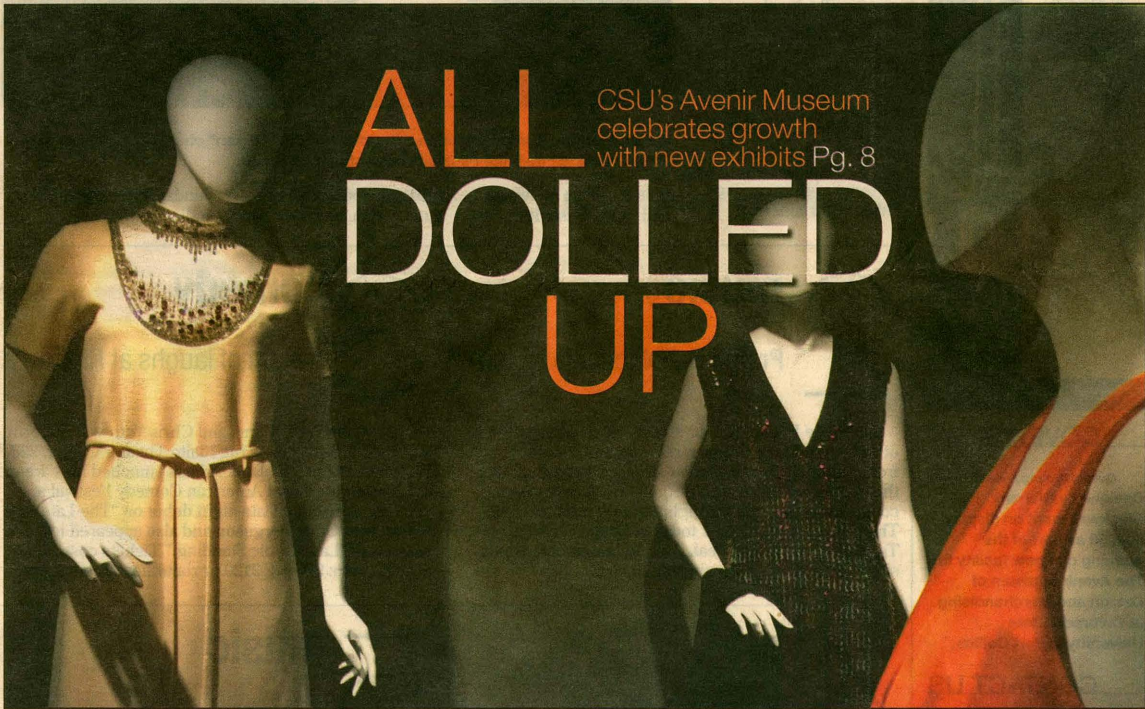


# ALL DOLLED UP

CSU's Avenir Museum  
celebrates growth  
with new exhibits Pg. 8





# New future for Avenir

CSU textiles, design museum opens four exhibits to mark major expansion

By QUENTIN YOUNG  
A&E SPOTLIGHT

Lucille Hawks taught herself how to quilt when she was well into her 70s.

Let that be an inspiration to you, because not only did she learn a new skill at a late age, she was no slouch. Her focus on miniatures suggests a purity of aesthetic vision. She invented new patterns and displayed a creative zest that artists of any age would envy.

The Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising at Colorado State University in Fort Collins turned to Hawks' work to help weave a new section of its history. A display of 116 miniature quilts by the 98-year-old artist is one of four opening exhibitions that mark the expansion of the Avenir, which derives its name from the French word for "future."

The museum last year added about 10,000 square feet to, and renovated about 8,000 square feet in, its facility at 216 E. Lake St., in the East Building of CSU's University Center for the Arts. Including galleries, classroom and seminar space, a library, a conservation lab and collection storage, it celebrated the expansion's grand opening Jan. 30. The new exhibitions are on view for varying durations, all at least for the next several months.

A monumental task preceded the opening. Staff and volunteers spent the previous half year placing the museum's roughly 18,000 objects, which they stored off site temporarily, into the new facility. Then came weeks of work on the new displays.

