

## Chicago History Museum Ebony Fashion Fair 'Inspiring Beauty' Exhibit Opens Saturday (PHOTOS)

Posted: 03/15/2013 5:02 pm EDT | Updated: 03/15/2013 5:05 pm EDT



The Chicago History Museum's "Inspiring Beauty" exhibition -- a tribute to the Ebony Fashion Fair -- opens Saturday. Joy Bivins curated the vibrant exhibition.

In their latest special exhibition, the Chicago History Museum is paying homage to the Ebony Fashion Fair.

The traveling show began in 1958 and, thanks to the leadership of its long-time producer and director Eunice Walker Johnson of the Chicago-based Johnson Publishing Company, brought stunning European fashion to the African American community.

"My mother often spoke about the importance of African American women feeling beautiful," Linda Johnson Rice, Johnson Publishing Company chairman said in a statement about the show. "The Ebony Fashion Fair legacy represents an important part of the rich African American cultural experience in America, and I am extremely excited that the Chicago History Museum is bringing my mother's vision to life."

The exhibition -- titled "Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years Of Ebony Fashion Fair" and featuring nearly 70 looks from designers including Yves Saint-Laurent, Christian Dior, Emanuel Ungaro and more -- was curated by Joy Bivins. **(Preview the exhibition below.)**

"This was really a unique experience where black women were exposed to the best of the best. We really wanted to establish that this was Mrs. Johnson's vision come to life," Bivins explained to NBC Chicago.

In addition to being aspirational, the vibrant show -- called "The World's Largest Traveling Fashion Show" -- has long been known for celebrating the human body in ways that were often unexpected at the time.

The 7,000-square-foot exhibition, one of the largest in the museum's history, opens Saturday and runs through Jan. 5, 2014.