

Elvis Presley's Original 12-Pound 'Aloha From Hawaii' Cape Has a New Home!

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Elvis' original 12-Pound 'Aloha From Hawaii' Cape to The King's Ransom Museum: Elvis Presley's original 12-Pound 'Aloha From Hawaii' Cape has a new home!

The 12-pound cape custom-made for Elvis Presley for the singer's famed 1973 performance Aloha from Hawaii Via Satellite is now owned by The King's Ransom Museum and is one of the 'Personal Treasures of Elvis Presley' soon to be displayed for Elvis fans around the world to enjoy.

The full-length cape, adorned with an American eagle and stars and inlaid with semi-precious stones, measured nearly five feet in length, but when Presley tried it on in rehearsals, he found it too heavy to be worn onstage for the show. Designer Bill Belew was forced to create a lighter replacement for Presley, with the original sent back to Graceland.



"Presley had the cape made to hide behind at the opening of the Hawaii show. His intention was to 'emerge' from behind the cape during the 2001 opening segment. The show was heavily choreographed - he intended to drop the cape and reveal himself to the anxiously awaiting crowd. However, when Presley tried on the cape during rehearsals, the weight almost pulled him over backwards, and it was decided that a smaller version was needed."

"Three small hooks and Velcro are sewn into the collar to connect the cape to Presley's jumpsuit, and two small straps are sewn into the corners to enable Elvis to stretch out the cape while wearing it."



Belew, who died in 2008, gained fame for designing many of Presley's outfits from 1968 to 1977, including the velveteen ensemble the singer wore for his infamous "Elvis meets Nixon" photo. In 1999, the full size Aloha cape made for Presley for the Hawaii performance sold by Graceland for over \$100,000 at auction. Years later, it was sold again for a quarter of a million dollars, making it one of the highest valued Elvis personal items ever sold. It was eventually acquired by Elvis historian, author, documentary producer and museum owner, Bud Glass.

Glass and his partner Russ Howe are owners of the world famous King's Ransom Museum that has successfully toured America and even Europe for the past ten years. Early this year, the museum just finished up a one year engagement at the former Las Vegas Hilton, where Elvis performed more than 800 performances from 1969-1976. Other than a single suit and cape that was on display in the early 1980's, The King's Ransom Museum was the first time Elvis had been back in the building in over 40 years, and preceded the

current Graceland sponsored display and impersonator show. During the 'Ransom's' run at the former Hilton, The History Channel filmed the museum and interviewed Bud Glass on the very stage where Elvis made history. Clips of the museum were also filmed and included on Fox News, and Geraldo Rivera's 80th birthday salute to Elvis last January.

"Hundreds of thousands of people from all a over the globe have been through our exhibit in the past decade. Our record attendance was 110,000 people during a three week period in Dallas, Texas". said Glass.

But in the last year at the Former Las Vegas Hilton, it is estimated by the Hotel Entertainment Director that well over half a million people have walked through the exhibit. Our museum is constantly evolving over the years as new artifacts are discovered and added to our archives. This historic cape, made for the most famous of all of Elvis' performances is something we are extremely proud to soon display for the



first time in our museum. It was actually on display in Elvis' Graceland home for the first several years the mansion was first opened up for tours in

the 1980's. Priscilla Presley can be seen telling the incredible story behind the famous cape on the very first 'Elvis Presley's Graceland' video documentary."

In a 2005 interview, Belew explained his process behind designing Presley's white jumpsuits. "The lighting [in Las Vegas] was still in its early stages," said the designer. "And we found that the color that worked the best was white. It allowed them to change the colors on him, where as black would absorb all the color. And it was

hard to highlight him. And we experimented with blue which was one of his favorite colors. Red. But it just ended up that white was the best thing and, of course, you know, you want the star to be the person, you know, and not the wardrobe."

Presley filmed the special on January 14th, 1973 at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center (then named the Honolulu International Center). It aired in more than 40 countries, with the United States airing it three months later on April 4th.

(Above: Photo of Aloha long-cape on display in Graceland in the early 1980s)

(Right: Photo of Aloha long-cape on display in Graceland in the early 1980s)