

**Welcome to
Hawaii's Alfred Shaheen:
Fabric to Fashion**

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Textile Traditions from a Tropical Paradise

The Hawaiian archipelago, composed of a chain of 132 islands, is unique physically, ecologically and culturally. Isolated in the Pacific Ocean, the Hawaiian Islands were discovered, it is believed, by Polynesian sailors traveling from the Marquesas Islands in 400 A.D. In search of inhabitable lands, these adventurous sailors traveled in long double-hulled canoes and brought with them their culture, a chief-ruled social structure and a polytheistic religion. They brought their families and foods—bananas, breadfruit, coconuts, chickens, dogs, pigs, pineapples, taro, yams—and the civilization thrived in the tropical paradise. A second wave of migrants came from Tahiti in 1300 A.D. and this group added to the complex and rich human culture that evolved in the remote island environment. They developed an intricate but unwritten language, their own set of gods and unique crafts including the development of a material—*kapa*—made from the paper mulberry tree.

In 1778 the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands by British explorer Captain James Cook ended Hawai'i's long cultural and physical isolation. He christened them the Sandwich Islands after the Earl of Sandwich, a patron, and soon thereafter the islands were mapped. Foreign navigators began visiting the islands, along with explorers, scientists, whalers and Christian missionaries. In 1820 New England missionaries arrived and set up schools. They brought with them American quilts and probably taught their methods of sewing to Hawaiian women and children. But the development of the distinct Hawaiian quilt style lies with the Hawaiian's themselves.

Centuries before cotton and woven cloths were introduced to the islands, Hawaiians created their own cloth called *kapa*. Made from *wauke*, the bark of the paper mulberry tree, *kapa*-making is an involved and extended process. The steps

include stripping the outer bark from the tree, removing the inner bark, soaking it until it softens, and then pounding this material until it grows in length. It is then dried and bleached in the sun and soaked again to continue the breaking down of the fibers. A second stage pounding spreads the *kapa*, and a unique watermark is applied all over the material. Complex designs are then stamped onto the *kapa*. According to contemporary *kapa*-maker Wendeanne Ke'aka Stitt, Hawaiian *kapa* is distinctly different from all Pacific Island *tapas* for two reasons. Hawaiian *kapa* is the only bark cloth—known generally as *tapa*—that goes through a fermentation stage, and Hawaiian *kapa* is also the only bark cloth that is watermarked in the final stages of its making. (See wall text panel for more detailed information on this process.)

Needles made from bird bones and thread made from twisted bark fibers were used to sew the *kapa* into clothing, bedding, ceremonial flags and banners. *Kapa moe* were bed coverings and were made by connecting several layers of white *kapa* with long running stitches. The top layer was usually decorated. Thus the idea of a decorated, multi-layered bedcovering was familiar to the Hawaiian's and similar to the American quilts that were brought to the islands. The name *kapa moe* was later applied to the cloth quilts that the Hawaiian's created.

However they learned about quilting, the Hawaiians clearly had an understanding of multi-layering, and, by the 1870s, had developed their own approach to quilt design. To the Hawaiian women, the concept of cutting up fabric and rearranging it into a pieced quilt seemed wasteful, but the tradition of early American whole cloth quilts made more sense. Usually a single large symmetrical appliqué filled the entire top of the design. The graphic and stylized patterns were abstracted versions of the island flowers, plants and trees. The method, similar to a

paper snowflake cutout, is an approach still followed today by many contemporary quilt makers. Basically, the top layer is first folded in half and then ironed to make a sharp crease. It is folded in half again to create a quarter fold and ironed. The right top corner is then folded down onto the lower left corner to create a triangle. A design or tracing is drawn onto the fabric and all eight layers of fabric are carefully cut at once. The unfolded pattern is then placed onto the backing fabric, and basted down. Fine appliqué stitching is applied around all of the fabric edges in a process that can take hundreds of hours. When the needlework is completed, a batting and back are added. Typically Hawaiian quilt stitching is called contour or echo quilting. This stitching follows the edges of the appliquéd designs and ripples across the entire surface. The stitching adds another visual and textural element to the overall design.

Our entry gallery exhibits introduce these two traditions with the work of *Wendeanne Ke'aka Stitt: Contemporary Kapa* and *Grand Appliqué: Hawaiian Quilts*. Stitt studied kapa-making in a two-year apprenticeship under the tutelage of Kuma Kapa Dalani Tanahy of Makaha, Hawai'i. In some cases her work echoes the traditional kapa motifs, but she also references traditional quilted motifs, and sometimes-figurative allegories. Her kapa-making is meticulously crafted and clearly demonstrates that this lost technique has contemporary possibilities and a modern sensibility. Stitt is an accomplished designer and her work with the traditional kapa-making process and the kapa material, combined with a modernist graphic aesthetic ensures the continuation of an important Hawaiian craft and art.

