PHOTOGRAPHY MOLLY DICKSON FOR SISTERBROTHER MANAGEMENT. ART DIRECTOR MICHELLE AVIÑA. STYLE EDITOR FRANCINE BALLARD. VERSACE ALPACA FUR COAT, PRICE UPON REQUEST AT THE VERSACE BOUTIQUE. AGENT PROVOCATEUR MAXENE DRESS $590, AT THE AGENT PROVOCATEUR BOUTIQUE. PHOTOGRAPHER ASSISTANT JUSTIN LEVERITT. STYLIST CARLOS ALONSO PARADA FOR ON SET MANAGEMENT, ASSISTANT STYLIST GABE ORTIZ FOR ON SET MANAGEMENT. HAIR AND MAKEUP GABBY ROSENBERG FOR SISTERBROTHER MANAGEMENT. SHOT ON LOCATION AT LE MÉRIDIEN DALLAS, THE STONELEIGH. MODEL AZLIN FOR DRAGONFLY, DALLAS.

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The Heat’s On of movies, including an actress. She landed in a handful to Hollywood to become a dancer before her death, the oil widow who didn’t mince words. Hamon famously once told a bartender at a museum ball, who squeezed a tiny piece of lime into her drink, “I have emeralds bigger than that.” When she lost a fingernail to a blender in the 1980s, special-effects designer Carlo Rambaldi — who created the missing digit and, at her request, permanently bent it to look like she was holding a cocktail. When her husband, wildcatter Jake L. Hamon, Jr., died in 1985, leaving her his oil empire to run (Fortune magazine estimated its worth at $200 million), she set out to spend it all. For those who knew this broad who didn’t mince words, she threw high-spirited parties Dallas has ever seen. Her lavish masquerade balls included one with circus performers and an elephant, and another with jazz legend Louis Armstrong. In the late 1940s, Hamon chartered the luxury ship Goddess and treated 100 friends to a cruise to Spain and Morocco. She hosted politicians, presidents’ wives and celebrities, dined in tuxedos and wore millions of dollars of jewels without apology. But after Jake died, Hamon donated more than $70 million over the next 26 years to a wide array of recipients, including the Dallas Museum of Art, the Dallas Historical Society, UT Southwestern Medical Center, the Salvation Army, the Dallas Public Library, Booker T. Washington School for the Visual and Performing Arts, the African American Museum at Fair Park and the Dallas Zoo.

On view September 24 – December 13, located in the Jerry Bowsler Special Collections in the Hamon Arts Library, SMU. 6100 Hillcrest Ave., 214.768.2894, smu.edu.

I have emeralds bigger than that.

BY REBECCA SHERMAN. PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY JAKE AND NANCY HAMON PAPERS, BYWATERS SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, HAMON ARTS LIBRARY, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY.

A NEW EXHIBIT OF THE LATE LIVE-WIRE PHILANTHROPIST NANCY HAMON’S EARLY FASHION SKETCHES REVEALS A YOUNG GIRL DESTINED TO TAKE DALLAS SOCIETY BY THE HORNS. BUT FIRST, THERE WAS HOLLYWOOD, OUTRAGEOUS PARTIES AND A MISSING FINGER.

BY NANCY B. HAMON

FASHION DESIGN SKETCHES BY NANCY B. HAMON

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