

WECS Wardrobe

Spring issue 2018

£5.50: Free to members

wecs
west of england
costume society



www.
wofecostumesociety.org

Calendar

The University of Bristol Theatre Collection

Thursday 24 May 2018

■ Bristol

Killerton visit

Saturday 14 July 2018

■ Exeter

Janet Arnold Study Day: Masculine Attire

Saturday 6 October 2018

■ Bath Cricket Club

Yeoman of the Guard

Saturday 17 November 2018

■ Bath Bowls Club



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WECS events

Visit: The University of Bristol Theatre Collection

Thursday 24 May 2018 14.30-16.00

■ Faculty of Arts, University of Bristol
Vandyck Building, 21 Park Row, Bristol BS1 5LT

Dr. Jill Sullivan, acting Assistant Keeper, will give us a conducted tour for one and a half hours starting in the exhibition spaces where she will tell us about the Theatre Collection history and the collections generally. There is a limited amount of display space and unfortunately the majority of costumes are stored off site, which is not available for tours. However, there will be a small exhibition on Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh showing some of his costumes and items belonging to Leigh. We will then tour the store-rooms and finish in the library/reading room where we will have the opportunity to sit down and look in details at the work of costume designers such as Julia Trevelyan Oman, David Walker, Deirdre Clancy, Alan Tagg and others. Some of you may remember Deirdre Clancy who holds Oscar and BAFTA awards for costume design and came to talk to us about her work and the history of theatre costume at the 2016 AGM.

This is an impressive collection of archival material to do with putting theatre on the stage and recording it from 1572 to the present day, along with live performance art from the 1960s. The collection holds over 20,000 books and 300 journal titles, which are available on open access in the library.

The Mander and Mitchinson Collection is one of the three largest theatre archives in the country and reflects the public and private "life" of theatre from the 18th century to modern times.

If you have any particular interest and would like to request to view something in the archive then do ask and I will forward the request.

If you look online you may see something that might interest you.

www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection

Meet at 14.15 at the publicly accessible entrance located on Park Row opposite the

Trenchard Street multi-storey car park. The entrance is clearly signed, with blue railings outside. Please ring the buzzer for entry as the doors are automatic, so do not push.

Numbers are restricted to 10 so book early. If the demand is high it may be possible to arrange a second visit.

NB. There is no refreshment provision but there are plenty of cafés at the top of Park Street near the Will's University building.

Timeline: History of Killerton costume collection



Visit: Killerton House

Saturday 14 July 2018 11.00-16.00

■ Killerton House, Exeter
Devon EX5 3LE

Get-yourself-there visit.

Home to the Acland family until Sir Anthony gave it to The National Trust in 1944, the Killerton Estate has a comfortable Georgian house at its heart which houses the costume collection of Paulise de Bush. The collection now has 20,000 objects from 1690 to the 1970s and has annual exhibitions, which can be viewed as part of a visit to the house. The house was closed last year while its roof was made watertight but it is open again with an exhibition celebrating 100 years of some women getting the vote. The special twist to this exhibition is that it tells the story of two Killerton women who were on opposing sides of the Suffragette Movement and shows, how during the campaign from 1866 until 1928, women's fashion changed and was exploited by the supporters of women's suffrage.

Shelley Tobin, the curator, will tell us how the exhibition evolved and the history of the costume collection of Paulise de Bush.

Booking form with this edition of WECS Wardrobe.

If you are not a member of the National Trust the entrance fee to Killerton house is £11.60 with a parking fee of £4.00. **If you are a member** then do remember to bring your current membership card and to display the parking disc in your car. The journey will take at least two hours via M5 or A303 so give yourself plenty of time.



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Janet Arnold Study Day

Masculine Attire: It isn't always Black or Blue

Saturday 6 October 2018

9.30 - 16.45

■ Bath Cricket Club, North Parade Bridge Road Bath
BA2 4EX

Today women's fashionable clothing comes in all shapes, colours and sizes and even age doesn't necessarily become a restraining factor, but it is not so easy for men. Despite the kilt and the sarong, men-in-skirts has not really caught on.

Victorian men in their three-piece suits set a trend of dullness and uniformity but it was not always so.

At this study day Dr Ulinka Rublack introduces us to Matthäus Schwarz from *'The First Book of Fashion'*, in which he catalogues the clothes he wore between 1520 and 1560. He was certainly a man of style and loved his clothes.

Susan North, senior Curator of Fashion 1550-1800 at the V&A, will then explore historical concepts of manliness with her talk entitled *'Men in Pink'*. Think of all that lace and embroidery!

Then we have **Shaun Cole**, currently Associate Professor in Fashion at Winchester School of Art and Vice Chair of the Costume Society UK, who will tell us about what happened between the late eighteenth century and the late nineteenth century in his talk *From Flamboyance to Restraint?*

While **Ben Whyman**, manager of the Centre for Fashion Curation, a research centre based at London College of Fashion, will bring us more up to date with how clothing can tell us stories of men's lives through a case study of the wardrobe of Sir Roy Strong.

Roy Strong's wardrobe, currently stored in the Fashion Museum. Photo: Ben Whyman



More detail and the booking forms in the summer edition of WECS Wardrobe

Christmas Meeting

Saturday 17 November 2018 14.00-16.30

■ Bath Bowls Club, Pulteney Road, Bath BA2 4EZ

Speaker Shaun McCormack

A member of The Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeoman of the Guard Shaun will bring along his uniform and tell us about the history as well as his role as a Yeoman of the Guard.

More detail and the booking forms in the summer edition of WECS Wardrobe

The photo shows Shaun in his uniform outside St. James Palace

Out & About

All items in 'Out and About' are published in good faith. WECS Wardrobe cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Please check details before making a special journey.



■ Fashion Museum,
Assembly Rooms,
Bennett Street, Bath
BA1 2QH
01225 477789
www.fashionmuseum.
co.uk

A History of Fashion in 100 Objects

until 1 January 2019



Royal Women

until 28 April 2019

The exhibition shows clothes worn by Queen Alexandra, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, and Princess Margaret. Wives and daughters, sisters and mothers; all played a key role in the British monarchy. The exhibition examines their sartorial lives, looking at each woman's unique style.



Fashion and Freedom

until 1 September 2018

■ Chertsey Museum, The Cedars, 33 Windsor Street, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 8AT
www.chertseymuseum.org.uk

Fashion and Freedom examines female clothing from the 1840s to the 1980s looking at female emancipation, with pieces displayed in the context of women's social, political and cultural lives. As the exhibition progresses it emerges that over time, they began to be freed from many of their restrictive garments.



Himalayan Fashion

High Altitude - High Fashion

until 26 October 2018

■ Leeds Museums and Galleries
Lotherton Off Collier Lane, Aberford, Leeds LS25 3EB
www.leeds.gov.uk



London Antique and Vintage Textile Fair

13 October 2018

■ Chelsea Old Town Hall, Kings Road Kensington and Chelsea, London SW3 5EE
www.textilesociety.org.uk
The Textile Society's London Antique Textile Fair Chelsea Old Town Hall



Heavenly Bodies Fashion and the Catholic Imagination

until 8 October 2018

■ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Met Fifth Avenue and The Met The Cloisters
www.metmuseum.org

Images © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Martin Margiela

Retrospective

until 15 July 2018

■ Palais Galliera Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, 10, Avenue Pierre 1er de Serbie 75116 Paris

Marking the first retrospective in Paris dedicated to Belgian fashion designer Martin Margiela, this exhibition traces his career from 1989 up to 2009. This retrospective, held at the Musée de la Mode in Paris, follows the designer's career in the fashion industry, starting with his debut spring-summer collection in 1989, up to his spring-summer collection in 2009, underlining his conceptual approach to design.

Martin Margiela SS08, © Françoise Cochenec / Galliera / Roger-Viollet



Peter Lindbergh, courtesy of the Design Museum

Azzedine Alaïa

"The Couturier"

10 May - 7 October 2018

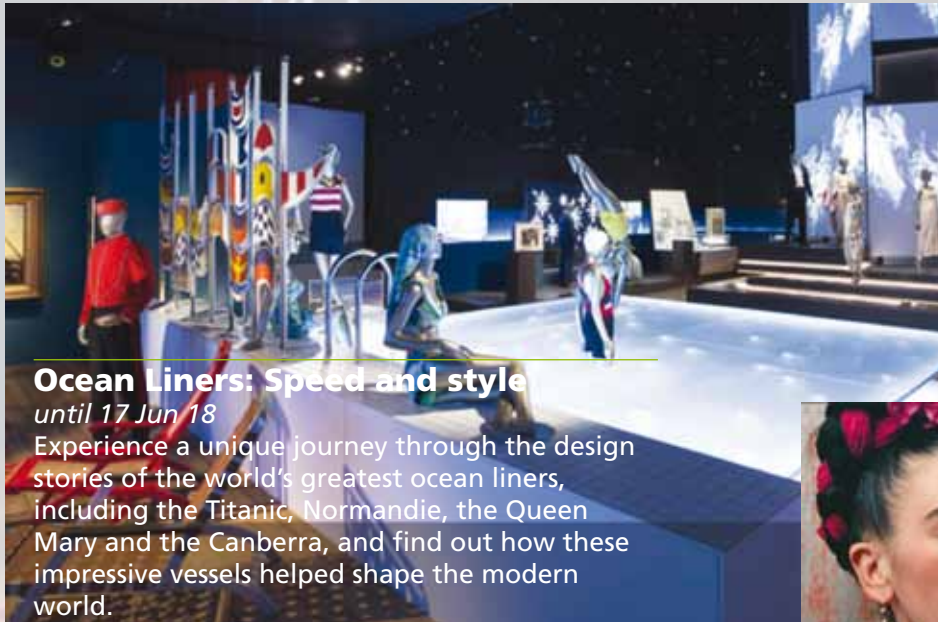
■ The Design Museum, London 224-238 Kensington High Street, W8 6AG, London

www.designmuseum.org
The Design Museum in London is set to open a major exhibition focusing on the life work of legendary fashion designer Azzedine Alaïa. Despite the designer's untimely passing in November 2017, the exhibition will launch as the museum had been working closely alongside of the late Alaïa to develop it.