Like Stitt, Carol Kamaile, carries on the traditional Hawaiian quilting aesthetic with her exquisite work. This exhibit features her own quilted work as well as work created by some of her students using

original Kamaile designs. Carol Kamaile is a full-time quilter, teacher and a master of traditional Hawaiian quilting. Large-scale and beautifully made, these quilts showcase the rich individual self-expression that is still found in Hawaiian quilt-making and the continuation of a long-standing tradition by contemporary makers.

Hawai'i's Alfred Shaheen: Fabric to Fashion

In the 20th century, the Hawaiian textile tradition continued to evolve with the creative work of Alfred Shaheen and his team of designers, seamstresses and craftsman that he hired and trained. Shaheen, inspired by the Hawaiian floral and fauna, melded Hawaiian, Polynesian and later Asian imagery with silk-screen printing technology to create a harmonious fusion of tropical style with contemporary fashion. Shaheen was an entrepreneur, an engineer, a creative designer, and a visionary businessman. He is credited with creating the Hawaiian look—aloha wear style—and the casual, carefree lifestyle it exemplifies. The aloha shirt was well-liked because the colorful and bold patterns set the mood for lightheartedness, relaxation and fun. This style and the idea of the aloha look has remained popular since the 1950s.

Shaheen returned to his Hawaiian home after World War II. Hawai'i at that time was filled with the buzz of returning soldiers and an influx of tourists. Shaheen, who had grown up in a family textile business that specialized in making special occasion and prom dresses, soon realized that the time was ripe to start his own business. But he shifted his focus to "ready to wear" while still retaining the high-quality materials, design, and craftsmanship of his family's business. In 1948, he opened *Shaheen's of Honolulu* with four seamstresses trained by his mother. Using equipment that he designed himself, he started his own silk-screen printing business. In that way, he was able to control not

only the amount of fabric that he needed to produce, but, more importantly, the quality and the designs of the fabric. He was the first to hire artists, train them as textile designers and put them on staff. His vision for the prints was different than the small scale “chop suey” all-over prints that were used by other manufacturers and found in the earliest aloha shirts. Instead he developed large-scale imagery with 24” repeats of beautifully rendered Hawaiian scenes, tropical florals, and designs inspired by traditional Hawaiian kapa cloth and other ethnic artifacts. He is renowned for his excellent border prints and his clever use of them in shirts and garments. He wanted his prints “to be about something.” His daughter Camille Shaheen-Tunberg adds that, “cultural authenticity was paramount.” He often sent his artists to museums and libraries to research genuine ethnic designs and later would send them traveling to Tahiti, Polynesia, and Asia to find first-hand inspiration that could be adapted for textile design. He also developed a process to use metallic printing on the cloth so that it wouldn’t be stiff and rub off, and this soon became a signature element on his fabric designs.

Shaheen was an innovator, and his designs and clothing were among the first “fusion fashion”—the combining of different cultural elements and traditions in western-styled clothing. For example, a dress may use Asian-style fasteners (braided frogs) with a Hawaiian print or a Hawaiian-styled dress like a long mu’u may be made up with an Indian-inspired paisley print. Quality was important and the garments were well-made, beautifully designed and stylish. He most certainly raised the standards of the industry. Shaheen was a marketing innovator; he established the first “in-store boutiques”—called *East Meets West*—in upscale department stores across the United States mainland, developing distinctive branding for his product. At the height of his business, there were 140 *East Meets West* boutiques

in stores across the mainland United States showcasing his individual brand of fusion fashion.

Shaheen retired in 1988 after a productive 40-year career. In 2001, he was awarded Hawai‘i’s Lifetime Achievement award. The Honolulu Advertiser also awarded him the distinction of being one of Hawai‘i’s 150 most important influences from 1856 through 2006. This recognition was well-deserved. Today the Shaheen label is highly sought after by vintage clothing collectors and prices for his garments can be very high.

This is the first major retrospective exhibition of the remarkable legacy of Alfred Shaheen. It highlights the achievements of this extraordinary man—among them his use of metallic inks, employment of local talent, his hands-on approach to every aspect of his business, and his merging of multi-cultural aesthetics. The exhibition features a wide range of dress styles and patterns that he created over the four decades of production.

