

**The Imperial Court of New York
Office of the Minister of Protocol**

6th March 1996

Memorandum for the General Membership

Subject: Court Attire and Etiquette for the Coronation Ball

Dear Courtiers,

It seems necessary to address the area of proper attire and behaviour regarding the Night of A Thousand Gowns Charity Ball. The Imperial Court of New York requires that all of our courtiers assist us in creating a memorable evening by dressing their absolute best. A coronation ball is the most formal event possible in Western society.

For gentlemen, tuxedos would be the minimum requirement. White tie and dress uniforms are highly desirable, to include the wearing of military type orders, decorations, gold braid and so on. Uniforms on the order of "leather men" can be practical, provided they are somehow adapted to a "white tie/black tie" look. For example, leather pants and jacket (even caps), coupled with a wing collar, cummerbund, and gloves could work for us. For this look, a "spit and polish" finish for leather would be essential. Bare chests or butts, attractive though they may be, cannot be tolerated on this occasion.

For the ladies, a floor length evening gown would be considered the minimum requirement. Accessories should harmonize, and gloves, while desirable, are optional. If worn, gloves should be on at all times in the ball room, the exception being while dining. Hopefully, fancy dress ball gowns will be worn by many. In this case, it is almost impossible to go too far. This is the time to flaunt your biggest jewels and the beadwork you have been doing all winter, and it certainly is the time to wear a tiara, should you have one.

Our only suggestion of restraint would be that these ensembles should not prove impractical for walking, seating at table, and especially ascending or descending stairs. Again, regarding nudity, a gown may be very low cut, front or back, as long as the display of nipples or gluteal cleavage is avoided.

With regard to etiquette, there are just a few formalities to be discussed at this time. Specifically, during the Coronation Ball all Courtiers should make their bows or court'sies to all monarchs, reigning and past. That is to say that each of these persons should be greeted with a short court'sie or bow upon your first meeting that evening. It is not necessary to continue doing so throughout the night. Never attempt to kiss the hand of a monarch unless it is offered, and we all know the kissing of cheeks does not involve any actual physical contact.

Visiting monarchs are usually identifiable by very elaborate regalia, and sometimes by name tags. These monarchs should also be granted the courtesy of a bow or court'sie. If a particular monarch's identity is in question, they may properly be addressed as "sir," or "madam," or "your majesty." Visiting royalty are always pleased to be recognized in this manner.

(Regarding the events surrounding the Coronation Ball) Also, for your information, the Thursday evening State Dinner with H.M.I.S.M. Jose I, the Absolute Empress I of San Francisco and All of America, the Widow Norton, is a completely informal event. "Dressing" of any kind is optional. The Friday evening Out of Town Show should be regarded as a semi-formal event, as it is a reception for visiting Courts. Drag is encouraged, but optional. Finally, the Victory Brunch. The precedent has been that only the newly-crowned Empress "does drag." The newly elected monarchs encourage continuance of this tradition.

In reading all of this, one might think, "Oh, it's so complicated!" But actually, it is rather a simple matter to which one readily gets accustomed, and may come to enjoy.

We thank you for your cooperation in these matters. These efforts on your part will contribute to an overall effect of *haute couture* splendour, which is our aim. These guidelines are to assist us all to produce an event particularly distinct from any and all other events, and to achieve a function of which we all may be overwhelmingly proud.

This promulgated under the hand of the Minister of Protocol, Her Imperial Highness, the Grand Duchess Swana Swarovski, in the name of Her Most Imperial Sovereign Majesty, Philomena, of Faith, Hope and Cartier, the IX elected Empress of New York.

Swana Swarovski
Grand Duchess
Imperial Court of New York

PS. Should you have questions or comments, do please be in communication with the Grand Duchess Swana by telephone on [REDACTED]

SS/nn