Frida Kahlo:
Making Her Self Up
 16 Jun 18 until 4 Nov 18
 ■ V&A Cromwell Road,
 London SW7 2RL
www.vam.ac.uk

This exhibition will present an extraordinary collection of personal artefacts and clothing belonging to the iconic Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Locked away for 50 years after her death, this collection has never before been exhibited outside Mexico.



Ocean Liners: Speed and style
 until 17 Jun 18

Experience a unique journey through the design stories of the world's greatest ocean liners, including the Titanic, Normandie, the Queen Mary and the Canberra, and find out how these impressive vessels helped shape the modern world.



Orla Kiely A life in pattern
 25 May - 23 September 2018

■ Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF
www.ftmlondon.org
Info@ftmlondon.org

Orla Kiely, one of the most recognizable designers from the UK, is the focus of a new exhibition set to open at the Fashion and Textile Museum of London. Entitled "Orla Kiely: A Life in Pattern", the retrospective is set to focus on her stylized graphic patterns, which are both innovative and influential.

Images courtesy of Orla Kiely



Haute Dentelle Designer Lace
 9 June 2018 - 6 January 2019

■ Museum of Fashion and Lace,
 Cite de la Dentelle et de la Mode, 135 Quai
 du Commerce, 62100 Calais
 Tel : 03 21 00 42 30 Calais
www.cite-dentelle.fr

The Museum of Fashion and Lace in Calais is set to open a new exhibition dedicated to hand-made and mechanical lace. The exhibition offers visitors a view into the contemporary use of lace woven by fashion designers. Curated by Sylvie Marot, the exposition offers a unique dialogue between lace houses and fashion houses, highlighting the exchanges between the two creative propositions.

Images for Haute Dentelle, Calais Lace
 Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel, courtesy of
 The Museum of Lace and Fashion



Photo courtesy Whitchurch Silk Mill

The Costume Society
www.costumesociety.org.uk

Saturday 7 July 2018

Celebrating Patterns of Fashion Study Day

London College of Fashion, 20 John Princes Street, London W1G 0BJ

Saturday 8 September 2018, 14.00-16.30

Visit to Whitchurch Silk Mill

28 Winchester Street, Whitchurch, Hampshire RG28 7AL. Costume Society members £7.00, non members £9.00

Saturday 15 September 2018, 10.00-16.00

Fashion, Femininity and Power

Killerton House, Broadclyst, Exeter EX5 3LE
 Study Day to co-incide with the new exhibition at Killerton.

Southern Counties Costume Society

www.sccostumesociety.org.uk
 Saturday 9 June 2018, 11.00-15.00

Fashion and Freedom,

33 Windsor Street, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 8AT
 Collaboration with Chertsey Museum Study day, exploring the history of women's emancipation and dress from 1840s to 1980s.



Royal Fashion Course

with Futurelearn

starting 7 May 2018

■ Online

To sign up go to www.futurelearn.com/courses/royal-fashion

This free course sounds good fun. Several WECS members have already joined.

Lucy Worsley says:

The curators and our colleagues at Historic Royal Palaces, plus our friends at the University of Glasgow, have a wonderful free new online course for you on ... The History of Fashion.

From Henry VIII to Queen Elizabeth II, explore how British kings and queens have influenced fashion over 500 years.



Photo @ Tanya Heath

Feeling down at heel?

Well don't be - just change your heels!

Tanya Heath, a Canadian lady who moved to Paris worked on the idea of being able to change the heels on her shoes to avoid taking several pairs with her every day: one pair for getting to and from the office, another pair for work, and a third pair for going out after work.

Find the full article:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-41048851>

And to the website in case you can't resist!

https://www.tanyaheath.com/en/e-boutique/heels.html?color_category=766

The Great Tapestry of Scotland

18 May - 1 July 2018

■ New Lanark, World Heritage Site, South Lanarkshire Scotland ML11 9DB
www.newlanark.org

New Lanark, an 18th century Scottish cotton-spinning mill village, is hosting the return of the Great Tapestry of Scotland with their new exhibition, *Making of the Great Tapestry of Scotland*, opening this May. After first exhibiting the tapestry in 2014, the new exhibition will allow visitors to discover the story of the tapestry's creation through original sketches, photography, memorabilia and memories from those closest to the project.



Panels from the tapestry will be exhibited alongside fascinating insights from Dorie Wilkie, lead stitcher, and her team of 1000+ stitchers who worked on the project. The show will also include original sketches and personal works by Andrew Crummy, the artist behind the tapestry's illustrative design depicting key moments in Scotland's history.

The Great Tapestry of Scotland was the brainchild of writer Alexander McCall Smith, the author, together with historian Alistair Moffat, artist Andrew Crummy and more than 1,000 stitchers, formed a team to produce the world's longest tapestries through one of the biggest community arts projects ever to take place in Scotland. Taking 65,000 hours of stitching and using over 300 miles of wool, illustrating 420 million years of Scottish history in 160 panels, this beautiful tapestry depicts the entire history of Scotland.

As advertised in *Selvedge Magazine*



Nos da - Goodnight!

A panoply of Historic Welsh Quilts

until 10 November

■ The Welsh Quilt Centre, Town Hall, Lampeter, Ceredigion SA48 7BB
www.welshquilts.com
quilts@jen-jones.com
01570 422088 or 480610

The exhibition is billed as a celebration of ten years of wonderful exhibitions showcasing the entire spectrum of the Welsh Quilting tradition. The centre also has Samplers and other examples of Welsh folk art.

Bath Textile Summer School

Workshops

20-24 August 2018

■ Bath: Holburne Museum, BRLSI, venues tba
www.bathtextilesummerschool.co.uk



Wendy Dolan

Architecture in Stitch
In the meadow, paint and stitch



Isobel Hall

Working with cocoon strippings



Anna Scott

Raised embroidery level 2



Jenny Adin Christie

Arts and Crafts Inspired embroidery

Janet Bolton

Fabric pictures



Classes range from two to five days and cost between £215 and £540. For individual workshop details, dates and venues, visit the website.



East and West

until 10 November

■ Bexhill Museum, Egerton Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 3HL
www.bexhillmuseum.co.uk
enquiries@bexhillmuseum.co.uk
01424 222058

Bexhill Museum's Costume Gallery has western examples dating from the C17th to modern day, including a mourning dress belonging to Queen Victoria and a collection of kimonos and traditional Japanese dress.

Structuring Fashion Foundation garments through history

13-14 September 2018

■ Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Prinzregentenstrasse 3, 80538 München, Germany

The International Conference organised by Johannes Pietsch (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum) and Jenny Tiramani (The School of Historical Dress, London) will be held at the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich.

This conference will focus on undergarments that have shaped fashionable silhouettes. It will cover a broad timespan from the Middle Ages up to the 21st century.

Conducted in English, the event will be held in Munich to celebrate a very special exhibition and the launch of an exciting new book. The Bayerisches Nationalmuseum preserves the world-famous pair of silk bodies worn by Countess Palatine Dorothea Sabina around 1598. This extremely rare garment is in very fragile condition and thus has been safely stored for decades. Now it will be presented to the public exclusively from September to December 2018, which coincides perfectly with the publication of this pair of bodies in the new volume of the Janet Arnold *Pattern of Fashion* series, which is being continued by members of The School of Historical Dress. *'Patterns of Fashion 5: The cut and construction of bodies, stays, hoops and rumps c.1595 – 1795'*, presenting over 40 garments in great detail, will appear this autumn.

Internationally renowned experts like Valerie Steele (FIT New York), Alexandra Palmer (ROM Toronto), Peter McNeil (UTS Sydney), Amalia Descalzo (ISEM Madrid) and Denis Bruna (MAD Paris) will be among the speakers of the conference. The participants will go on exclusive tours to explore one of the leading historic dress collections, both in front of and behind the scenes to see exciting garments and accessories from the 15th century onwards.

More information and inscription:

www.bayerisches-nationalmuseum.de



Reformation to Revolution

until 2019

■ Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1 Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1JD
www.nationalgalleries.org

The Scottish National Portrait Gallery has a wealth of costume information in its paintings.

Current exhibitions include *Reformation to Revolution* until 2019 - which exhibits expensive painted portraits from the early 1600s of people asserting their social status as well as individual likenesses.

Art and Analysis until 2020 - is a small exhibition highlighting two Netherlandish painters. Adrian Vanson and Adam de Colone, worked in Jacobean Scotland in the late C16th, early C17th, and there is detailed explanation of the technology used in the conservator's analysis of their work.



The Visual Culture of the Jacobite Cause until 2019 - focuses on the way the Jacobites presented themselves in portraiture.



Top: Mary of Guise by Corneille de Lyon, Queen to James V and mother of Mary Queen of Scots (inset)
Above: Portrait under analysis
Left: Charles Edward Stewart before he starred on the shortbread tins.

WECS Reports

WECS Christmas Meeting

Fashion in the time of Jane Austen: Dressing for the Pleasure Gardens

Saturday 18 November 2017

■ Bath Bowls Club, Bath

Speaker Sarah Jane Downing

Report by Vibeke Ormerod

Public Pleasure Gardens were opened in the 18th and 19th centuries; amongst many were Vauxhall Gardens in London and, opening in 1790, Sydney Gardens in Bath. They came with a variety of attractions, Sydney Gardens featured a labyrinth, a sham castle a grotto and a bowling green. Activities included promenades and public breakfasts and Jane Austen is believed to have been a visitor.

So how would people dress for such an outing?

The change in fashion from the 18th to the 19th century was radical, it went from one extreme to the other and pushed along by industrialisation, capitalism and political ideas, fashion became the "barometer of change". Sarah Jane showed us the satirical engraving by Châtaignier "What Relics", 1797 where the silhouettes of the old and new fashions are juxtaposed, one side depicting the hallmarks of the "Ancien Regime" and the other the new slender, more practical "Empire" silhouette.

