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Exposed: A History of Lingerie

Colleen Hill



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Lingerie is a subject of enduring fascination. As the final barrier to the fully nude body, it is simultaneously modest and erotic. This compelling and eye-catching publication surveys lingerie from the mid-18th century to the present, covering a broad range of foundation garments, intimate apparel, and lounging clothes—from bras and corsets to slips, peignoirs, and tea gowns. All pieces are gorgeously illustrated in color.

Stunning historical garments from well-known fashion houses such as Christian Dior are included, as is risqué contemporary lingerie by labels such as Agent Provocateur. When viewed as a whole, these pieces illustrate important developments in fashion over time, such as changes in silhouette, shifting ideals of propriety, and advancements in technology.

While a number of the pieces featured in the book were worn hundreds of years ago, the majority date from the 20th century. It was at that time that lingerie started to become as beautiful and alluring as it was functional. Authors Colleen Hill and Valerie Steele show that the decorative, highly feminine styles from the early 1900s set a new precedent for the importance of lingerie in women's private lives—a concept that remains important to many women today.

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