Of course, this exhibition would not have been possible without Shaheen’s daughter, Camille Shaheen-Tunberg, who for the past ten years has amassed this most comprehensive and fascinating collection. Camille has a devoted passion and, of course, a personal relationship to the collection. She has diligently found, gathered, and collected all of the clothing, textiles and ephemera from her father’s life’s work so that his legacy and creativity can be shared and remembered. It is through her keen vision and love that this exhibition and the aloha-style comes to our galleries. I am also indebted to Linda Arthur, Ph.D., co-curator of this exhibition, for sharing her expertise on Hawaiian textile art and the Shaheen story. The spirit of the fabrics—with their Hawaiian motifs, exotic scenes, and perfect colorations—is evidence that the rich Hawaiian textile tradition evolved from the unique point-

of-view and hard work of the visionary entrepreneur, Alfred Shaheen. May the spirit of a tropical paradise be with you as you view this beautiful collection.

Deborah Corsini
Curator

EAST MEETS WEST:

CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN ALFRED SHAHEEN'S TEXTILE DESIGNS

Linda Boynton Arthur, Ph.D.

Washington State University

Hawaiian textile art has drawn the attention of artists and connoisseurs from all around the world. The quality of the textile art produced in Hawai'i from the late 1940s through the 1960s has been unsurpassed. Many of the textile designs showcased the multi-ethnic nature of Hawai'i, a state with no ethnic majority. One man with a broad vision and a sincere appreciation for cultural diversity brought Polynesian, Asian and Middle Eastern designs to Hawai'i, then incorporated them into Hawaiian textile designs; in doing so, Alfred Shaheen brought the East to the West with his fabrics and fashions. Shaheen used these culturally rich textiles as the foundation upon which his fashion lines were based. While he produced in Hawai'i, a great deal of the Shaheen textiles and clothing designs were sold in the finer department stores throughout the mainland United States. From there Hawaiian design was introduced to the entire world. Today, Hawaiian textile designs can be found across the globe.

Alfred Shaheen was the cornerstone on which Hawai'i's garment industry was built and he was pivotal in its development. In the late 1940s, a period of time when Hawai'i was still an American territory, but isolated from the U.S. mainland, the fledgling garment industry there was composed primarily of small family businesses. Shaheen brought concepts from large-scale garment manufacturing to Hawai'i; he pioneered large-scale screen-printing, manufacturing, marketing, distribution, and vertical integration in Hawai'i. Shaheen combined all facets of textile and garment

creation under one roof, establishing a model for Hawai'i's garment industry. In less than a decade, he was producing fashion that retailed at \$3 million annually (worth \$35 million in today's dollars). But how did all this happen? To tell the tale, I need to set the stage and take you back into history. The information that follows comes from many interviews with Alfred Shaheen as I've been conducting research on Hawaiian textiles and apparel for the past 15 years.

A Bit of History

Alfred Shaheen, an aeronautical engineer, never intended to follow the family tradition of garment manufacturing (started by his grandfather in New York in 1902). He was born in 1922, to George and Mary Shaheen who moved to Hawai'i in 1938 and built a custom clothing business focused on women's special occasion attire. After earning his engineering degree, Shaheen enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942, then became a fighter pilot during World War II. After the War, he returned to his family in Hawai'i where there was no aircraft industry to employ him, so Shaheen began working in the family business. Soon thereafter, he married and started his own apparel business, Shaheen's of Honolulu, in 1948. Like his parents, Shaheen focused on quality material, but rather than custom apparel, Shaheen saw that the market in Hawai'i was ready for mass production. He had engineering skills, a creative mind, a willingness to solve problems, and an entrepreneurial spirit. These would lead Shaheen to great success.

When Shaheen started making aloha shirts in 1948, the shirts being produced by his competitors were similar in style and in prints, but varied in the types, qualities and weights of fabrics. Most of the Hawaiian apparel manufacturers ordered roller prints, but the nearest textile printing operations were 6,000 miles away on the East Coast on the U.S. mainland. These fabric designs were small scale, with a 15-inch repeat.

These prints were called “hash” prints; they were composed of many disparate design motifs that did not necessarily tie together.

When a unique design was desired, free-lance artists would sell the art to the manufacturer, who would send the art to textile converters in New York. It would take three months or more to convert the art to a textile print, produce the fabric and send it through the Panama Canal to Hawai'i in order to start production.

These brightly printed aloha shirts were greeted with enthusiasm by tourists who were a ready market for more adventurous aloha attire in the post-World War II era. Although the hash prints tended to have smaller motifs, over time designs grew larger and more daring, incorporating such uniquely Pacific patterns as palm trees, hula girls, Diamond Head, the Aloha Tower, surfers, and pineapples. Color combinations were no longer staid; colors became riotous and three to five colors in a textile became common.

1948 - Shaheen's of Honolulu

Shaheen came from a Lebanese American family and was committed to cultural diversity. This value was manifested in both his employment practices and the textiles produced by the company. All but one of his designers (Richard Goodwin, trained in Paris) were from the Hawaiian Islands. Most of the Shaheen employees were ethnically Japanese, but others were Hawaiian, Chinese or African American. Toward that end, Shaheen championed textile art that reflected the ethnic backgrounds of all of Hawai'i's people.