"The last several months we've been working on the content for the exhibition," said Doreen M. Beard, the museum's director of operations and engagement.

One of expansion's goals was to make the museum more open to the immediate neighborhood and the broader community. The museum is a repository and gallery for a widely appreciated historic costume and textiles collection, which offers points of interest for a diverse audience, Beard said. Visitors might come to the gallery for the value as visual art of the costumes, or they might view displays through a scientific lens, for example.

"Textile conservation is really chemistry," Beard noted.

The thread of the Avenir collection begins in the 1950s, when it was assembled as a teaching resource in CSU's home economics department. Its mission grew to be "the exploration of the aesthetic, social, cultural and physical significance of textiles, dress and interior furnishings."



Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising / Special to A&E Spotlight

The Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising at Colorado State University in Fort Collins opened four exhibitions last month to mark a major expansion of the museum.

## If you go

**What:** Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising  
**Where:** 216 E. Lake St., Fort Collins  
**Tickets:** Free  
**Info:** [avenir.colostate.edu](http://avenir.colostate.edu)

## Three buildings

The Avenir Museum includes five galleries in three buildings:  
• Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising, the flagship location, includes the Avenir Museum Gallery, Blackwell Gallery and Lucille Hawks Gallery, at the University Center for the Arts East Building, 216 E. Lake St.  
• Avenir Gallery at the University Center for the Arts, 1400 Remington St.  
• Gustafson Gallery, in the Gifford Building, 502 W. Lake St.

With the expansion, the Avenir Museum includes five galleries in three campus buildings, including the flagship on Lake Street.

To kick off the new Avenir presence at CSU, the museum is presenting exhibitions that have ties to supporters of the museum. Here's a short description of each show; all the exhibitions are displayed in the University Center for the Arts East Building except where noted:

### Mr. Blackwell: Artist of subtle witchery

Features dresses by Richard Blackwell, the late fashion designer who is known as "Mr. Blackwell." The museum holds the world's



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The Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising at Colorado State University in Fort Collins opened four exhibitions Jan. 30 to mark a major expansion of the museum. One of the exhibitions features work by Lucille Hawks, a 1958 graduate of the university.

largest collection of Mr. Blackwell designs, and he and his partner left a substantial estate gift to the museum. Blackwell, who was best known for a "worst-dressed list" that skewered celebrities for fashion shortcomings, imbues his dresses with elegance and glamour.

## Layers of Meaning: Color and Design in Guatemalan Textiles

Presented in the large gallery of the new museum, it features traditional Guatemalan textiles donated by collector Martha Egan and Mary Littrell, former head of the CSU Department of Design and Merchandising, two longtime Avenir supporters. Traditional motifs and color design in the textiles serve as cues that signal cultural and geographical origin.

### Tiny Bits and Pieces

Quilts by Lucille Hawks, who earned a master's degree in home economics from CSU in 1958 and was a longtime supporter of the Avenir Museum.

"Lucille's quilts are wonderful examples of historic as well as modern quilt patterns," Megan Osborne, curator of the Avenir Museum, said in a press release. "They have been invaluable teaching tools in the collection for many years, and there is something very fulfilling about being able to feature pieces created by an alumna."

### The Power of Maya Women's Artistry

Located in the Avenir Gallery at the University Center for the Arts, this is contemporary work by artists from The Maya Women's Rug Hooking Cooperative of Guatemala, a traveling exhibition funded in part by the Avenir Museum Education Exhibition Endowment. The work can be viewed as a modern manifestation of the artistic traditions displayed in the "Layers of Meaning" exhibit.

"All of the inaugural exhibitions in the new Avenir galleries have seams connecting them, even though they are so different from one another," Beard said in a press release. "They are held together by one overarching theme: the passion of our loyal supporters for the woven stories told by our clothing and textiles."

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Above right, a detail of a garment in the exhibition "Layers of Meaning: Color and Design in Guatemalan Textiles," which went on view Jan. 30 as part of the opening of a new facility for The Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

At right, miniature quilts by Lucille Hawks went on display Jan. 30 as part of the opening of a new facility for The Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

Photos by Quentin Young / A&E Spotlight