The main influence on fashion in the UK had hitherto come from France but the French Revolution forced a change which was facilitated by international trade and import of muslin and raw cotton from India. Gradually muslin was available to all and became a vehicle for expressing democratic ideas. Social mobility was now possible and people from all social spheres could frequent the Pleasure Gardens, even the Prince Regent would go there.

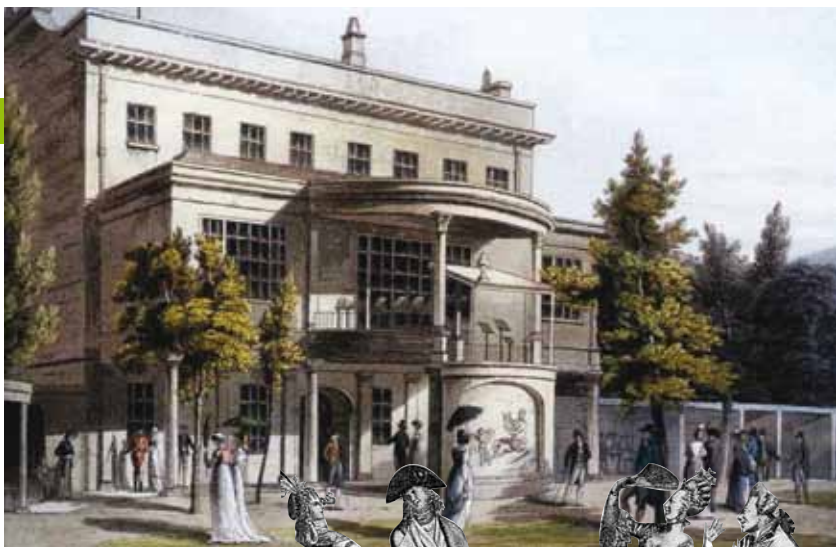
The new fashion ideas were widely disseminated by the advent of one man, Nikolaus von Heideloff who had fled Paris at the time of the terror and came to London where he started the first periodicals devoted entirely to fashion in 1794, *The Gallery of Fashion*. He was forward looking and his fashion plates showed the elegant English restraint rather than earlier extravagance and often depicted people communing with nature. As The Grand Tour stopped during the war people had to make do with venturing out at home in the UK appreciating the English landscape, inspired by gothic architecture, gothic novels and Rousseau. Follies and romantic ruins were popular features and many a large estate had one, often with a hermit installed.

For the well to do an outing in a phaeton was all the rage, the phaeton being the Bentley of the day.

Soon after *The Gallery of Fashion* two other periodicals appeared in 1806, *Ackermann's Repository of Arts and La Belle Assemblée* with new specific outfits for special occasions and often showing outfits made with less expensive materials.

Parallel lines

Although the new fashion really took hold there were still two systems in operation for some years to come. If one was presented at Court there were hard and fast rules as to what to wear. The rules of Court directed that ladies wear hoops and trains and feathers in their hair. The Prince Regent was reasonably relaxed but Queen Charlotte held firm on the rules in London at St James Palace "Drawing Rooms" until 1817 when a new and more flexible hoop was introduced as a compromise. It was possible to wear this in a Sedan chair and The Assembly Rooms in Bath had changing rooms where one could change from a hoop into dress suitable for a country reel. The hoop was finally abolished by the Prince in 1820 when he became King George IV though the plumes were still to be worn and it appears that vanity and the need for people to stand out went to their heads! With the hoop gone the extravagance was transferred to the head dress and plumes became ridiculously large. Some were so high that they were at risk



This page, from the top: Sketch of the Fancy Fair at Sydney Gardens, Bath for the Relief of Distressed Seamen. Painted around 1836 by an unknown artist.

Châtaignier's "What Relics", 1797

Tintern Abbey painted by Peter van Lerberghe,

Opposite page, from the top:

A Drawing Room at St James' Palace 1810.

A Hint to the Ladies to take Care of their Heads. 1776

Marie Antoinette by Vigée Le Brun, 1783

"An exact representation of M Lunardi's new balloon as it ascended with Humfelt 13 May 1785"

The Graces in a Storm, Gillray ca 1810

and described as the Bentley of its day - a phaeton, driven by two rather fetching ladies of fashion.

Pictures not in the public domain are from Sarah Jane Downing's books and are used with her permission

of catching fire from the candles in the chandeliers above. Such an episode was mentioned in a poem by Christopher Antsy *An Election Ball*

*... But Madge at the Rooms,
Must beware of her plumes,
For if Vulcan her feather embraces,
Like poor Lady Laycock,
She'll burn like a haycock,
And roast all the Loves and the Graces...*

As it wasn't easy to get about in a carriage with such large plumes, ladies would take them in their husband's swordcase and then dress at the Assembly Rooms or Pleasure Gardens.

Keeping it simple

In the 1780s Marie Antoinette was inspired by the clothing of the women in the French West Indies and she started wearing "la chemise à la reine", a loose flowing gown or shirt tied round the waist with a wide sash. The portrait of her in her chemise painted by Vigée Le Brun in 1783 caused a scandal: How could the Queen show herself in such informal attire, not suitable for her rank! But it soon caught on as fashion and was widely copied.

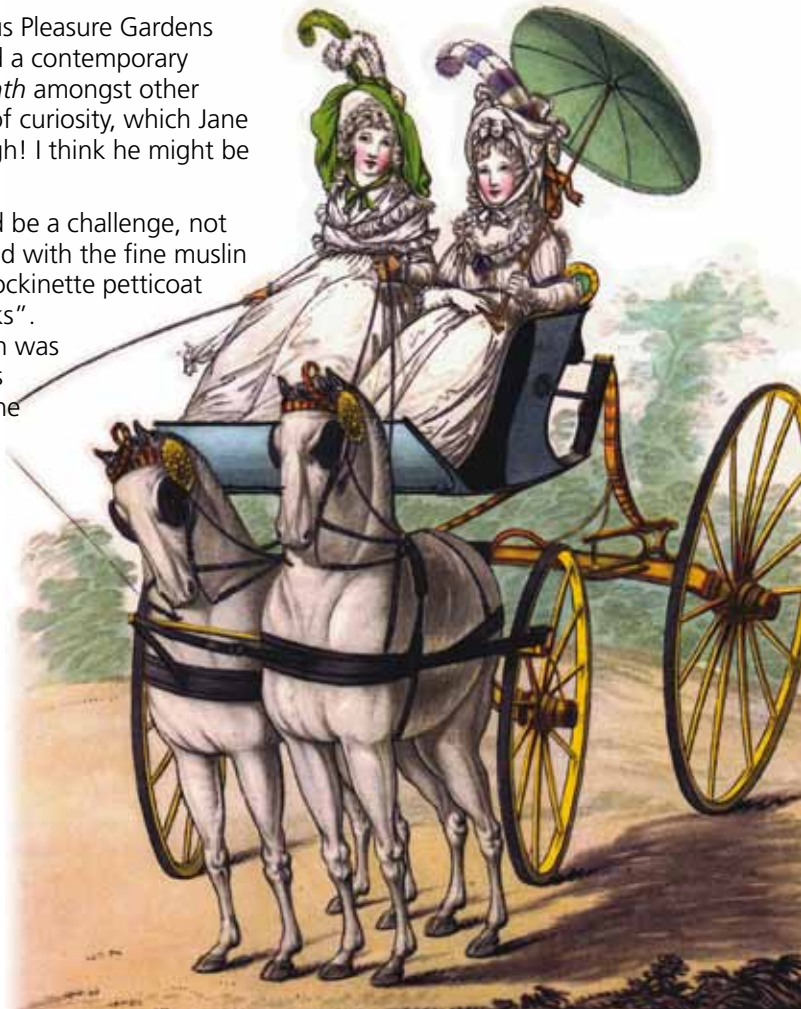
The success of the cotton chemise garment was apparently to the detriment of the French silk industry which reported losses. One of the followers of this fashion in the UK was Mary Robinson who played Perdita in *A Winter's Tale* and who had an affair with the Prince Regent. This romantic scandal further promoted the chemise fashion!! "And there is no new thing under the sun"! Still the same today.

In 1782 the first hot air balloon flight was performed in Paris, the balloon was made by the Montgolfier Brothers. The balloon was first seen in London in 1784. It descended over Ware and people were horrified. But balloon ascents soon became the hallmark of the Pleasure Garden along with firework displays.

So now everybody were able to dress and happily go and enjoy themselves at the Pleasure Gardens! The only snag was the "flaw" with the muslin fabric: Being so affordable the servants were now dressed like their mistresses! The democratic muslin was a bit too democratic for some!

The beautiful Sydney Gardens was one of the most illustrious Pleasure Gardens outside of London. Pierce Egan, 1772-1849, a journalist and a contemporary of Jane Austen, wrote *Life in London* and *Walks Through Bath* amongst other things and in 1819 described the labyrinth, another object of curiosity, which Jane Austen is supposed to have taken four hours to walk through! I think he might be leading us up the garden path!

All this gadding about in nature in a thin muslin gown could be a challenge, not least in a strong wind where the slimline silhouette combined with the fine muslin was very unforgiving, showing every curve. Many wore a stockinette petticoat to avoid the thin muslin getting caught between the "cheeks". Catching cold or worse was another peril, in fact the fashion was held responsible for many cases of pneumonia, hence it was named the "muslin disease". So the moral is: Dressing for the Pleasure Gardens one would do well to arm oneself with a parasol, a face veil, wear nankeen boots instead of slippers and if necessary a kerseymere spencer before setting out.



Foale and Tuffin

Saturday 3 February 2018

■ Bath Bowls Club, Bath

Speaker Iain Webb

Report by Liz Booty

Iain Webb gave us an insightful look at the life and work of Marion Foale and Sally Tuffin over the ten years they were in business together from 1962. They were part of the 'youthquake', bunking tradition, creating young, modern and immensely wearable clothes AND are attributed to making the trouser suit generally sexy and popular! They were young, talented and good businesswomen.

