



**COLLEGE OF
PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS**

SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 09/20/2017

Ashley H Pollock, Public Relations & Information Coordinator
College of Performing and Visual Arts
Southern Utah University

Office: (435) 865-8667
Cell: (435) 590-0961
pollocka@suu.edu

A Legacy of Love: The Thread That Binds Us

Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah: Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA) hosts *A Legacy of Love: The Thread That Binds Us*, an exhibition featuring the fashion designs of Eletra Casadei and her impact on the theatrical design and costumes of SUU Department of Theatre Arts & Dance. The exhibition is currently on display through November 11, 2017. SUMA is free and open to the public from Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 6 p.m.

L.A. fashion designer Eletra Casadei was an innovative and favored designer generating buzz with her TD4 (To Die For) prom dress designs created with teenage girls' desires in mind, "prom parties" to kick off the fashion season, first-of-its-kind fashion videos showcasing her elegant gowns and original beaded and lace fabric designs. Her Casadei line embodied Eletra's true fashion philosophy; to create a sense of Hollywood Glamour that was affordable and made every woman feel beautiful.

Eletra passed away from brain cancer in 2008 leaving behind her fashion label and a studio stocked full of exquisite items. Eletra's sister, Andrea, took charge of these treasures, searching for the perfect place to continue Eletra's legacy.

A chance meeting occurred in the spring of 2012 in Cedar City, Utah, between Andrea and Deborah Snider, SUU Assistant Professor of Art. Andrea said, "It was so unexpected that I would meet her at the perfect moment, inside of a fabric store I typically wouldn't find myself in. It wasn't too long before Deb introduced me to Wendy Sanders, an amazing designer who runs the [SUU Department of Theatre Arts & Dance] costume shop. Between these two women and myself, we decided to have [Wendy's] students come over to my storage unit to potentially purchase some of the things I had for their upcoming show."

One thing led to another and soon one show turned into many. Through Andrea's enthusiastic giving, the SUU Department of Theatre Arts & Dance received from Eletra's studio yards and yards of stunning fabric and trim, bins of Eletra's originally designed beaded fabrics and appliques, industrial sewing machines and equipment, a vast collection of fashion history books, and boxes of sewing notions. Over the last five years, students have been able to design and construct costumes beyond what would have been possible on a typical university production budget.

Eletra was not only an exquisite designer, but a consummate educator, always taking young designers under her wing to mentor or finding time to teach at Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design. It is, therefore, most fitting that her legacy be continued at an institution of higher learning.

Andrea said, "I know, without question, that Eletra would be so very proud of all that SUU has done for their students and the freedom that Wendy Sanders has allowed them to have while working with all the beautiful things I was able to provide. Together we have bound the love of design from one gifted talent to so many others."

A Runway Fashion Show and Luncheon will be held on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at noon. Tickets are available for \$25 and a portion of the sales will go toward the *Eletra Casadei Legacy Scholarship*.

For more information about *A Legacy of Love: The Thread That Binds Us*, please visit www.suu.edu/suma.

About the College of Performing and Visual Arts

The Southern Utah University College of Performing and Visual Arts is comprised of nationally accredited programs in Art + Design, Music, and Dance. The College also offers programs in Theatre Arts, graduate programs in Arts Administration and Music, as well as a Center for Shakespeare Studies. The College offers 26 academic programs, including liberal arts Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees; professional Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Fine Arts in art and theatre degrees; and Master of Fine Arts in Arts Administration, Master of Arts in Arts Administration, Master of Music Education and Master of Music in Music Technology graduate degrees. More than 60 full- and part-time faculty and staff are engaged in teaching and mentoring over 600 majors in the College. The College presents over 100 performances, lectures, presentations, and exhibitions each year. The College's affiliate organizations include the Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA), Utah Shakespeare Festival and SUU's Ballroom Dance Company. For more information about the College of Performing and Visual Arts, visit www.suu.edu/pva.

For Calendar Editors: *A Legacy of Love: The Thread That Binds Us*

- What:** Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA) hosts *A Legacy of Love: The Thread That Binds Us*, an exhibition featuring the fashion designs of Eletra Casadei and her impact on the theatrical design and costumes of SUU Department of Theatre Arts & Dance. The exhibition is currently on display through November 11, 2017. SUMA is free and open to the public from Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 6 p.m.
- Who:** SUU Department of Theatre Arts & Dance, Eletra Casadei family, Southern Utah Museum of Art
- When:** Now through November 11, 2017, Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 p.m.
- Where:** Southern Utah Museum of Art, 13 S 300 W, Cedar City, Utah
- Tickets:** Free admission
- Info:** For more information, please visit www.suu.edu/pva.

###