It was clear in 1948 that there was a ready market for aloha attire. Luckily Shaheen had the creativity and ingenuity to solve the numerous problems that appeared. As an entrepreneur, these skills were necessary components toward the development of a successful company. Shaheen began with four machines and

had six employees. He did the fabric cutting. At the time, there was not a viable labor pool, so he personally trained his employees on every detail of the operation. He'd been using roller prints for his aloha shirts, and, in 1950, the Korean war led to a huge upset in the textile market. Shaheen had tied up a great deal of money in inventory and in ordering printed fabric, when the political situation led to textile prices dropping by more than half. Shaheen said,

I barely survived financially. I said to myself, 'If I am going to survive in this business, I have got to control the fabric.' So I rented a Quonset hut....and I started the print plant there, I built the tables, my screens, I built the equipment to process the fabric after it was printed--after printing it had to be washed and dried. I did it with baling wire, bicycle parts and 2 X 4's because I didn't have money to buy the equipment.

In order to protect himself from the uncertainties of the market, where a manufacturer was required to buy 10,000 yards of a print at a time, Shaheen began to print his own fabrics. He ordered 100,000 yards at a time of plain white cotton that was woven to his specifications and prepared for printing. He printed the fabric only as it was needed for orders he had on hand. This way Shaheen was never again stuck with inventory he could not use. By having his own printing plant in Honolulu, Shaheen was then in an advantageous position by comparison with his competitors.

Shaheen was unimpressed with the hash prints that were commonly used in the late 1940s and 1950s. He described the designs as “doodling on fabric, throwing in a surfboard and palm tree and so forth.” He felt that the hash prints were not artistic, and not as dramatic as he liked. They

were small in scale, since roller prints were produced with 15-inch repeats. Shaheen decided to create his own 24-inch silk-screens so that he could have a 24-inch repeat which led to larger designs.

The next problem Shaheen encountered was hiring textile artists. He needed people who could render the artwork with great detail and in three colors. Textile design was a specialty that was learned through an apprenticeship system in the 1940s, and the available artists were on the East Coast of the U.S. near the printing plants. There were no art schools to train textile designers at that time; it was not until the 1970s that textile design was taught in Europe and then America. Without other options, Shaheen solved his problem in a unique way. He remembered that in 1950:

What I did then-- and I was the first to do this in the whole US --I got together four artists in Hawai'i, and I put them in a studio. They'd been living hand to mouth, barely surviving. And I put them in a studio and put them on salary and taught them to do textile design. It's an art all in itself because the design had to be done in repeats and color separations had to be done for each one.

Shaheen recognized that providing a stable work environment for the employees was important to the production of quality textiles and apparel. By setting up the artists in a studio with a stable salary, they were able to concentrate on their textile designs. Similarly, Shaheen workers were all paid above average wages and generally worked from their youth to retirement at Shaheen's. Bob Sato was a good example. When he met this young Japanese-American boy, Shaheen immediately recognized his talent and hired Sato, then personally taught him to do textile design. Sato had been etching glass, where having a keen eye and a good hand were essential skills

that readily transferred to textile design. At Shaheen's, Sato became the lead textile designer who led a team of four other textile designers, who were mostly women. Shaheen referred to Sato as "my hands--I'd tell him what I envisioned and he'd draw it." Sato stayed at Shaheen's until his death.

Shaheen wanted his textile designs to be works of art that were not just pretty. They needed to be bright, bold and dramatic. These goals were achieved by having fine textile art, and never scrimping on dye. He hired a Dr. Lutz, a textile chemist, to help him develop the kinds of dyes he needed to produce bright, bold designs. Through silk-screening the designs by hand, they could push a lot of dye into the fabrics and they could manipulate the screens and jigs to get unique treatments. They also developed over 100 metallic dyes to enhance the designs; these became a Shaheen trademark.

While the art had to be dramatic, Shaheen also insisted that it be culturally situated. The designs were based on ethnic design motifs from numerous cultures. To maintain the authenticity of the designs, Shaheen kept a library of rare books for the designers to use in their research. These books contained the history of the original native prints that were adapted to Shaheen textile designs. In this way, the textile designs were unique. There were over 6,000 textile designs created between 1948 and 1988. In talking about the early years of his textile designs, Shaheen said:

What I did was to make my designs more demonstrative. The first thing I did was to have my artists go into the Bishop Museum and study the tapas, and look for artifacts that could be illustrated. Basically what I wanted them to do was to create a textile design that had some meaning to it, to write a story about each textile

design. We tried to put in more substance into the design, and on the hangtag we'd write the story behind the design.