They had met first at Walthamstow Art School and at The Royal College Art graduating in 1961. This was a golden period at the college where they were contemporaries of Sylvia Ayton, Zandra Rhodes, James Wedge and others. The head of fashion at that time was the legendary Janey Ironside.

The convention for a new graduate fashion student would have been to go and work for a Paris couturier in a very minor role or as a very junior designer for one of the large manufacturers - neither of these routes appealed and they decided to start their own business priding themselves on achieving this without the help of a man. They shunned Paris and concentrated on making 'fun' clothes becoming known for their tailoring, creating long lean suits and coats.



On graduation, hearing that the 21 shop at Woollands in Knightsbridge was looking for new merchandise from young designers, they took two dresses and their portfolio to show the young buyer, Vanessa Denza. She placed a small order for 36 dresses that sold quickly leading to further orders. Denza was influential in them being awarded a commission to design the wardrobe for 'the free swinging girl' Sindy doll!

Marit Allen, the young editor of the new 'Young Idea' section in Vogue featured their clothes in 1962 photographed by David Bailey including the first dress they sold to Woollands - a grey dress that cost ten and a half guineas. Their collections became a regular feature along with along with many other young designers such as John Bates, Bill Gibb, Gerald McCann, and Jean Muir setting new trends. Soon they were selling to *Top Gear* and *Browns*, *Miss Selfridge* and *Way In* at Harrods newly created for this new young, revolutionary market. They were part of the new generation who did things their own way.

The pair started sharing a South Kensington flat. Having been given sewing machines and a steam iron for their 21st birthdays, they put them on the dining room table and cut out on the floor, buying fabric from retail shops; but they rapidly had to get organised sourcing a suitable factory to fulfil their orders. They were designing easy to make simple well tailored garments. In 1963 they took on their first premises, starting with one floor workshop and then taking on the rest of the house as it became vacant with a showroom on the ground floor. This became their shop in 1964 - it was in Marlborough Court, just off Carnaby Street. At that time, this area was just a run down area with cheap premises that was just starting to change, aided by John Stephen opening a trendy menswear shop followed by two more, along with other small enterprises. This soon became the hub of the Swinging London Scene.

America beckoned. Paul Young, an American businessman was very influential in bringing the Swinging London scene to America along with Foale and Tuffin, Mary Quant, Sylvia Ayton, Caroline Charles, Zandra Rhodes and others and introduced them to J.C. Penney who quickly licensed their designs. They were treated like pop stars, in whirlwind tours appearing in talk shows and touring with groups and dancers waving the Union Jack. In 1966 they designed costumes for the American film Kaleidoscope featuring the young Warren Beatty and Susannah York. The press, both in USA and UK were hungry to capture the youth market featuring the 'bright new things', youthful looks and arrogance - papers producing supplements with fashion pages for the first time and magazines with special features. In America they came in contact with workwear jeans that were to influence their direction. This was the time of 'Ready, Steady Go' on TV, Biba opening in 1964, the Beatles etc. Their clothes were being worn by people in the limelight such as Cathy McGowan, Lulu, Twiggy, Marianne Faithful.

**BRITISH YOUTHQUAKE
CRASHED THE OLD
ENGLISH FASHION IMAGE
CREATING A NEW LONDON FLAIR WITH A NEW YOUNG AMERICAN AIR!**

YOUTHQUAKE ORIGINATOR, MARY QUANT, is a true Queen, meaning Queen designer. For 1963, Mary Quant has designed a completely new breed of fashion for the "very ahead girl" who's under 25. First to create the Chelsea look, then Quant is moving away from the "bushy" look with a new kind of clothes, she calls "pimper but fantastic" - "sensational but definitely not busy." Barnswell, 12, 3, 4, bring this new Quant look over for the young Queen to model. And give what retailers wanting to hang their noses in... and say!

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YOUTHQUAKE COMBO: TUFFIN & FOALE design for the girl who thinks 30 is old - and wants to look any thing but boring. Tuffin & Foale's lady new looks will sweep across the country, adding Anglianness by the millions. Some types of Tuffin & Foale's new looks that catch the eye, crystal, strapless as fabric, pop art, looks, conspicuous, clean 1960s theme, and to the girl it "stuff that wings." J.P.'s of Purton brings Tuffin & Foale to these shores, by way of Youthquake, 1960!

YOUTHQUAKE FOR JUNIORS
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By the late 60s dressing down and 'the birth of cool' arrived. This was the time when Conran introduced us to duvets, pine furniture and pasta jars! Plastics, PVC, perspex and futuristic fabrics were all popular. Fashion models were depicted jumping in the air - into the future. By 1968 it was the time of the student riots and when the Foale and Tuffin trouser suits became popular. Fashion was looking for a new direction escaping into the fantasy world and deluxe bohemia. As the 70s arrived fashion became more extreme with the duo being well attuned to the moment producing quilted Liberty prints often mixing the prints- much copied.

In 1972 they closed for personal reasons. They said 'we weren't a mercenary generation but a basis of optimism'.

Sally Foale now runs Moorecroft pottery near Shepton Mallet and Marion Foale has a knitwear company. They are still friends.

Throughout this decade they remained at the forefront of fashion using modern materials and seemed to have a 6th sense for timing of new ideas. Their clothes were loved and worn by the young stars of the time.

What a fabulous illustrated talk Iain Webb gave us about them, bringing them alive and talking about the influences of the time as he traced their decade of being in business together.

March Study Day

17 March 2018

■ BAWA, Bristol

London Court dressmakers and Lucile 1880s-WW1

Speaker Amy de la Haye

Report by Vivien Isbister



The first talk of the day was given by Amy de la Haye on the subject of late 19th century court dressmakers which included Lucile.

Amy has researched some little known couturiers and dressmakers. She started her talk by giving a general outline of the industry.

By the end of the 19th century London was at the top level of production for clothing. The demand was huge, ranging from the luxury to the cheaper end of the market. At this time a catalogue was produced of London Dressmakers. Newspapers would advertise court dressmakers. From about 1916 magazines were giving details of dressmakers in their advertising pages.

The businesses making court dress were the following: Couturiers such as The House of Worth, Tailors and high end departmental stores such as Fenwick and Marshall & Snelgrove which had workrooms at the top of their premises.

Mayfair was the area where many high class, luxury tailors and dressmakers were situated. We were shown a detailed map of the businesses which were in close proximity. Paris couture houses extended their businesses to London, which included The House of Paquin, Paul Poiret and Chanel.

Apart from making day wear and court dress some of the fashion houses would also make fancy dress costumes for customers, mourning dress and elaborate cloaks to wear over evening gowns.

Clientele would visit the luxury classical interior showrooms which were more like a superior lounge which housed comfortable chairs, chandeliers and large mirrors. There, they would be fitted for their chosen garment, with weekly adjustments until finalised.

Some couture houses would have fashion dolls wearing the latest gown, complete with accessories. This gave the client a good indication of the finished effect.

Interns, C19th style

Young ladies who wished to become dressmakers could learn their trade at a couture house. Whilst training they would receive no pay. On completing a two or three year apprenticeship a small remuneration would be offered. However, a newly qualified dressmaker could earn more in a departmental store workroom.

The East-end was a major employment area for outworkers in the textile industry.

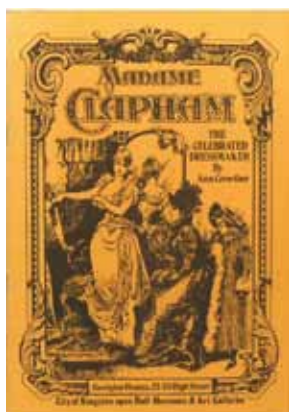
On marriage a fully trained dressmaker would have to leave her place of employment and some would set up their own businesses.

Some designers' ledger books for work done do survive. It has been noted that clients regularly took garments to their dressmaker for alteration, maybe to readjust the size or to refashion the item. Receipts still exist from court dressmakers that give a fascinating insight into purchases made by customers. Wealthy clients could be slow in paying their dressmaking bills which caused financial hardship to the business concerned. Discounts were offered to encourage customers to pay promptly. However this incentive wasn't always enough to revive a failing business, which then had to close down.

Outside London

There were dressmakers and tailors who had successful businesses in other parts of the country. The following two being such an example:

One was a *Madame Clapham* who for 65 years had a successful dressmaking business in Hull. In 1887 a Mrs Emily Clapham opened her salon, having done



Lucile

Born Lucy Christina Sutherland (1863-1936). She became Lucy Duff Gordon on her second marriage in 1900. As a self taught fashion designer she took up dressmaking after a failed marriage so as to support herself and her daughter.

Lucile opened her first premises in the West End of London in 1894. As her business grew she moved to larger premises at 23 Hanover Square in 1897.

Wealthy clients frequented Lucile who was a successful business woman of her time with a large workforce. Approximately 2,000 people were employed by Lucille Ltd. though there is no evidence of the number of people who worked in her workrooms. During this period the weekly pay for a dressmaker was 14/-.

Two of her apprentices were Edward Molyneux and Sir Norman Hartnell who became fashion designers in their own right.

Lucile is renowned for her softly draped gowns of pastel colours, these included, lingerie, tea gowns and evening wear. Fancy dress and tailored garments were also part of her remit. All Lucile's dresses had fancy names.

Lucile also designed costume for the theatre.

To display her collection Lucile used professional models. This was the beginning of the catwalk shows we know today.

After remarrying she kept her business name. It became a Limited company in 1903, known as *Lucile Ltd.* Between 1911 and 1915 shops were opened in New York, Paris and Chicago.

Lucile thought 'Womens Suffrage' a huge joke. However, she still used the colour purple to promote her designs at the time. Later in life Lucile published her memoirs, titled "*Discretions and Indiscretions*", which became a best seller. She died in 1935 aged 71.

