



# history class

A renowned art academic puts her own fashion past online.

**W**hen it comes to vintage fashion, provenance is all, and this cache couldn't be, quite frankly, any more storied. Yoox is selling 26 pieces

from the wardrobe of nonagenarian art historian and magazine editor Rosamond Bernier. (We can add "legend" to her résumé, even though she'd hate to be called that—though really, how else would you describe someone who befriended Matisse and Picasso, and was made a Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur?)

Bernier focused her selection on the clothes she wore while delivering her lectures, when she liked to take an individual, not to say operatic, approach to getting ready. "Giving a slide lecture can be a gloomy procedure," she says, "so I'd wear an evening dress and flashy jewelry, and come onstage to music."

Now that she is no longer lecturing, she doesn't need the 1959 Dior silk-taffeta evening dress or the feather-shredded chiffon peasant top and long skirt by Zandra Rhodes circa early eighties, or any of the Kenneth Jay Lane or Chanel jewelry that would induce envy in a magpie. (For those not planning to emulate Bernier's approach to workwear, there is also a great 1980s scarlet bouclé suit from Chanel.)

Bernier's sale is one in Yoox's occasional series of offering vintage pieces a season or two old. What sets this event apart from sales devoted solely to such marques as Dior and Gucci is that this is the first time an individual has opened her closet doors. "I don't like to even call it a sale," says Yoox founder Federico Marchetti. "It is a project with



Courtesy of Rosamond Bernier; still life: CHRISTOPHER COPPOLA

**PERFECT MATCH**  
BERNIER WORE ZANDRA RHODES TO WED THE LATE JOHN RUSSELL, 1975.

a lot of soul, a lot of emotion."

Marchetti, who hopes that the project will

bring Bernier's work to a new generation, loved to hear her lecture. Maybe he even saw her the time she swapped her usual designer finery for a purple pleated Issey Miyake-style dress she found in a junk shop. "And do you know," says Bernier, "it looked just as good as the couture numbers." Well, of course it did. When it comes to making clothes illustrious, it all depends on who is wearing them.—M.H.



out of her closet

**TIMELESS**  
THE BERNIER SALE INCLUDES (CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE) PIECES BY KENNETH JAY LANE, CHANEL, AND ZANDRA RHODES.

