM

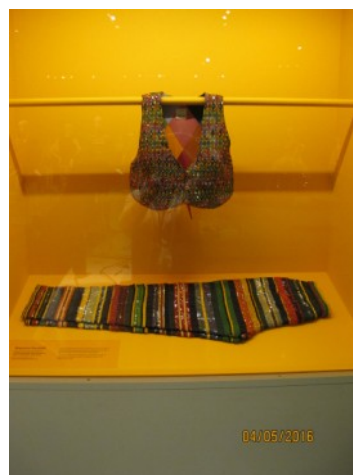
Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Mosaic Tile Coat, Fall 1991
Lamontage (felted synthetic fiber) coat
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL73.20171

The felting technique used to create this coat's fitted pattern pieces is called Lamontage, invented by New York artist Liora Manné. The coat was made by hand drawing the motif patterns within the outline of the garment's pattern pieces, then projecting the image onto the floor. Layered colors of fiber were trimmed to actual tile shapes and laid as one would a mosaic tile onto the projected shape of the pattern piece, then affixed with a felting needle. It was finished in the factory that also made the filters for Jarvik replacement hearts in the 1990s.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Ringmaster Ensemble, Spring 1993
Jacquard-woven vest with Swarovski crystals; pants with sequins, beads, and embroidery
Vest courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL74.20171
Pants gift of the Todd Oldham Studio 2014.90.11

The vest front features prong-set Swarovski crystals on top of a silk textile that was custom woven in England. It also has a 12-color custom-made printed silk lining and back. The pants are fully hand-beaded and embroidered with an unusual mix of thread, beads, and sequins, allowing for drape and softness.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Trash Print Preparatory Collage, Fall 1994
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL75.20171.1

The ingredients in this collage were collected on my walk to work one summer day. A church had thrown away used bingo cards. I also found tabloids, traffic tickets, old posters, and much more, and I collaged them together to create the print that I used in my Fall 1994 collection. You can see a coat in this pattern on the adjacent platform in this gallery.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Scissor Stripe Print Preparatory Collage, Fall 1996
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL75.20171.2

We used acrylic paint to create the colored papers, then used children's ornamental scissors to cut the pinstripes for this collage. Then we used the collage to make a print.



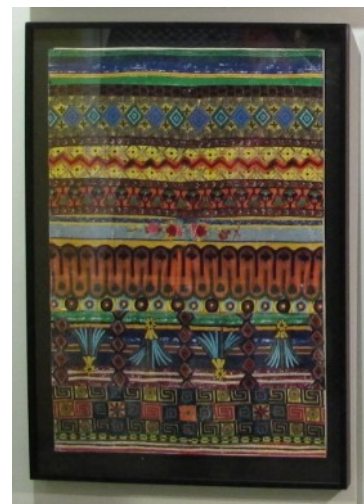
Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Pantone Print Preparatory Collage, Spring 1996
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL75.20171.3

We cut up a Pantone book purchased at a flea market to create this collage. More than 1400 different colors were printed in the fabric panel, allowing us to cut garments without color repeats—a bit of a printing miracle!



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Egyptian Print Preparatory Collage, Spring 1994
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL75.20171.4

The banding of this collage is inspired by Egyptian tomb paintings that I had had embroidered and beaded in India. I photographed the embroidered panel with natural light to create the shadows, then I collaged the prints into stripes. We printed from the final collage; there's an example in this gallery on the adjoining platform.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Disc Print Preparatory Collage, Spring 1996
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL75.20171.5

We used tonal-colored bleeding tissue paper to collage panels of color together that were then cut into a variety of oval shapes. We used a draftsman template for the shapes.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Quilt Print Preparatory Collage, Fall 1996
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL75.20171.6

Because this collage was to be printed on panels sized 26 by 40 inches, borders could be easily used. We cut up wool woven fabrics and pieced them together, just as a quilt would be made, but we glued our pieces down on board. This occasionally left loose threads in the final print.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Group of Accessories
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL76.20171

This case includes an embellished choli top, a purse, earrings, barrettes, pony-tail holders, brooches, necklaces, bracelets, belt buckles, and hair ornaments. Accessories played a big part in our collections. We made almost all of the pieces in the factory using many methods, but the prevalent technique was white-metal centrifugal casting. Molten liquid metal was poured into the middle of the mold, with gravity pushing it into the model's shape. After cooling and hardening, the pieces would be filed, plated, and then embellished with stone or lacquering elements.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Choli Top
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL77.20171



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Group of Accessories
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL78.20171



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Group of Accessories
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL79.20171

Included in this case are examples of shoes, hair clips, hair ornaments, earrings, bracelets, pendants, brooches, a belt and belt buckles, and barrettes we produced in the 1990s. We made thousands of pieces through the years in our Texas workshop.



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Choli Top
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL80.20171



RISD MUSEUM

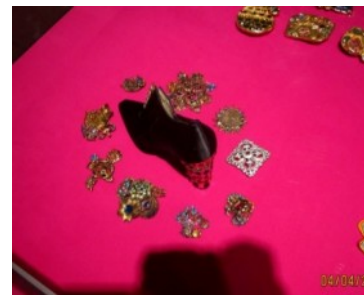
Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Group of Accessories
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL81.20171



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Group of Accessories
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL82.20171



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Group of Accessories
Courtesy Todd Oldham Studio TOL83.20171



Todd Oldham
American, b. 1961
Buttons,
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL84.20171

I was always frustrated to not find exactly what I had in mind in terms of buttons, so I set up a casting facility in my factory that could make buttons and belt buckles in white metals, porcelain, and resins. We approached the design differently each time. Sometimes we fashioned the models from Sculpey, sometimes we cast actual objects like branches and screws. One season I found some metal molds from some of my favorite extremely toxic toys I had as a child, called Creepy Crawlers. The molds were of various psychedelic flora and fauna and worked perfectly for making impressions, which we recast in metal and plated in 24-karat gold. We used Swarovski crystals endlessly, lacquered pieces with enamel, and often made unique buttons for just one style. Over the years, we amassed hundreds of designs.



RISD MUSEUM

Todd Oldham Fashion Shows, Fall 1991 - Spring 1998
Courtesy the Todd Oldham Studio TOL85.20171