



FIXATED

## JACKET MAN

*Skip the stamps. Cash in the coins. One Dallas collector wraps his arms around coats once worn by a certain Sir, who sings about candles in the wind and yellow brick roads.*  
**STEVE KEMBLE**, "America's sassiest lifestyle guru," waxes rhapsodic about his sartorial scores

photograph by CHRIS PLAVIDAL

"I have always been a fan of Elton John's music — and his wardrobe. So when I heard about a charity sale in 2006 in New York called Elton's Closet, I hauled ass there. I purchased 10 Versace jackets from his collection — the prices were from \$600 up to \$2,000 for a sequined number. But, I mean, they are Versace and the retail prices had to be triple that. I am as big a fan of Versace as I am of Elton's. They just seem to go together, don't they? I had a lot to choose from at the sale, which benefited the Elton John AIDS Foundation. There were nearly 10,000 pieces of clothing from Elton and his partner David Furnish. It was like a really, really great garage sale hosted by Crystal Charity's Ten Best Dressed women. I wear the jackets all the time. At the sale, many people said they were going to take a jacket home and frame it as a piece of art. For me, though, the jackets are meant to be enjoyed. They do look like art when they are all hanging together in my closet. When grouped together, it turns into a miniature version of Angie Barrett's closet — all sparkly and designer-filled! It's hard for me to tell you which piece is my favorite. I've worn them all, tons, but I think the best one is a black-sequined jacket. One year I actually wore it to The Crystal Charity Ball. I promise you, no less than 30 of those best-dressed women came up to me, wanting to borrow the jacket for an upcoming event. I thought to myself, Well, the jacket *would* look great as a mini with a pair of Louboutin heels! I haven't tried that look yet, but you never know. Whenever I wear one of Elton's jackets, it always gets the conversation started. Everyone asks, 'Where did you get that?' They freak out that it was owned by Elton John. Everyone loves him. And I love nothing more than a feel-good moment. Well, maybe I love sparkles a little more."

— as told to Jason Shirley