Lucile's extensive archive is now held at London's V&A Museum. Many exquisite watercolour and pencil designs are left to posterity. Fabric swatches of garments made are also included in the archive, while some of Lucile's garments survive today in various museums.

an apprenticeship with Marshall & Snelgrove in Scarborough. She was highly regarded; her patronage, generally by word of mouth, became worldwide, competing well with the London and Paris fashion houses. The quality and style of clothing attracted an impressive clientele, one being Queen Maud of Norway. Also John Redfern (1820-1895) & Sons (later Redfern Ltd) had a business in Cowes on the Isle of Wight. His tailoring business developed into a leading English couture house. By the early 1890s he had branches in London, Edinburgh and New York. An early designer of chic sportswear for women, he also made clothes for mourning attire. By 1870 his clients included British and European Royalty.

The court dressmaker, Reville & Rossiter Ltd were a London couture house and court dressmaker to Queen Mary. They made Queen Mary's coronation dress in 1911 gaining the Royal Warrant in 1910 and 1911. However they ceased business during the 1930s.

Another designer, Frederick Bosworth worked in New Burlington Street, London W1 during 1908.

Water colour artists were an important part of the fashion world at this time as they provided an accurate sketch of garments a couture house would show to prospective clients and these were sent out to customers for their approval. Prior to the 1920s there was already a wide spread practice of copying couture designs to make them available on the high street.

Elizabeth Handley-Seymour, (1867-1948) was one such artist. Known as Madame Handley Seymour in business from 1910-1940, her premises were at 47, New Bond St. She worked in water colour and pen and ink. Like Lucile she was a court dressmaker who designed for Royalty and society clients.



Opposite page: Catalogue about Madame Clapham of Hull

This page from top:
Lucile's autobiography, published 1932

Interior of dress, London court dressmaker
Russell & Allen

Interior of dress by W Reville Terry Ltd

In the lecture Amy de la Haye posed the question - were Lucile and Redfern proto London couturiers?

The Fashionable Client: Dressmakers of London through the Wardrobe of Heather Firbanks

Speaker Cassie Davies-Strodder
Report by Jean Scott

To me there is nothing better than looking in detail at beautifully made clothes and being able to study how they were made and admire the skill of those who made them. Usually we do not know who made them and frequently have no idea who wore them but when a collection is discovered where not only the wearer is known but also how much the clothes cost and where they were purchased then a personal story emerges which throws light on the many different worlds that interconnect in the creation of clothes.



The Heather Firbank collection and archive does just this. Acquired by the V&A in the 1960s, Cassie Davies-Strodder studied the 200 strong collection as part of her Masters and from what she found was able to discover the life and tastes of a single, wealthy, fashionable woman in the early years of the twentieth century. The V&A did not take all the collection, which covers the period from 1905 – 1925; the sportswear clothes went to Platt Hall in Manchester, but from what must have only been a part of Heather's wardrobe it has been possible to investigate changing fashions and shopping experiences from dressmakers and department stores, and through newspapers, census and Post Office Directories reconstruct the histories of forgotten London dressmakers.

The earliest piece in the collection is a blue striped summer dress, which Heather wore when she was seventeen. It is in two pieces with a steel boned bodice and would have been worn with a corset that created the s-bend shape typical of the Edwardian period. In contrast, one of the later pieces is a loose fitting, shift shaped dress, not so well made, and considerably easier to put on and take off, clearly showing what a dramatic change had taken place in women's fashions in the space of two decades. The collection



includes beautiful evening gowns, underwear, stockings, tailor-made suits and sportswear, in fact everything a wealthy young woman of the early twentieth century would need to operate in the society in which she moved.

Heather bought most of her clothes in London from exclusive dressmakers and tailors. Some are well-known names like Lucile⁷ and Redfern, as they were patronised by the aristocracy, but others such as Bosworth, Mme Mascotte⁶ and Kate Reilly⁸ have now been forgotten. John Redfern & Sons became the world leader in tailoring in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, specialising first in sportswear and then in highly fashionable women's tailored suits. He started on the Isle of Wight and then had a branch on Conduit Street in London. Frederick Bosworth, the brother-in-law of his son, managed this branch but then went on to start his own tailoring business in New Burlington Street and Heather bought a stunning golfing and shooting outfit in Scottish Tweed from him between 1905 and 1908. She also had a cape made by Scott Adie who specialised in tweeds, ideal for those country weekend visits. She was clearly an active woman and her sportswear in Platt Hall museum includes what could be described today as jogging bottoms with built in socks. It is not known who made these. For formal afternoon occasions such as garden parties Heather had some exotic gowns with the typical high necks, three quarter sleeves and elaborate trimmings of lace and chiffon. This delicate, feminine style was the trademark of Lucile and the well-known image⁷ of a

¹ Speaker Cassie Davies-Strodder with her latest production. Thank you to Cassie for sharing the images from her presentation.
From left to right:

- ² Heather Firbank herself.
- ³ Book: London Society Fashion with a comprehensive account of the collection.
- ⁴ Afternoon dress 1909

- ⁵ Gold ball dress 1909
- ⁶ Invoice from Mascotte with the blouse
- ⁷ Lucile dress
- ⁸ Kate Reilly dress, showing the inner 'workings'.
- ⁹ Inset: *The Phantom Thread* seamstresses.

white silk satin, silk chiffon and machine made lace gown from 1913 is trimmed with skunk and has a large, wired bow. The other afternoon gown c1909 is made by Pickett of whom little is known. As a debutante Heather would have attended as many as three balls in an evening and complete ballroom ensembles can be put together from the Firbank collection. Low-cut with no sleeves, this gold silk ball gown⁵ is overlaid with fine gold net appliqué with small gold sequins, a silver lace trim at the hem and the sleeves are of sheer net with strings of bugle beads. It was probably made by Reville & Rossiter who made Queen Mary's coronation gown. What makes the Firbank collection special is the paper archive with over 50 shopping bills⁶. In 1909 she spent over £1,000 on clothes and sheet music. A dressmaker would have earned £150 per year. But from these bills it can be seen that Heather had clothes repaired and re-trimmed, and items like ready-made blouses were bought from the Irish Linen Stores in bulk and paid for in cash in order to earn a 10% discount. Eleven boaters were bought from Woodrow and Son in different shades. The bills also tell us Heather lived in Curzon Street, just around the corner from Lucile, one of her favourite dressmakers and the various fashion houses she bought from were all clustered in the same



district, Mayfair. At this time there were over 1,700 dressmakers listed in the London Directories and 5% were listed as 'court dressmakers'. It was not until after WWI that some London dressmakers gave themselves the title of couturier/couturiere after the French fashion houses.

Mme Mascotte was another dressmaker patronised by Heather, who provided her with her favourite colour day dresses and chiffon blouses. Starting from modest beginnings as a railway clerk's daughter she married banker Major Cyril Drummond before opening her business, first in Kensington and then Park Street. Mrs Drummond adopted the name Madame Mascotte to identify her creations with French fashion. She never advertised and her business survived only twelve years. Kate Reilly on the other hand did and traded for 36 years but there are few of her gowns surviving in museum collections, probably due to their fragility. A portrait of Heather wearing a Kate Reilly dress with a Woolland Brothers hat c1909 is the only Reilly dress surviving in the Firbank collection. Her business was twenty years before Lucile. She started as a milliner and went on to dress minor royals and traded internationally. She is thought to have worked with Vionnet and believed to have dressed the Kellogg and Vanderbilt families. A rare photograph shows Reilly's London showroom in 1888 as a high Victorian interior in Dover Street. Most dressmakers based their businesses in eighteenth century townhouses with the showrooms on the ground floor, fitting rooms above and workrooms with employee's accommodation on the top floors.

The other source of Heather's fashionable wardrobe was the department store of which the most important one was Woolland Brothers, where she bought most of her hats. Department stores had their own workshops where the clients' choices



would be constructed. Labels inside the hats show that although made by the store they were the latest styles from Paris.

Heather's interest in fashion is supported by her collection of over 500 cuttings from newspapers and fashion magazines. She collected not only fashion sketches but also adverts and fashion advice



and her annotations show the styles and colours she preferred. Her relationship with her dressmakers can be gleaned through two pencil sketches in the archive, showing dresses by Machinka of Dover Street from the 1920s. The dressmaker would send sketches with suggestions for fabrics and trimmings that would suit the client. There might have been a charge if the sketches were not returned. Heather did not leave a diary but from other sources we know she must have spent many hours with her dressmakers. A newspaper fashion cut out with Heather's annotations '*Sailor Frock I do not want the bands of colour...*' suggest she was active in her sartorial choices. She attended the famous Lucile fashion shows and on a programme from 1923 she has ticked 7 of the 77 models shown that day. Fittings did not always occur at the dressmakers. One corset, which survives in the collection, is marked with an address which suggests the fitting came to the client. The business card of '*Mesdames Devalois & Rocher, Corsetières de Paris*' is in Heather's papers.

Heather's personal life is rather sad and can be seen in the correspondence in the archive of her famous brother Ronald Firbank. It goes some way to explaining the amount of black in her wardrobe. She never married and so was supported by her brother when the family fortune was lost. In his letters Ronald chided her over her 'Lucile habit', as she often exceeded her clothes' allowance. However, although she was born into wealth and loved luxury fashion she was never



'showy' but her choices showed a refined elegance and together with her archive her clothes give us the opportunity to study the creative talents of dressmakers, seamstresses, tailors, shoemakers and milliners of London in the early twentieth century.

To end her fascinating talk Cassie told us that her research had led to a visit from Hollywood. The writer and director Paul Thomas Anderson of the film *Phantom Thread*, a 2017 American period drama film set in London's couture world in 1954, together with its star Daniel Day-Lewis, who plays a couturier, came to the V&A study facilities. This is supposed to be Day-Lewis's final role before retiring and he is renowned for his total immersion in the role he is playing. Cassie told us the visitors were very nice and genuinely interested in getting an accurate portrayal of the backstage world of couture. While studying the clothes collection they met Sue Clark and Joan Brown ⁹, long-term volunteers at the V&A and who in an earlier life had trained at Worth and then worked for Hardy Amies. Realising the extensive practical knowledge they had, Day-Lewis recruited them as technical advisors and from here they graduated into having speaking parts in the production. It is believed that under their guidance Day-Lewis worked 100 buttonholes as part of his immersion in the couturier role. Recognition at last for the skilled fingers that make the designer's creations a reality.