East Meets West in Shaheen Textiles

One of Shaheen's goals was to capture the exotic sense of Hawai'i and to have his designs remain authentic to Hawai'i and its multi-ethnic people, most of whom came from Asia and Polynesia. Following the success of the textile artists in representing Hawaiian kapa and Polynesian tapa in textile designs, Shaheen chartered boats and planes to send his textile designers on trips all over Asia and the Pacific, then in later years into other countries. His goal was to have them visit many cultures, islands and museums, and his requirement was that they would infuse ethnic design from these cultures into the Hawaiian textiles. Shaheen had many designers, but he considered Bob Sato to be his "right hand". Sato focused on Japanese and Chinese designs for the Hawaiian textiles used by Shaheen in his aloha attire lines.

Most of Shaheen's ethnic textile designs were influenced by Hawaiian history, flowers, and people. (See Hapu`u Forest, Hawaiian Pageant, Ali'i Procession, Hibiscus, Hawaiian Village, Halakahiki Tapa, Kapa Poni Poni, Makaha Tapa, Tapa Temptations, and Abstract Tapa, Bird of Paradise, Kilauea, Pineapple Lei, Pua Nani, Tropic Hibiscus, Undersea Garden, Undersea Paradise, Metallic Shells, Night Blooming Cereus, Hawaiian Garden, Hawaiian Marlins, Bombax, Keiki Geography, Paladin Pineapple, Pagan Primitive, Pua Ali'i, Spearfishmen, White Ginger, Stylized Monster, Octopus, Petroglyphs, Kau Kau, Tiki, Lio Kai, Footprints in the Sand, Tiare Tapa, Pagan Drums, Tradewinds, Uli Uli, Mala Pua, Paniolo, Bird of Paradise panel, Ti leaves, Anthurium Garden, Hukilau, Ala Moana.)

Often you can see a blend of Hawaiian and Polynesian motifs in Shaheen's

textiles, but those designed with primary influence from the islands throughout Polynesia include the Pua Iani Pareau, Fiji Tapa, Samoan Tapa, Tahitian Feast, Blowfish, ET Fishing, Garden Tapa, Tiki Pareau, Bora Bora, and Tahitian Girl.

It was through Asian design motifs used by Shaheen's textile designers that the East was brought to Hawai'i. Tourists, and later manufacturers, took these Asian designs into the West as demand for Hawai'i's ethnic prints increased and Shaheen's distribution of fashion into numerous high end-department stores brought Asian and Hawaiian design to the West. Asian designs produced for Shaheen were derived primarily from Chinese and Japanese designs. (See Tribute Brocade, Parasols, Geisha Promenade, Chinese Landscape, Thai, Happy Talk, Joss Sticks, Japanese Postcards, Nikko, Cherry Blossom Brocade, Fisherman's Fantasy, Moon Goddess, Asian Spring, Fan Fantasy, Metallic Scrolls, Mandarin brocade, Chrysanthemum, Geisha, Pussy Willow, Mon, Mikado, Lotus, Pom Pom, Dynasty and Oriental Cranes.)

Shaheen's designers did not only focus on Hawai'i, Asia and the Pacific, but Indian and Arabic design was also used as inspiration. (Please see Indian Metallic Floral, Indian Border with Elephants, Indian Paisley, Taj Mahal, Paisley Border, Indian design, Indian Border, Arabic Metallic, Yashmak, and Egyptian Border.)

It was through textile design that Alfred Shaheen used fabric and fashion to bring the East to the West. He was the major fashion manufacturer from Hawai'i to ship fashion to the U.S. mainland. While other Hawaiian manufacturers shipped aloha attire to U.S. department stores, but none was as successful as Alfred Shaheen who used ethnic prints on garments de

signed with Western-style lines; they could therefore be worn anywhere in the US, not only to luaus and theme parties. Additionally, Shaheen's distribution methods also accounted for the popularity of his fashion in the U.S. An innovative technique championed by Shaheen was the use of his East Meets West boutiques within many high-end American retail stores such as Bloomingdales in New York and Bullocks in Los Angeles. Ultimately, there were 140 East Meets West boutiques; they were a total marketing concept similar to what we see today in brand marketing. The boutiques were three-dimensional sets within the stores, that presented Shaheen's concept of ethnic diversity in all features from the garments displayed to the design of the boutique and its fixtures.

Alfred Shaheen has been called "visionary," a "genius" and a "pioneer." He did many things, but, most importantly, he introduced Hawaiian clothing and ethnic textile design to the people of the world, and in doing so forever changed the global landscape of textiles, fashion and design. His impact on Hawai'i was recognized in 2001 when he was awarded Hawai'i's Ka`Ahu No`eau Lifetime Achievement Award, then later on, in 2006, Shaheen was listed as one of the 150 most important influences on the state of Hawai'i.

