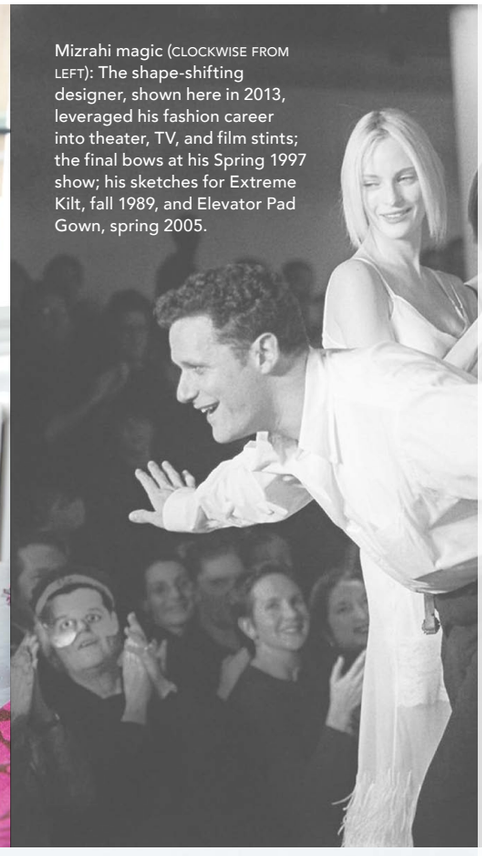


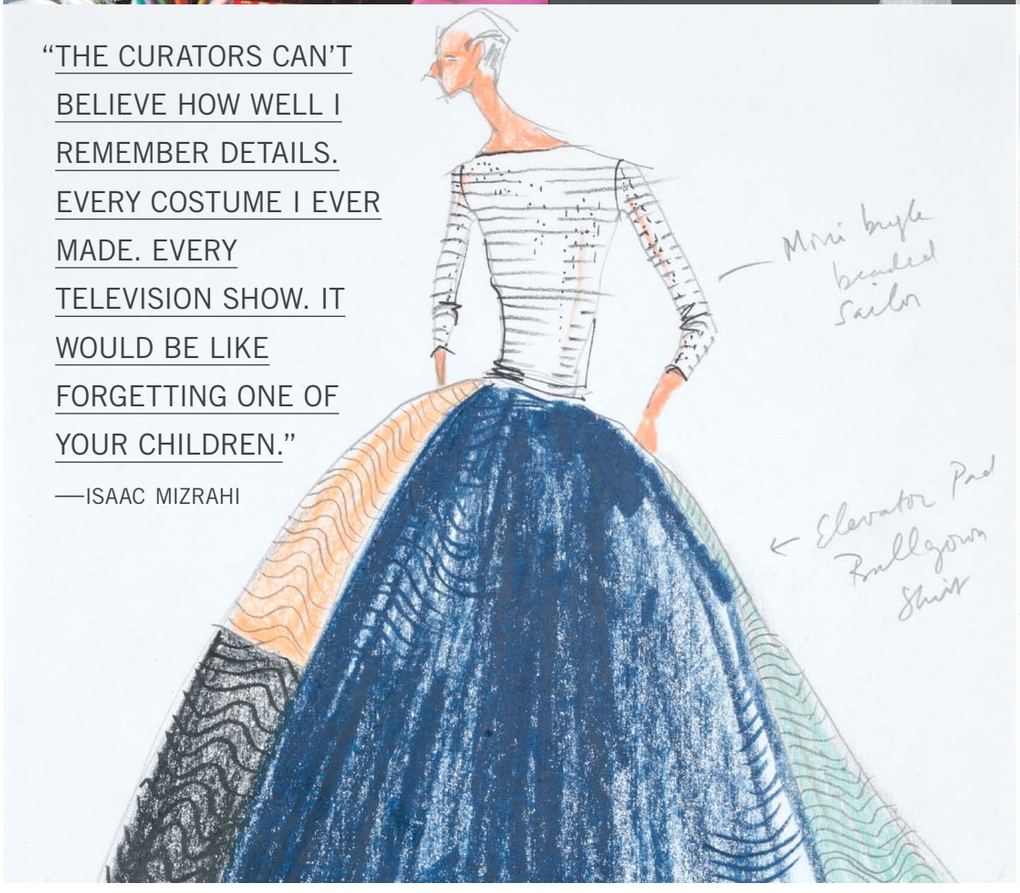
Mizrahi magic (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT): The shape-shifting designer, shown here in 2013, leveraged his fashion career into theater, TV, and film stints; the final bows at his Spring 1997 show; his sketches for Extreme Kilt, fall 1989, and Elevator Pad Gown, spring 2005.

THE UNRULY ARTIST

AS HE PREPS FOR HIS FIRST MUSEUM SHOW, DESIGN DARLING **ISAAC MIZRAHI** TAKES STOCK OF THREE DECADES IN THE FASHION FAST LANE.

BY OUSSAMA ZAHR

What did you say when the Jewish Museum approached you about a survey? "I was really skeptical. To quote Diana Vreeland, 'I loathe nostalgia.'" ***The word "retrospective" doesn't appear anywhere on the exhibit's website.*** "Right. A retrospective means you're only looking back. I'm making a few new coats for the show, which will be the last part of the exhibit. That's kind of fun too, because I don't really make couture anymore." ***Can you give us a hint about them?*** "[The shape is] ovate. It has a kind of a sack quality to it. You know, that's my favorite thing. I love a sack!" ***What word comes to mind when you look at your career?*** "I would say 'surprise.' It surprised me how bold and clean my work is." ***And a word for the fashion industry in the '90s?*** "Extravagance." *"Isaac Mizrahi: An Unruly History," March 18–August 7 at the Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., 212-423-3200; thejewishmuseum.org* ■



"THE CURATORS CAN'T BELIEVE HOW WELL I REMEMBER DETAILS. EVERY COSTUME I EVER MADE. EVERY TELEVISION SHOW. IT WOULD BE LIKE FORGETTING ONE OF YOUR CHILDREN."

—ISAAC MIZRAHI

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON FRANK ROTHENBERG FOR FABRICUT (MIZRAHI); BEBETO MATTHEWS. IMAGE PROVIDED BY AP IMAGES (MODELS); RICHARD GOODBODY, THE JEWISH MUSEUM, NEW YORK (SKETCHES)