If you would like to know more about the world of Heather Firbank and her dressmakers I would highly recommend the 2015 V&A publication *London Society Fashion 1905-1925: The wardrobe of Heather Firbank* by Cassie Davies-Strodder, Jenny Lister and Lou Taylor ⁶.

Images (except the book photographs) courtesy of Cassie Davies-Strodder's presentation.

The Ghosts of Mayfair or the Curious Case of London's Forgotten Women Couturiers

Speaker Jonathan Faiers
Report by Helen Montague-Smith



Women have been overlooked! No longer, said Jonathan Faiers beginning a fascinating talk, illustrated by excellent slides, about some of the hidden London fashion designers of the first half of the C20th.

Jonathan Faiers listed couturiers including Eva Lutyens; Matilda Etches; Angèle Delanghe; Helena Geffers and Raemonde and Dora Rahvi.

Showing us a slide with an image from *Vogue* in 1949, probably by Clifford Coffin, of a model posing in a bomb damaged Mayfair town house, Jonathan re-introduced his audience to the Rahvi Sisters whom we had met briefly in an earlier talk. The model's gown was made by the firm of Rahvi Couture. We watched a delightful 1958 film clip from *Pathé News* promoting the sisters who assured the male interviewer that they were better designers than men and that they made clothes to please their women customers, not the men!

The Rahvi sisters were émigrées, originating in South Africa. By 1929, they were in business in South Molton Street in the Mayfair area, as *Rahvi Gowns* and then as *Rahvi Couture*. The Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers, IncSoc, was established in 1942 to promote the British fashion and textile industry. The Rahvi sisters applied for membership of this important group but were refused – they evidently did not conform to the normal template of London couturiers. Their rise and fall is traceable as to where they lived/ had their trading premises.

They had many royal patrons in the early 1930s and by 1958, they had over 100 staff! During the 1950s, they attracted many interesting clients including film stars such as Valerie Hobson. They designed costumes for several well known films, notably *Blythe Spirit*, *Tartu*, *The Good Die Young*, *I am a Camera*, *Room at the Top* and the Bond film *For Your Eyes Only*.



Mrs Eva Lutyens was born in Russia in 1890 to an intellectual Russian Jewish family. She married Robert, an interior decorator, the son of the famous architect, Edwin Lutyens in 1920. She thus became part of an influential family with useful connections but she was also a self-publicist. By the 1930s, she had set up as a designer and costumière in Buckingham Gate. She had an acute and interesting sense of colour. Eva knew members of the London Jewish intellectual circle and also attracted other wealthy clients including the Duchess of Windsor. Other notable patrons included Lady Jersey and Mrs I.M. Sieff, Marks and Spencer heiress, a well known hostess. Very few of Lutyens's garments survive but a significant example is a 1930's red silk crêpe dress held by the V&A. Described by Jonathan as dramatic and sophisticated, it had picot edged decoration.



Matilda Etches, who died in 1974, worked mainly for the theatre and ballet. Jonathan showed us an amazing photograph of a model dwarfed by the stones at Stonehenge. He described Matilda Etches as unqualified. She worked directly with the cloth, her scissors and her model, draping and cutting to produce the desired fit. (1948 green, draped dress) Her avant garde designs were simple and elegant and often multi-functional. The image of a black quilted evening dress and jacket from 1947, showed a very dramatic garment with an ingenious reversible jacket.

Etches chose not to work in Mayfair, but in Frith Street, Soho – the slummiest part!

Her ballet costumes were designed with Sophie Fedorovitch and she also worked on film costumes with Cecil Beaton. Described as 'Conceptual Fashion', the 1949 red butterfly cape, in the V&A, was made for Ninette de Valois and was a key acquisition for the Museum. Vivienne Leigh wore Etches clothes in the 1945 film of *Caesar and Cleopatra*.

Doris Langley-Moore described Etches in her book *Women of Fashion* as an 'interesting young designer'. Ahead of its time was a 1948 West African style wrap-around dress. Made from a Manchester print cotton cloth it is actually boned and stitched although it looks wrapped.

Angèle Delanghe was born in Belgium but by 1914, was established in London in Kensington, making romantic clothes for debutantes. She was able to use foreign fabrics and was successful in joining IncSoc in 1947 and moved the same year. However, by 1948, Angèle Delanghe was in financial difficulties and she sold her label to Fortnum and Mason. She actually worked in the store and thus had many important customers. Delanghe made many of the 1953 Coronation robes using imported German velvet! One image was of a stunning red lace gown with chenille embroidery. Leaving Fortnum and Mason's in 1954, she set up her own business again in Bruton Street but finally retired, and died in 1971.

Not much is known about **Helena Geffers** but she did make undergarments and corsetry for Dickins and Jones. She also liked using towelling as a fabric, as did the Rahvi sisters.

Jonathan finished his talk with a very significant image of a 1950 young model wearing a beautifully tailored suit which made her look tough and not feminine. She was also smoking! And without a cigarette holder!

It was entitled '*Impertinence*' and was published in *The London Way*. Was this perhaps the forerunner of new designs and designers?



Opposite page:

Beaded Silk evening dress and coat (detail), designed by Rahvis, London. 1966. V&A
Mrs. Eva Lutyens by Glyn Warren Philpot. c.1935. Atkinson Art Gallery Collection

This page:

Black quilted silk crêpe evening dress and jacket, designed by Matilda Etches. 1947. V&A

Impertinence suit designed by Helena Geffers. 1950.

Photographed by Norman Parkinson U.K. Vogue March 1950

I have to confess that prior to filling in my application form for the 2018 March Study Day, I had never heard of Jo Mattli.

I gather I am not alone in this, because although we all know the names of Hardy Amies and Norman Hartnell who were contemporaries working in London at the same time, Mattli did not dress the Queen nor did his couture house continue after his death. At the time though, his business was just as well known and successful, but history seems to have forgotten him and it is largely because Caroline has done so much research on his work, that he has been 'found' again. It was a fascinating talk with some of his actual garments from her own collection for us to handle and many beautiful slides, based on the research she did for her MA and PhD and the studies she did on the Mattli archive in The Fashion Museum in Bath.

Giuseppe (Jo) Mattli was born in Locarno, Switzerland in 1904. He had eleven sisters whom he loved to dress with his own designs, though his first job on leaving school was not in fashion but in the oil industry – a job he hated. By the 1920s, he managed to escape and travel to Paris to be trained in the fashion house Premet. He visited London to learn English and study English tailoring during this time and then came back permanently to open his own haute couture house in 1934.

In 1947, he met and married his second wife, French born, Claude, who had worked for Jean Patou as a model in Paris before coming to London during the war, when she worked for the Free French. She became his *director-vendeuse* (head of sales) and occasionally modelled his evening gowns.

As he became more successful, he moved his premises several times and in 1948, he achieved his ambition of becoming a recognised couturier by joining the Incorporated Society of Fashion Designers (INCSOC) as their eleventh member. After the war, INCSOC was often called the Big Ten, and its aim was to promote British fashion and fabrics at home and abroad. It joined up with the Board of Trade, the Textile Industry and the Chambre Syndicale De La Couture Parisienne to co-ordinate their fashion shows and bring much needed American dollars to Britain and France. In 1948, Princess Elizabeth came to an exhibition organised by the International Wool Secretariat for the INCSOC designers to present their designs in wool. The Royal family always supported INCSOC and British fabrics – cotton, silk, wool and man-made fabrics.

After this, his business became so successful that in 1951 he moved again to new, more prestigious premises in Upper Grosvenor Street with fourteen rooms where he was able to employ 100 staff. One of the items in the Bath Fashion Museum Mattli archive is a sketch book from 1952. This would have been produced for his bi-annual collection and contains complete drawings of suits, day dresses, cocktail dresses, evening dresses and ball gowns. Inside the front cover is a list of all the designs and the fabric manufacturers relating to each sketch. Rationing by 1952 was more relaxed and couturiers could once again design dresses with big, full skirts.

The Fashion Museum, Bath Mattli archive also holds 61 ensembles, a collection of over 3000 fashion drawings and eight press books with 9000 press cuttings, including this example of a press book page from 1953 (right).

Caroline brought in one of the few dresses still in existence from this period for us to handle. Because it is in her own collection, she was able show us a photo of her sister modelling it so we could see how it looked on a real woman. It was constructed with a boned, corseted bodice and had been shortened and you could see the original scalloped hem which was now hidden – illustrating how women kept their couture clothes going by having them altered as fashions changed -- something flagged up by Amy in her talk on London's Court Dressmakers, earlier in the day.

By 1953 Mattli was at the height of his success creating gowns for debutantes and society women preparing for the coronation, but from these heady heights, in 1955, Mattli Couturiers Ltd ran into financial difficulties and went into voluntary liquidation. However, within a month, Mattli had re-opened as Mattli Ltd this time sharing his premises with his friend and fellow INCSOC member Charles Creed. The labels sewn into these garments read: 'Mattli, London'. At about this time he also began a ready-to-wear range selling at



**Famous,
forgotten,
found:**

**Re-discovering
the career
of London
couture
fashion
designer
Giuseppe (Jo)
Mattli, 1934-1980**

Speaker Caroline Ness
Report by Jill Hazell



Marshall and Snelgrove and other select stores using different labels. These were often designs from a previous year's collection, thus saving time on the design and cutting of the patterns.

