

Ann Lowe American Couturier by Elizabeth Way

Ann Lowe: American Couturier

By: Elizabeth Way

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The definitive illustrated volume on the work and life of Ann Lowe, a consummate couturier who designed lavish evening and bridal gowns for members of America's social registry, a Black woman working hard behind the scenes whose important legacy has remained underappreciated—until now. At the height of her fashion career, Ann Lowe's luxurious and opulent evening gowns and bridal wear were sold in upscale department stores across the country. At various times Lowe owned salons on Madison Avenue. She made Jackie Kennedy's wedding and bridesmaids' dresses, but, upon arrival at the Auchincloss estate on the big day, the butler directed Lowe to enter via the service entrance (she refused). Throughout her lifetime (c. 1898–1981), her major contributions to American style were unrecognized. Vivid new photography of Lowe's couture gowns—including lush details of her exquisite handwork and signature floral embellishments—accompany essays that explore the trials and achievements of Lowe's life, contextualize her work within fashion history, profile Black designers whose work reflects her influence, and offer a behind-the-scenes look at the extraordinary efforts to preserve Lowe's gowns.

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