All of the objects in the exhibition are from the collection of Camille Shaheen-Tunberg and William Tunberg.

Entry to the Main Galleries

1

Indian Metallic Floral

Late 1950s
Cotton blend
Long mu'u

2

Tiki Pareau

Early 1950s
Cotton broadcloth
Shaheen is wearing this shirt in his portrait.

3

Portrait of Alfred Shaheen

2002
William Tunberg
Pencil

Alfred Shaheen's son-in-law, artist Bill Tunberg, drew this portrait when Shaheen was 80.

Howard and Elizabeth Turner Gallery: Tropical Paradise

4

Shaheen Tiki Gods

William Tunberg
Marquetry (collaged veneer)
Exotic natural and dyed woods

William Tunberg's marquetry sculpture calls upon his lifelong love of assemblage and classical drawing. Defying traditional applications of marquetry, Tunberg concentrates on fragmenting imagery and arranging the imagery into surreal combinations and juxtapositions. While most of these pieces are large scale,

Tunberg also creates smaller, limited editions of sculptures, such as his series of abstracted *Shaheen Tiki Gods*. *Tiki Gods* reflects his admiration for Shaheen's understanding of universal cultural interconnectivity.

Along with sculpture and furniture, Tunberg is a skilled draftsman. Tunberg is recognized for his life-sized pencil portraits that depict the intricate details of the human form juxtaposed against a stark, white background. Tunberg's portrait of Alfred Shaheen (Object #3) is an example.

5
Hawaiian Pageant 01 (Ali'i Procession)

Late 1940s
Cotton yardage – border print

6
Kau Kau

Early 1950s
Cotton

7
Hawaiian Pageant 01 (Ali'i Procession)

Early 1950s
Cotton
Shirt with border pattern

8
Textile design of original flower artwork

c 1950s
Gouache

9
Pua Melia

Early 1950s
Cotton shirt shown in different colorway from original artwork

10
Novelty 03

Early 1950s
Cotton Dress

11
Hibiscus

Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

12
Fan Fantasy

Mid-1950s
Cotton, pique
Dress with strap and bolero

13
Hapu'u Forest

Mid-1950s
Cotton yardage –border print

14
Kapa Poni Poni

Early 1950s
Cotton yardage
This fabric was designed after studying Hawaiian kapa at the Bishop Museum.

15
Not included in traveling show. (Was tapa from Museum collection)

16
Lotus

Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

Display Case

Selection of original gouache print designs created by Shaheen's studio artists

17
Night Blooming Cereus

Late 1950s
Cotton
Sundress with strap

18
Halakahiki Tapa

Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

19
Hibiscus Forest
Late 1950s
Cotton
Sarong with kikepa

20
Hibiscus 04
Late 1950s
Blend, yardage

21
Tropic Hibiscus
Mid-1950s
Cotton yardage

22
Undersea Garden
Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

23
Undersea Paradise
Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

Wall of Aloha Shirts

Top Row:

24
Spearfishmen
Late 1940s
Rayon

25
Hukilau
Early 1950s
Rayon

26
Fisherman's Fantasy
Late 1940s
Rayon

27
Paniolo
Early 1950s
Cotton

28
Hawaiian Garden
Late 1940s
Rayon

29
Makaha Tapa
Late 1950s
Cotton

30
Anthurium Garden
Late 1940s
Rayon

Middle Row:

31
Garden Tapa
Late 1940s
Rayon

32
Bird of Paradise Panel
Late 1940s
Rayon

33
Ala Moana
Early 1950s
Rayon

34
Uli Uli (Polynesian Gourds)
Late 1940s
Rayon

35
Hawaiian Holiday
Early 1950s
Rayon

36
Mala Pua
Late 1940s
Rayon

37

Bombax Panel

Early 1950s

Rayon

Bottom Row:

