

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Oscar de la Renta commemorates presidential ties with Texas retrospective

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*Oscar de la Renta exhibit at the Bush Presidential Center, photo courtesy of the George W. Bush Presidential Center*

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By SARAH JONES

Fashion brand Oscar de la Renta is reinforcing its eponymous designer's affiliation with first ladies of the United States with a retrospective at the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas.

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**Luxury Daily**

"Oscar de la Renta: Five Decades of Style" looks at the designer's career, from his beginnings in Spain through the present day, including the gowns created for a number of presidential wives. This sets Mr. de la Renta up as more than a designer, but an institution in the U.S.

"We're excited to introduce our visitors to Mr. de la Renta's beautiful designs," said Hannah Abney, communications director at the George W. Bush Presidential Center, Dallas.

"Women in Dallas have a love for all things Oscar, and we are thrilled to offer guests to the Bush Center an opportunity to experience elegant and timeless pieces from five

decades of Mr. de la Renta's renowned career," she said.

Looking back

The George W. Bush Presidential Center consists of a library, museum and institute on the grounds of Southern Methodist University in Dallas.



*Bush Presidential Center; photo courtesy of the George W. Bush Presidential Center*

The Oscar de la Renta retrospective includes more than 60 garments, some of which have never been on display before, presented by theme.

A look at the designer's love of gardening and how botanicals have influenced his work, appearing as floral prints or embroidery begins the exhibit-goers experience.

From there, the viewer is shown the effect of Mr. de la Renta's early years in Spain, working for Cristobal Balenciaga. Matador style and embellishments appear in a number of the designer's pieces.



*Oscar de la Renta exhibit at the Bush Presidential Center; photo courtesy of the George W. Bush Presidential Center*

Celebrating the acclaim given to Mr. de la Renta, his collection that won him the 1968 Neiman Marcus Award for Distinguished Service in the Field of Fashion is also on display. Neiman Marcus is thanked by name for its part in the exhibit.

The Bush Presidential Center's exhibit also delves into the designer's other global inspirations, from French couture techniques to Japanese and Chinese textiles and Russian trimmings.



*Oscar de la Renta exhibit at the Bush Presidential Center; photo courtesy of the George W.*

## *Bush Presidential Center*

Appropriate for a presidential museum, a number of day and evening wear pieces worn by former first ladies, including Laura Bush, Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton will be on display.

Mr. de la Renta's place on the red carpet with celebrities is also explored, including gowns worn by Anne Hathaway, Amy Adams and Carrie Underwood.

To introduce the exhibit, the museum filmed a short video showing Laura Bush talking about Mr. de la Renta's life and career as a friend. This also includes video interviews with the designer.

Both talk about the white suit created for her to wear to the former President George W. Bush's inauguration, as well as the wedding dress for daughter Jenna Bush's wedding.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/efcsZQ2tzlo](http://www.youtube.com/embed/efcsZQ2tzlo)

## *Oscar de la Renta: Five Decades of Style*

The Oscar de la Renta retrospective opened July 19 and will run through Oct. 5. Admission is \$17, allowing aspirational consumers access to learn more about the brand.

### Getting personal

Oscar de la Renta previously celebrated its founder's heritage of gardening with a collaboration with the New York Botanical Garden on a collection of tableware and gift items.

The collection, part of the brand's Country Gift and Entertainment Collection, will be available for sale through Oscar de la Renta, the Garden's museum store and ecommerce site and select retailers. Through this partnership, the brand is able to both assist the Garden in raising funds for its efforts as well as highlight its designer's green thumb ([see story](#)).

Other U.S. brands have shown their affiliation with political families through exhibits.

For instance, Diane von Furstenberg is celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its iconic wrap dress with a multichannel campaign centered on an exhibit in Los Angeles and a limited-edition collection.

A hallway of the exhibit showed photos depicting the dress' appearance through history, with images of celebrities from Madonna to Michelle Obama wearing versions of the frock ([see story](#)).

Beyond showcasing Mr. de la Renta's dedication to his chosen craft, this exhibit solidifies his place in U.S. history.

"Haute couture is an art," said Karen Kreamer, president of [K2 Brand Consulting](#), Overland Park, KS. "And like many forms of art, it is purchased by few, but appreciated and admired by many."

"The Oscar de la Renta exhibition at the George W. Bush Presidential Center provides visitors a unique opportunity to experience the artistry and history of Oscar de la Renta's design achievements," she said. "For visitors, it is a virtual front-row seat to an Oscar de la Renta retrospective fashion show.

For Mr. de la Renta, it is an opportunity to inspire visitors by showcasing the historical significance of fashion as a creative and innovative art form.

"History becomes real when we visit a museum or an exhibition. The Oscar de la Renta exhibition solidifies the idea that fashion is a significant and meaningful part of our country's history."

Final Take

*Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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