



The Met's "Heavenly Bodies" Breaks Attendance Record with 1 Million Visitors

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by Pat Rogers

"Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination" received its 1 millionth visitor at The Metropolitan Museum of Art this week, registering attendance records for both The MET and its Costume Institute. "Heavenly Bodies" is a record breaker for a Costume Institute exhibition and lands as The Met's third most overall attended exhibition ever, according to the New York art museum.

After the exhibition registered its 1 million visitor on August 23, 2018, "Heavenly Bodies" bumped "The Vatican Collections" (1983) from the museum's third most popular show and sits behind "Mona Lisa" (1963) as the second most popular exhibition. The Met's most well attended show is "[Treasures of Tutankhamun](#)" (1978), which saw 1,360,957 people viewing the show, according to The Met.

"Heavenly Bodies" continues a banner year for The Met in relation to attendance. In the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2018, [The Met welcomed more than 7.35 million visitors](#) to its three locations—The Met Fifth Avenue, The Met Cloisters, and The Met Breuer. It was the highest fiscal year attendance in the Museum's recorded history, due in part to attendance for "[Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman and Designer](#)," which brought in more than 700,000 visitors while on view from November 13, 2017 to February 12, 2018, making it the 10th most attended show in The MET's history.

"[Heavenly Bodies](#)" is the largest exhibition that either The Costume Institute or The Met has ever mounted. Opening on May 10, 2018, the exhibition spans 60,000 and is set across 25 galleries. The show can be found in The Met Fifth Avenue's medieval galleries, Mary and Michael Jaharis Galleries for Byzantine Art, part of The Robert Lehman Wing, and the Anna Wintour Costume Center. The show is also presented at The Met Cloisters in northern Manhattan. It is organized by Andrew Bolton, Wendy Yu Curator in Charge of [The Costume Institute](#).

The exhibition presents a dialogue between fashion and masterworks of medieval art in The Met collection and examines fashion's ongoing engagement with the traditions of Catholicism. A group of papal robes and accessories from the Vatican are centerpieces and help to highlight the lasting influence of liturgical vestments on designers. There are 42 ecclesiastical masterworks from the Sistine Chapel sacristy presented in the show, many which have never been seen outside the Vatican.



“Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination,”
installation view, Medieval Sculpture Hall Gallery at The MET. ©
The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Courtesy of The MET.

The Costume Institute organizes one or two shows annually at [The Met](#). The collection encompasses over 35,000 costumes and accessories representing seven centuries of fashionable dress, regional costumes and accessories from five continents from the 15th Century to the present day. The collection is not typically on view because of the fragile nature of textiles but The MET offers two tours that discuss costume history in relation to works on view in the museum. [Click here](#) for details.

BASIC FACTS: “Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination” remains on view through October 8, 2018 at The Met Fifth Avenue and The Met Cloisters. [The MET Fifth Avenue](#) is located at 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10028. [The Met Cloisters](#) is located at 99 Margaret Corbin Drive, Fort Tryon Park, New York, NY 10040. www.metmuseum.org.

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