

MADAME ALEXANDER

Press Release

THE MADAME ALEXANDER HERITAGE GALLERY™

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**The Alexander Doll Company Presents
A Lifetime of Dolls, Design and Dreams
With the Launch of**

THE MADAME ALEXANDER HERITAGE GALLERY™

New York, NY - November 17, 2004 - The Alexander Doll Company (or 'Madame Alexander', as it is known worldwide) is proud to introduce **The Madame Alexander Heritage Gallery™**, a new exhibition space showcasing over 81 years of the doll makers' artistry and design. One of the true pioneers of the doll industry, 'Madame' Beatrice Alexander Behrman believed that dolls should engage the imagination and contribute to a child's happiness and understanding of the world. Ultimately, her impeccably dressed dolls mirrored the changing lifestyles, tastes and dreams of the 20th century and today offer a unique view of social evolution. A tribute to her legacy of style, quality and spirit of innovation, the Madame Alexander Heritage Gallery was founded upon her enduring vision.

In 1923, sewing cloth Red Cross dolls at her family's Lower East Side kitchen table may not have seemed an auspicious beginning, but it was one fueled by Madame's fierce determination that made all the difference. In the decades that followed, Madame brought changes to her craft that set the trend among her peers and competitors and forever changed the industry, thereby winning respect and admiration from the worlds of art and industry, politics and science, Hollywood and even royalty. While Madame appreciated and enjoyed the acclaim, ultimately she created dolls for the little girls who longed to own them. It was for them that Madame approached DuPont to develop a formula to make dolls of the new "miracle" product plastic to avoid the heartache of broken composition dolls. It was for them that she introduced another industry 'first' - not only the first-ever design of exquisite handmade haute couture fashions, but also a doll with a real female form (with bust, hips and the ability to don high heels) to wear them. The mission of the Heritage Gallery is to bring to life the fascinating development of Madame's career and her many contributions to the doll industry itself against the backdrop of the times in which she lived.

The Collections

The Gallery's inaugural exhibition is entitled Madame Alexander: ***A Lifetime of Achievement in Doll Making and Design*** and features a collection of "Alexanderkins" on loan from the Lamb Collection, featuring over 250 "Wendy" dolls spanning from her 1953 debut to 1968. One of Madame Alexander's most popular doll sculpts, the majority of these examples are in mint condition and include a display of select furniture which were original accompaniments to the line.

The permanent collection of the Madame Alexander Heritage Gallery allows visitors to travel back through a timeline of significant milestones in the Company's history. The journey begins with a video presentation that introduces us to Madame, her sources of inspiration and many members of the current Alexander design team who continue to express her vision in the language of dolls. From there we move through the Gallery, traversing the decades via storyboards and archival photographs documenting early product and historic moments. Also on view is doll making

equipment for live demonstrations, such as hat and shoemaking machines, as well as wax sculpt prototypes and samples of doll assembly that reveal more about the doll making process.

On display are rare and unusual early examples of Company creations including one of those very first Red Cross dolls and a sampling of works from the 20s and 30s. As mentioned, Madame's pioneering use of hard plastic as a medium for dolls marked a historic turning point for the entire toy industry and the transition from dolls made of composition to this revolutionary new material is documented with interesting examples. Throughout, one may also discern recurring themes in the Alexander catalog - great works of literature and popular fiction, the Arts, fairytales, nursery rhymes, popular personalities and film characters and differing world cultures - which continue to inspire today. Early incarnations from Alice in Wonderland (the "March Hatter", ca. 1935) and Little Women (ca. late 40s) are fun to compare when juxtaposed with present-day examples.

The world of fashion was a constant source of fascination for Madame and nothing epitomized the height of style, taste and quality more than the Cissy doll she introduced in the 1950s. On display are examples of Cissy that underscore her importance as the first doll to model haute couture-inspired designs on her womanly figure. So popular as an expression of style and taste, in the late 1950s Cissy turned spokeswoman when Yardley chose her as their model for cosmetic ads for women's magazines.

Other Gallery highlights include prototypes that were never manufactured, select dolls from Madame's famed First Ladies series, unusual trunk sets and boxes and limited editions of convention and club dolls produced for the Madame Alexander Doll Club throughout the years.

Hours of Operation

The Madame Alexander Heritage Gallery will be open to the public BY APPOINTMENT ONLY Monday through Friday, from 10am - 6pm. Five-person minimum per group (exceptions may apply).

The Alexander Doll Company, a New York-based company, is now celebrating its 81st Anniversary, continuing the tradition, elegance and innovation of Madame Alexander® dolls with a full line of fine quality, handcrafted collectible dolls, baby dolls and play dolls. The company has created a series of "firsts" that have shaped the doll industry and has always been a pioneer of style and quality in this community.

The Madame Alexander Heritage Gallery
The Alexander Doll Company
615 West 131st Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10027
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY .
Monday - Fridays, 10am - 5pm
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