

Haute Couture Techniques
On-Site Course
Advanced Level

Fantasy

07 — 11.07.2026



CRISTÓBAL BALENCIAGA MUSEOA

With the aim of promoting excellence and broadening and deepening technical knowledge within the professional fashion sector, the museum presents this specialised course dedicated to the study and practical application of the specific methods used in the couture workshops of the Balenciaga House.

This practical, intensive course forms part of the dressmaking programme. It can be taken either as part of the proposed training programme or as a stand-alone course. Although it is recommended that participants have previously completed the introductory and/or intermediate courses in the same programme, this is not a mandatory requirement for enrolment.

The five-day course combines demonstrations of the sewing and ironing techniques characteristic of the House of Balenciaga with a strongly practical focus. Its aim is for participants to acquire practical skills by creating various elements of a 1955 dress from the museum's collection.

Specifically, we will be working on a strapless bodice finished with a ribbon cut on the bias, paying particular attention to its inner corset, as well as to fastening and finishing techniques. We will also cover techniques such as creating ruffles and applying organza and fine battings.

FANTASY	Duration	Format
Level 1. Beginner	20 hours	On-Site
Level 2. Intermediate	32 hours	Online
Level 3. Advanced	35 hours	On-Site

Presentation of the course and of the programme

1. The Fantasy Atelier

- The materials, silk fabrics and how to work with them
 - Typical fantasy constructions
 - Marking and cutting techniques
 - Positioning prints
 - Adapting the design to the fabric
 - Reinforcements, paddings and other accessories
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2. Practical Exercise: Making an Inner Corsetette

- Preparing and cutting the bodice
 - Seams and the application of strips for boning
 - Application of tulle cups
 - Breast pads
 - Assembling the boning
 - Zip and grosgrain finishes on the neckline
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3. Practical Exercise: Preparing and Cutting a Strapless Bodice

- Preparing and pressing the fabric
 - Matching and marking the pieces
 - Cutting the lining
 - Cancan ruffle
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4. Practical Exercise: Marking and Basting

- Tailor's tacks and marks
 - Basting the bodice
 - Basting the waistline and first fitting
 - Adjustments and alteration
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5. Practical Exercise: Altering and Composing the Bodice

- Making the required alterations
 - Basting and sewing the main seams
 - Pressing techniques
 - Fitting the zip with organza bias binding
 - Application of a decorative strip complete with bow
 - Combined fastenings, zip, poppers, hooks and eyes
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6. Practical Exercise: Assembling the Gathering

- Marking the hem of the bodice
 - Applying organza to the edges and sewing the hemming stitch
 - Lining the panel and overcasting the allowance
 - Running stitch for gathering
 - Gathering the panel and hand sewing it in place
 - Placing the lining at the waist
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Javier Martín

Resident in Madrid though originally from Ávila, Javier Martín graduated at the Polytechnic University of Madrid as Senior Fashion Designer in 1991. During his formative years, he met Carmen and Emilia Carriches, seamstresses at the EISA workshop in the capital and first assistants of the head couturier, Felisa Irigoyen. From them he learned the specific dressmaking techniques of the couturier from Getaria and acquired knowledge on the construction of volumes that would shape his designs.

For ten years, he was part of the team at Sybilla, until 2005, when he decided to create his own brand, Nihil Obstat, focused on Haute Couture. He combines his activity as a designer with collaborations with other creative artists such as Carmen May, Jesús del Pozo or Joaquín Trías, the latter the grandson of a model of the Balenciaga house, to whom he provides technical advice. He worked from 2012 to 2019 for the Spanish company DELPOZO, taking care of the modelling and development of the volumes of part of the collection and developing luxury prêt-à-porter garments with an international projection.

Also a lecturer, he has participated in educational projects of the Spanish Government's Ministry of Education, and has given lectures on design and modelling at the Centro Superior de Diseño de Moda of the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, the European Design Institute of Madrid, and at the Estación Diseño school in Granada, among others. Since 2015, he has been collaborating with the Cristóbal Balenciaga Museoa education programme compiling and transmitting the sewing techniques used at the Balenciaga House ateliers.



Dates	From June 29 to July 3, 2026.
Timetable	10:00–14:00/15:00–18:00 Total dedication of 35 hours.
Language	Spanish.
Participants	<p>Those holding qualifications in Fashion Design, Pattern Design and/or Dressmaking, fashion professionals, and all those interested in gaining deeper knowledge of haute couture tailoring techniques. Especially recommended for people who have previously completed the initiation or/and the intermediate course in Haute Couture Fantasy Techniques organised by the museum.</p> <p>The maximum number of participants will be 16 people. The participants will be selected based on the required documentation and place allocations will be communicated from April 30.</p>
Requirements	Those interested in participating must be able to prove that they have prior knowledge of haute couture techniques and that they are capable of cutting, basting and sewing a garment.
Registration	Registration will remain open until 15 April (up to and including 2.00 pm Spanish time). Interested parties must complete the online registration form. Applicants must attach a CV detailing their education and experience in the field of fashion, as well as a cover letter explaining their interest in the programme and how it relates to its content. Incomplete applications or those submitted after the deadline will be automatically excluded.

Price 475€. The price includes the materials required to proceed with the exercises, valued at 50€. The Museum will provide a kit with the necessary material, including pique cotton or similar, cotton trim, tulle, muslin, and all of the accessories need to proceed with the exercises proposed. The participants must, in turn, come equipped with basic sewing tools (scissors, pins & needles, thread, measuring tape, tailors chalk, etc.).

The net registration fee to be received by the Cristóbal Balenciaga Foundation is the above-mentioned, all bank charges are to be paid by the participant.

Any discount applicable to "Friends of the Museum" is restricted to those friends who can demonstrate that they have been members for at least two years at the time of registration.

Places limited/Registration is required

In the event of failing to meet the minimum number of participants, all interested parties will be informed of the activity cancellation and any registration fees paid will be refunded

A certificate of attendance will be issued at the end of the activity.

Contact T +34 943 004 777
info@fbalenciaga.com

Aldamar Parkea 6
20808 Getaria
T +34 943 008 840
info@crislobalbalenciagamuseoa.com
www.crislobalbalenciagamuseoa.com

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