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WITTE MUSEUM

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Witte Museum Presents 2009 Annual Fiesta Exhibit *Queens and Crowns: Fiesta's Royal Traditions*

SAN ANTONIO—The Witte Museum's 2009 Fiesta exhibit honors the 100th anniversary of The Order of The Alamo—the men's social organization formed to present 24 duchesses, a princess and a queen in an elaborate coronation. *Queens and Crowns: Fiesta's Royal Traditions* is on view in the Betty Coates Textile Gallery **April 4** through **September 7, 2009**.

Crowns and scepters have been associated with Fiesta San Antonio almost from the first Battle of Flowers parade in 1891. However, the selection of a queen was quite haphazard until 1909 when John Carrington founded The Order of The Alamo. The highlight of the exhibit is the cream silk dress and blue velvet train worn by Helena Guenther, Queen of the Court of Carnival of Flowers in 1911, one of the oldest royal robes in the Witte Museum Collection. A gold card case given to Queen Guenther by The Order of The Alamo is also on exhibit. The Witte's 2009 Fiesta pin is based on the jeweled motifs of the dress and train and is available for purchase at the Witte Museum Store and the official Fiesta® Store.

Other features of the exhibit include an 18th century style waistcoat and knee breeches worn by Latrobe Onderdonk as a duke in the 1909 coronation and examples of robes and accessories from the early decades of Fiesta. The exhibit also highlights the 60th anniversary of the Miss Fiesta Scholarship Pageant, which began in 1949. The crowns and gowns of the rest of Fiesta royalty are also included in the annual exhibit.

Queens and Crowns is included with museum admission and is generously supported by the Fiesta® San Antonio Commission, Inc. For more information call 210.357.1900 or visit www.wittemuseum.org.

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