38

Metallic Tikis

Early 1950s

Cotton

Women's Pake top

39

Keiki Geography

Early 1950s

Cotton

40

Samoan Tapa

1950

Cotton

41

Mermaids

Late 1940s

Rayon

42

ET Fishing

Early 1950s

Cotton broadcloth

43

Ti Leaves

Early 1950s

Rayon

44

Footprints in the Sand

Late 1940s

Rayon

45

Octopus

Early 1950s

Cotton shirt

46

Octopus

Early 1950s

Cotton

Two-piece bathing suit

47

Hawaiian Beaches

Early 1950s

Habauti

Holulu'u

48

Hawaiian Marlins

Early 1950s

Rayon

Dress

49

Bird of Paradise Border

Early 1950s

Cotton

Sarong with kikepa

50

Fiji Tapa

Early 1950s

Cotton

51

Fiji Tapa Border

Early 1950s

Cotton

Sundress

52

Palladin Pineapple

Late 1950s

Cotton broadcloth

Dress

53

Hawaiian Village

Late 1940s

Rayon

Pake mu'u

54

Chrysanthemum 01

Early 1950s
Cotton
Pake mu'u

55

Bombax Panel

Early 1950s
Rayon
Pake mu'u

56

Luau

Early 1950s
Cotton
Holomu'u

57

Pom Pom

Late 1950s
Cotton
Holomu'u

58

Tradewind 02

Early 1950s
Cotton
Dress with ribbon belt

59

Kau Kau

Early 1950s
Cotton
Dress

60

Hawaiian Pageant 01 (Ali'i Procession)

Early 1950s
Cotton
Long mu'u

61

Pua Ali'i

Late 1950s
Cotton
Dress

62

Tahitian Feast

Mid-1950s
Cotton
Dress
See object #80 to see this fabric in a red colorway.

63

Tahitian Feast

Mid-1950s
Cotton
Dress
See object #80 to see this fabric in a red colorway.

**Gilliland Family Galleries:
Black & White & Red Allover**

64

Pom Pom

Mid 1950s
Cotton yardage

65

Not included in traveling show. (Was from Museum collection)

66

Metallic Shells

Late 1950s
Cotton
Sundress

67

Pagan Drums

Mid-1950s
Cotton

68

Pua Nani

Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

69

Hibiscus Border

Early 1950s
Cotton yardage

70

Hibiscus 03

Mid-1950s

Cotton yardage

Display Case

On top of Asian Spring fabric yardage is a selection of Alfred Shaheen labels, hang tags, story hangtags and assorted buttons.

71

Mon

Mid-1960s

Linen blend

This screened print would have been used as a panel in a dress.

72

Parasols

Late 1950s

Cotton

Kimono

73

Tiki Tapa

Mid-1950s

Cotton

Bathing suit

74

Tiki Tapa

Mid-1950s

Cotton

Cover-up

75

Pua Lani Pareau

1950

Cotton yardage

76

Pau Lani Pareau

1950

Cotton

Boy's shirt

77

Joss Sticks

Early 1950s

Cotton

Sundress

78

Bora Bora

Early 1950s

Cotton yardage

79

Kilauea

Early 1950s

Cotton yardage

80

Tahitian Feast

Early 1950s

Cotton yardage

81

Tahitian Girl

Early 1950s

Cotton

Dress with straps

82

Stylized Monstera

Early 1960s

Arnel & cotton

Dress

83

Mala Pua

Late 1940s

Rayon

Dress

84

Pua Nani

Early 1950s

Cotton

Sarong with kikepa

85

Pua Nani

Early 1950s

Cotton

86

Seahorse Fantasy

Mid-1950s

Cotton

Sundress

87

Petroglyphs

Late 1950s

Cotton

Sheath

88

Chrysanthemum 02

Early 1960s

Cotton/polyester blend

Angel mu'u

89

Indian Border 04

Late 1960s

Polyester, viscose

90

Happy Talk

Mid-1960s

Cotton

Dress with belt

91

Pagan Drums

Mid-1950s

Cotton

See object #67 to see this fabric in a gray colorway.

92

Lace Fans

Mid-1960s

Tri-acetate & cotton blend

Dress

93

Lio Kai

Early 1950s

Cotton

94

Lio Kai

Early 1950s

Cotton

Dress

Gallery C:

