



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elizabeth Tadie
Marketing Director
(225) 344-5272, ext. 125
etadie@lasm.org
100 River Road South
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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Discover the Person Through Her Purse!

BATON ROUGE, LA —On June 13, 2009, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum (LASM) will open a uniquely fascinating exhibition, *The Purse and the Person: A Century of Women's Purses*. LASM invites the public to discover the secrets that lie within a women's closest companion-her purse. Accompanying the exhibition is a special showcase of dazzling handbags by the renowned designer Judith Leiber. Both exhibitions run through September 13, 2009.

The Purse and the Person: A Century of Women's Purses considers women's lives as reflected by their handbag and the contents therein. The 167 purses on exhibit range from the late 19th century to the late 20th century and reveal the personalities, fashion sense and everyday concerns of the women who owned them. Eight exhibition vignettes examine iconic women of the twentieth century from the Flapper to the Flower Child to the working Superwoman of recent decades.

As visitors look at what is inside the purses and discover these personalities, they will find familiar objects whose purpose is still relevant today or has faded long ago. There are objects such as a flapper's vintage cigarette holder and a World War II ration card to a tin of 5-cent aspirin and a 1969 March on Washington button.

The special exhibition of Judith Leiber handbags, loaned to LASM by a private collector, celebrates Leiber's elevation of the purse's traditional functions to the status of accessory-as-art. Best known for her *minaudières*, many of them constructed in charming organic shapes, Leiber covers her purses with brilliantly colored crystal rhinestones, giving them an air of elegant playfulness while maintaining timeless style. Now considered the height of fashion, women everywhere admire and envy her handbags.

For more information on the exhibitions or for images, please contact Elizabeth Tadie at (225) 344-5272 ext. 125 or etadie@lasm.org.

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