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## Ralph Rucci: Ascension

by **Alexandra Thurmond**

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### Witnessing The Ascension

When you meet someone who is a truly creative, his or her talents are not limited to one medium. Look at fashion's current darling, Hedi Slimane, for example. He began as one of the leading menswear designers and is now considered a women's wear visionary, talented photographer, and art director extraordinaire. Another such talented individual is the designer, Ralph Rucci, whose skills far exceed his handiwork with a needle and thread.

Rucci moved to New York at the age of 21 to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology. He later went on to train under such masters such as Halston and the renowned Balenciaga patternmakers. He debuted his line of luxury women's wear, Chado Ralph Rucci, in 1994, and in 2002 he became the first American designer in more than 60 years to be invited to show in Paris by the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture. He is touted as a true perfectionist, as fashion critic Robin Givhan describes, "Rucci's clothes... ooze luxury from 100 paces, yet they are not ostentatious. They look expensive because every seam is perfect, every button exactly placed, every skirt has just the right lift." His constructions are truly wearable art.

What many may not know is that Rucci is also a skilled fine artist – a painter. He often based the textiles for his collections on his own paintings and prints, drawing inspiration from classic artists, as well as contemporary masters. His work exhibits both expressionist and minimalist tendencies from the post-modern era, and often includes references to Asian culture.

His latest series of works, titled Ralph Rucci: Ascension, are currently on exhibit at the Serge Sorokko Gallery until January 18th, 2013. The 30-piece collection features mixed-media paintings completed in 2011 and 2012, and offer a rare glimpse into the mind of the celebrated artist. The exhibit is definitely a must-see for any fan of fashion.

Serge Sorokko Gallery – 55 Geary Street, San Francisco – (415) 421-7770

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