East Meets West

95

Mandarin Brocade

Early 1960s

Blend

Pants outfit with belt

96

Arabic Metallic

Late 1950s

Arnel & cotton

Pants outfit with belt

97

Hibiscus Paisley

Late 1950s

Cotton/rayon

Pants outfit with belt and original hangtag

98

Metallic Scrolls

Mid-1950s

Arnel & cotton

Pants outfit with belt

99

Japanese Postcards

Early 1950s

Silk

Men's shirt

100

Geisha 02

Late 1950s

Silk

Angel mu'u

101

Indian 04

Mid-1960s

Acrylic crepe yardage

102
Indian Paisley
Early 1960s
Silk
Dress with belt

103
Indian Border 06
Early 1970s
Polyester
Pants outfit

104
Indian 01
Late 1960s
Acrylic crepe
Dress with belt

105
Cherry Blossom Brocade
Mid-1950s
Silk brocade yardage

106
Mikado
Early 1960s
Cotton yardage

107
Thai Ensemble
Early 1970s
Blend
Long dress & jacket

108
Asian Blossoms
Early 1980s
Polyester
Long dress with obi belt, original hangtag

109
Tiki 749Q
Mid-1950s
Cotton
Quilted jacket & pants outfit with original
SNS hangtag

110
Paisley 02
Early 1970s
Polyester
Long dress

111
Shaheen Sandals

112
Indian 05
Late 1960s
Blend
Dress with strap

113
Taj Mahal 02
Mid-1960s
Silk
Pants outfit

114
Mikado
Early 1960s
Cotton yardage

115
Dynasty 02
Late 1960s
Acrylic crepe yardage

116
Taj Mahal 01
1970s
Cotton
Dress

117
Bird of Paradise Drapery
Early 1960s
Drapery

118
Butterflies 02
Early 1960s
Silk
Dress with belt

119

Pussy Willow

Late 1950s

Silk

Dress with bolero

120

Paisley Border 01

Late 1950s

Cotton

Sundress

Display Case

Pompon fabric in brown, black and white colorway. See object #64 to see the fabric in a red colorway.

Set of Tiare Tapa print salesman samples in four colors.

Advertisement from Paradise Magazine describing Shaheen and his stores.

121

Nikko

Mid-1950s

Cotton yardage

122

Chinese Landscape

Late 1940s

Brocade

Cheong sam

123

Oriental Cranes

Late 1960s

Blend

Pants outfit

124

Chrysanthemum 07

Early 1960s

Brocade

Dress with bolero belt

125

Cherry Blossom Brocade

Mid-1950s

Silk brocade

Dress with belt

126

Indian Border Painting

Original gouache artwork for Shaheen textile design

Display Case

Yashmak and Indian Border 05 fabric – Indian Border print matches original artwork on the wall, but is in a different colorway.

Set of Mikado print salesman samples in three colors.

Copy of the Shaheen story, describing the process of print design to silkscreen printing and fabric finishing.

Boutique set-up brochure showing how displays should be created for stores.

127

Geisha Promenade

Early 1960s

Cotton

Dress

128

Egypt

Early 1970s

Polyester

Dress with belt

129

Indian Border 07

Late 1960s

Polyester

Long dress

Not included in traveling show (was tapa from Museum collection)

Alfred Shaheen Timeline

1922

Born in Cranford, New Jersey to George and Mary Shaheen.

1929

Moved to Compton, California.

1938

Family moved to Hawai`i.

1939

Entered Whittier College. Learned to fly an airplane.

1942 (or 1943?)

Enlisted in the Army Air Corps. Subsequently became a fighter pilot and flew 85 missions through France, Germany & Italy.

1945

Returned to Hawai`i from the war and started working with his family in the family's custom wear business. Joined Hawai`i's Air National Guard; trained pilots.

1948

Shaheen's of Honolulu established. Married Amelia Ash.

1949

First of six children was born. Started to learn printing, dyeing, and began to construct his own machinery.

1950

Established Surf 'n Sand Hand Prints in a Quonset hut by the Honolulu airport. Factory occupied 7,500 square feet of the Shaheen Kalakawa building. Transitioned from roller-printed aloha shirts to exclusive designs and women's wear.

1951

Hired two full-time artists to create textile designs.

Printing & finishing fabric at 8 yards a minute.

Hired and trained full-time models exclusively for AS (live models did not exist in Hawai'i during early-1950s).

1953

Began major Hawaiian promotion throughout the U.S. mainland.

1955

Was buying & printing minimums of 100,000 yards at a time from fabric weaving mills. Was producing over \$3,000,000 in garments and shipping most of it to the U.S. mainland.

1956

Hawai'i decided to construct the Honolulu Airport. Shaheen was forced to move his print plant but there wasn't a building large enough to accommodate it, so plans were made for construction of an additional Shaheen factory behind the Kalakawa building on a 90,000 square-foot lot which fronted Kapiolani Boulevard. Second building was connected to the factory on Kalakawa by an aerial bridge.

1958

By 1958, Shaheen had AS fabrics in major department stores across the country. Began to open his own chain of retail stores in Hawai'i, eventually numbering 12. Began design of engineered prints to counteract the flooding of the market with cheap Japanese copies of Shaheen prints.

1960

Established Hong Kong factory for brocades, brass belts, ivory buttons, etc.

1965

Opened distribution center in Los Angeles. Had established showrooms in major cities across the U.S.

1969

Had established 140 East Meets West shops in major department stores throughout the

country.

Had established Ports 'O Call for large specialty shops.

1970

Developed costume jewelry line.

1975

Developed perfume and cologne.

1988

Retired.

2001

Awarded Hawai'i's Ka 'Ahu No'eau Lifetime Achievement Award.

2006

Awarded the distinction of being one of the 150 most influential events to happen in Hawai'i from 1856 through 2006 by The Honolulu Advertiser.

2008

Passed away at 86.