In the early 1950s, Mattli had also begun to design affordable clothes for the Grattan Mail Order Catalogue and the Co-Operative Society. It seems he was happy to associate his high class couture house with wholesale clothing outlets, although some of the designs were two or three year old copies of his couture designs. By looking inside the dresses remaining in collections, Caroline pointed out that the difference in construction was marked. In couture clothes, everything was hand finished with his signature bound-buttonholes, beautifully made buttons and with darts and seams of different lengths as they had been fitted on their customers who were not symmetrical. The ready to wear garment were still beautifully made, but the seams were all symmetrical as no fittings had taken place. The wholesale clothes were all machine made to a much lower standard. This was reflected in the prices: in the mid 1950s, a tweed suit from the Co-Op retailed at around £10 (£280 in today's money), whereas a similar tweed suit from his ready-to-wear range cost around 30 guineas (£900 in today's money) and the same from his couture range around 72 guineas (£2000 in today's money)

Between 1954 and 1960, when Mattli was at the height of his fame he began writing a column called 'Mattli of Mayfair' in *Reynold's News*, a national Labour party paper owned by the Co-Operative Society. In 1956, the headline for one of his columns was 'Problems Ironed Out'. He described the properties of the new fabrics coming on the market such as nylon and polyester as being crease resistant and uncrushable and recommended them for people on a tight budget as they were easy to care for. Another article possibly showed the influence of his wife, Claude, as he told his readers to 'watch your figure, pay attention to detail and don't let your children get you down'!

It took a considerable outlay of a client's time, as well as money, to obtain a couture dress. Having first visited the Mattli Couture House to see the season's collection and possibly look at some sketches, she would have to choose which style she wanted, in what fabric and colour and then be measured for the first fitting of the



Images opposite page: Mattli and Claude on their wedding day, Claude wearing one of Mattli's designs at their house in 1949, Fashion Museum Bath's press cuttings

Above: Mitzi Gaynor in a Mattli dress and one of Caroline's examples brought along on the day.

Main picture: showing the construction and detail of the innards of a so-simple looking from the outside dress.

calico toile. She would be expected to come back for at least two more fittings before the garment was finally embellished and finished. If the dress was embroidered or beaded, the chosen embellishment would be stitched before cutting, but only finished after the final fitting, so it ran neatly over the seams and darts without a break.

Caroline showed us a good example of Mattli's couture work in a photo of a blue silk two-piece from the mid 1960s. This unlined dress had been mounted on silk organza so you could see the construction quite clearly, with its hand finished seams and details of buttons, bound-button holes and weighted hem. The jacket is fully lined as it would have been taken off in public.

In the 1960s, Mattli also produced *Vogue Couturier* Pattern designs, which were very popular with home sewers, although a high standard of skill was required to make them up well.

Mattli's ready-to-wear business was finally sold in 1980, just two years before his death.

It seems extraordinary that the life and work of such a prodigiously talented man could be forgotten for so long, but thanks to Caroline's research, he is once more able to take his place amongst the great twentieth century London couture fashion designers.





Visit to

Balenciaga:

Shaping Fashion at the V&A

Report by Ann Brown (Granny Ann)

Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion exhibition ran from the end of May last year until the middle of February 2018 at the V&A. I treated myself to a visit to this exhibition at the end of the May half term having done my granny bit.



Balenciaga Shaping Fashion Exhibition installation
Opening display, set up, checking and above, the toile and X-ray of the dress on display.
Images this page (c) Victoria and Albert Museum, London

On entering the exhibition you were introduced to *Cristobal Balenciaga* who was born in 1895 in Getaria, a fishing village in the Basque region of northern Spain. He got interested in fashion through his mother who was a seamstress. Aged twelve, he began an apprenticeship at a tailor's in the neighbouring fashionable resort of San Sebastian. There, ten years later, he opened his first fashion house in 1917. He was very much influenced by French designers such as Madeleine Vionnet and Coco Chanel, who became close friends. In 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, Balenciaga established a couture house on Avenue George V in Paris where he remained for the rest of his fifty year career. *Twice a year the new collections were shown in the Grand Salon. Balenciaga courted controversy in 1956, when he barred the press from his initial showings. Concerned with protecting his designs from illegal copies, he made journalists wait a month before they could view and publish them. His disciple Hubert de Givenchy joined him, and for ten years, the two were such beacons of the fashion world that foreign journalists made additional trips to Paris just to cover the Balenciaga and Givenchy shows.*

All the garments on the ground floor of the exhibition were designed by Balenciaga and it is evident how his designs gradually changed from Dior's corseted New Look of 1947 to experimenting with new forms by removing the waist which led to his famous shapes of the cocoon coat, the balloon skirt, the asymmetric hemline, the baby doll and most notable of all the 'sack dress' of the 1960s. A highlight of this part of the exhibition was life size X-rays of three garments allowing the viewer to see the detailed construction of boning and weights to make the exquisite finished shape of the dresses. In each case there was a linen toile along with the original object. The V&A curators had worked since September 2016 with Nick Veasey an international X-ray photographer in a specially constructed unit to film these delicate garments using balloons to pad

out each piece of clothing in lieu of a mannequin. Along with these exhibits there was an evening dress displayed inside out – “shows the attention to detail in constructing a couture gown. The net bodice, structured with steel boning was fitted to the exact measurements of the client. Fabric edges are bound with silk tulle and hard fastenings covered in velvet for comfort. Wide seam allowances in the skirt allow for later alterations if the client’s figure changed. The handwritten label at the hem reads “SNA (Senora) GUINNESS”, identifying the client.”



From left to right, above:

The evening dress on loan from the Fashion Museum, Bath collection

A dress and coat as worn by Ava Gardner

The two in one garment

Images this page by Ann Brown

One dress I was looking for was the black taffeta evening dress on loan from the Fashion Museum in Bath which was reported in *Harper's Bazaar* in 1951 to promote the balloon hem – “the hem that’s draped up and under to form a stiff puff of billows”. Such balloon hems became a signature Balenciaga feature. The dress was accompanied with the photograph of a model wearing the dress for the original article. As you pass through the exhibition you see the gradual changing shapes that was evolved by Balenciaga, from the baby doll dress to the bellowing smooth lines of his later work not to mention twenty hats amongst the displays. You

could not walk pass garments he designed for the rich and famous without admiring a black evening coat over white satin trousers as worn by Pauline de Rothschild (1955) beside a black evening gown and ecru net evening coat with embroidered scalloped edge once worn by Ava Gardner in mid 1960s.

Visitors were encouraged to get involved and make their own one-seam coat from A4 sheets of paper and with a bit of cutting and folding you made an imitation Balenciaga coat! There was also the inevitable chance to dress up and take a selfie. This was a replica Balenciaga two-in-one garment which could be worn as a cape as in a 1956 photo from the Balenciaga Archives or as a voluminous skirt tied at the waist as displayed on a mannequin.

The exhibition continued upstairs where there was a display of objects by designers influenced by Balenciaga mainly Hubert de Givenchy who was mentored by Balenciaga and had been helped to establish his own fashion house across the road from his own in Paris. One Givenchy example shown was a black net, silk taffeta, braid and beads evening dress worn by Gloria Guinness in 1961. There was a simple silk organza evening gown designed by Phoebe Philo for Celine worn by Tilda Swinton for the 2012 BAFTA award ceremony which promotes a pared-back, sophisticated chic. Her “less is more” echoes Balenciaga’s feminine ideal. There were examples of Andre Courreges space age minimalism which influenced the 60’s mini dress. Courreges was a cutter for Balenciaga from 1950 – 1961 so he learnt from the master. More of the Balenciaga legacy included handbags from the present accessory range by Nicolas Ghesquiere. The company is now in corporate ownership to protect the Balenciaga name. Balenciaga died in 1972.

The exhibition was accompanied by a beautifully illustrated and informative book “*Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion*” by Lesley Ellis Miller which covers all aspects of Christobal Balenciaga’s life and work from his birth through details of his legacy today to details of everything that was on display at the exhibition. So if you missed it, it is well worth purchasing.

Quotes in italics from: display boards at the exhibition; Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion by Lesley Ellis Miller; V&A magazine issue no. 42, X-ray vision by Catherine Troiano, assistant curator, photographs.

Granny's
Days out

Louise Dahl-Wolfe: A Style of Her Own

20 October 2017 – 21 January 2018

The First & Last Word in Fashion

Dior, 70th Anniversary

Wallace Sewell, 25 Years of British Textile Design

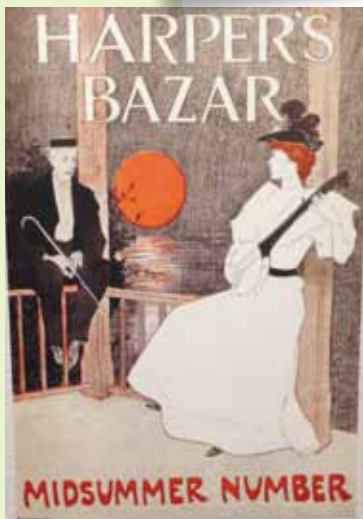
Report by Jean Scott

A visit to the Fashion & Textile Museum in November 2017 was primarily to see the display of front covers for Harper's Bazaar magazine but what I found was four exhibitions.

I had developed an interest in early fashion magazines through working in the magazine store of Bath Fashion Museum, not just in the fashion history they record but in the art work and how many well known artists worked for Harper's Bazaar. 'The First and Last Word in Fashion' exhibition celebrated the 150th Anniversary of the magazine which was launched in 1867. Justine Piccardi, current editor-in-chief, described the



magazine as "celebrating visionary women" and "providing a platform for bold and brilliant editors and art directors chronicling the careers of inspirational talents in the worlds of fashion, literature and performing arts". This was the link with the major exhibition on the photography of Louise Dahl-



Photos unless otherwise stated are by Jean Scott. In order of reference in text

This page:

Louise Dahl-Wolfe's Harper's Bazaar Cover June 1953. Jean Patchett at the Alhambra, Spain. Fashion shorts and short square jacket by Clare Potter.

September 1935. (taken from internet) March 1896

This issue was devoted to the subject of bicycling for women, as a means of promoting female independence

Cover illustration by H. McVickar

July 1894 Midsummer Number

Cover illustration by Edward Penfield

Wall display of Harper's Bazaar earliest front covers

1935 Salvador Dali's first fashion illustration for Bazaar: 'Imaginative suggestions for this summer in Florida'

Terence Pepper Collection

1930s front cover illustration by A.M.Cassandre

April 1965

Cover photograph by Richard Avedon with Ruth Ansell's modification in the hot-pink paper cut-out helmet to conceal a bad hat. (taken from internet)

April 1940 A Lelong bridal cover look by A.M. Cassandre

Harper's Bazaar Collection (taken from internet)

Opposite page:

Dress 1954 Cotton. Inside label reads: Christian Dior, Paris Printemps – Fr.16 1954, Made in France

Fashion & Textile Museum Collection

Wallace Sewell scarves

Wallace Sewell rug and upholstery

Jacket, centre: Wallace Sewell new garment design

Wallace Sewell designs for London Underground



modern, while her portraiture of famous people including Hollywood stars captures that same individual style. If you want to know more about her work just google her name as this report cannot do justice to her work.

To return to Harper's Bazaar, I discovered that the first issues were published under Mary Booth, a writer and campaigner for women's suffrage and she set the benchmark for celebrating women. A front cover from 1896 shows an independent, early feminist bicycling her way to freedom in full Victorian regalia, while one from 1894 shows midsummer serenading by a woman!

The renowned Carmel Snow, editor from 1933-54, fostered the career of Diana Vreeland as fashion editor and promoted fashion photography. Later Ruth Ansell and Bea Feitler became the first female artistic directors, aged 24 and 25, with Ansell responsible for the iconic 1965 front cover of Jean Shrimpton in what appeared to be a hot-pink space helmet, very much of the moment as this was the year of the space walk and pop culture was in the ascendancy. Although Valentina Tereshkova was the first woman in space in 1963 it was 1984 before Svetlana Savitskaya became the first woman to walk in space. The magazine embraced artistic movements such as surrealism with Salvador Dali's first fashion cover in 1935 and A.M.Cassandre, a French painter and commercial poster artist, borrowed artistic styles from Picasso and Ernst in his innovative graphic designs. Cassandre worked for many fashion houses and designed the well-known Yves Saint Laurent logo as well as scarves for Hermès.



Moving on, a very small exhibition celebrated another anniversary, this time the 70th Anniversary of the House of Dior, with a small selection of dresses from the Fashion & Textiles Museum's own collection. Dior set up his own couture house with textile magnet, Marcel Boussac in 1947 and his first show saw the unveiling of the 'New Look'. He became the star of French couture with his sales accounting for 50 per cent of all couture sales in Paris. The dresses on display were all from high-end department store collections, mainly from the French Department store Printemps. Dior died in 1957, aged 52, but his couture business continues and he was succeeded by some of the most influential designers in the industry.

Finally in a side exhibition room I was met by a wall of colour. Here was the work of Harriet Wallace-Jones and Emma Sewell, weavers trained at the Royal College of Art who set up their design studio, Wallace Sewell in 1990. They started with scarves and cushions, were spotted by a buyer from Barney's New York in 1992 and now their work is stocked in over 200 outlets. However, what most people will recognise if they have travelled on the London Underground will be the Wallace Sewell pattern for the moquette fabric used for the seating upholstery. It was inspired by the London skyline and can be found on the Jubilee, Northern and Central lines. They have now designed the moquette for the new Crossrail network. The company is an important ambassador for British manufacturing and textile industry.



In Memoriam Santina Margaret Levey 1938 - August 2017



Santina Levey giving a talk to WECS in 2009

From The Antiques Trade Gazette (shortened)

"There is nothing wrong in saying I don't know. You can just give possibilities 1,2,3..."

I shall never forget this amazing

quote given by Santina Levey FSA, BA Hons D Litt, a world renowned specialist in embroidery, lace and costume, at an international lace symposium which was held in May 1991 in Honiton, Devon.

Santina began her career in Northampton where she learned to make lace. She then moved to oversee two museums in Norwich. The next 20 years she spent in the textile department of the V&A, culminating in the top job as the final curatorial keeper of the V&A's textile department (1981-88).

In the 1990s Santina started to catalogue the Blackburne Lace Collection. She was instrumental in seeing it installed at the Bowes Museum, Bernard Castle, Co. Durham. Her final assignment was an extensive study of the textiles at Harwick Hall.

Apart from numerous publications, we are indebted to Santina for the V&A art book, *Lace: A History* (which contains 500 photographs and weighs an impressive three kg). It is considered to be the bible for all lace enthusiasts.

Santina will always be remembered for her kindness, her generosity in sharing her time and knowledge, but most of all for her humility.



In Memoriam Richard Davin 4 April 1936 - 30 December 2017

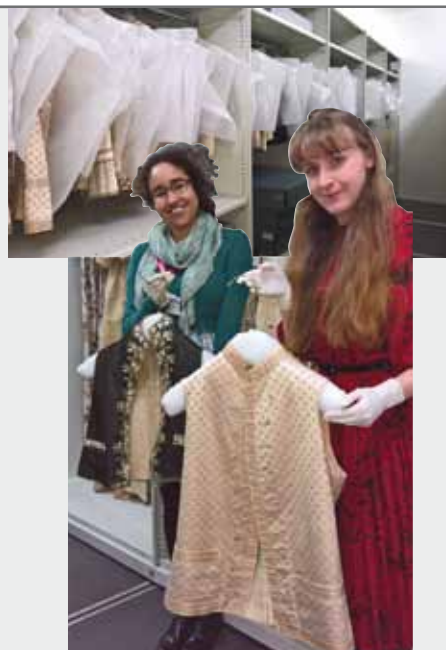
Born in 1936 in Bath, Richard's full name was Richard Davin Barber. He attended the West of England College of Art, where he studied stage design, and Clifton Park. At some stage he became Richard Davin the actor, dropping the surname as there was already a Richard Barber registered with Equity, the actors' trade union. Very little is known about his acting career as he rarely spoke about it in his later life.

By the 1980s he became known as a collector of dress and an authority on menswear, especially men's waistcoats, which were his passion. Based in Devon, he was closely associated with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, where he contributed to the temporary exhibitions programme at the former Museum of Costume and Lace at Rougemont House (part of RAMM).

In the files at RAMM there are letters written by the curatorial team to thank Richard for his help in organising dress-related exhibitions in the little gallery at Rougemont House. Some members might remember 18th Century Waistcoats (March-May 1988), and First Floor Millinery, an exhibition of 50 hats from RAMM's collections selected from a collection of over 350 (1990). The waistcoats exhibition was shown on the occasion of the Costume Society's 1988 symposium in Exeter on men's dress.

Richard selected the exhibits for both displays, which included locating and lending pieces from his own collection, as well as writing the excellent text for both catalogues which is still used as reference today. His work on the collections at RAMM remain his legacy for which the staff there today are very thankful.

Richard served on the committee of the Costume Society for much of the 1980s, and was Vice-chairman between 1993 and 2000. He is well-remembered there for his witty and



The waistcoat collection at RAMM catalogued by Richard Davin in the 1980s RAMM Volunteers Camilla King and Vicky Haddock have recently completed a project to update the database of 18th and 19th century waistcoats.. Photos courtesy Shelley Tobin

competent chairing of conference sessions, his entertaining and informative lectures, and generous sharing of extensive knowledge of 18th century dress.

WECS knew him first through his series of very lively talks and those who missed the talks may well remember the industrial quantities of Devon clotted cream he'd bring up for the mince pies at Christmas meetings.

When we still had the meetings at Church House in Bath somebody had the bright idea of a Christmas entertainment - there was a very good stage at the Church House. Amongst others, three of the committee sang *Three little maids from school* (wince), Iris Shopland dressed as an angel sang 'Nobody loves a fairy when she's Forty' (unforgettable - you had to be there) and Richard composed a ditty which with a few well chosen props stayed this side of clean and hit just the right note with the audience.

In the last few years Richard suffered from poor health and with travel increasingly difficult, stopped coming to meetings of WECS.

Newer members have missed a lovely gentleman with a wicked sense of humour.

Exhibition:

Costume in Barcelona

Report by Liz Booty

...detes
...illas
Basque
...panya, 1600-1710
...samaneria
Terciopelo de seda, bordado en oro, pasamaneria
Silk velvet, gold embroidery, passementerie
Donatig, Manuel Rocamora, 1969
MTIB 100042



Arriving in Barcelona on a cold, rainy winters' day in January we decided to head for the Design Museum, Museu del Disseny de Barcelona, Plaça de les Glòries Catalanes, 37, 08018 Barcelona, Spain.

What a treat was in store for us. It is the amalgamation of different design collections formerly found in different places - fashion, furniture, textiles and product design now brought together in the very striking modern, purpose built cultural centre (metro station right by it) opening its doors in 2014.

The top floor is devoted to their impressive fashion collection with eleven spacious showcases. The present exhibition is titled : *'Dressing the Body Silhouettes and Fashion(1550-2015)* and is set out chronologically ending with the work of some contemporary Spanish designers. Within each showcase there is placed a modern example showing the influence of the particular period - this is most effective and makes you re-examine the exhibits. There were five actions shown in the garments, **increasing**, like in big hooped gowns, **reducing** with corsets etc, **elongating** for example with trains, **profiling** and **revealing** when wearing very little.

It was interesting to see how terms were used to describe different fashion movements - e.g. Napoleonic instead of Directoire, Romanticism instead of Victorian etc! And to me it was interesting to see the subtle differences - somehow in the earlier showcases it seems that particularly luxurious fabrics were used in some of the garments, almost making them appear too boldly trimmed.

One of the galleries is devoted to the development of interior structures - crinolines, bustles, corsets and bras, the former being suspended from the ceiling and beautifully lit making them look like works of art. This is an area that particularly interest me and I have rarely seen such a wide variety.

I was also most thrilled to see their collection of sumptuous Balenciaga gowns. The display style alters with the use of videos in the background as one moved towards contemporary fashion.

It is a beautifully presented and carefully curated exhibition.

On the lower floors, all chronologically shown ranging from further gems with impressive textile - some dating from C13th (Barcelona had had a vibrant textile industry in the past). These were shown alongside furniture - some very fanciful! Then it was the product design floor with items exhibited from old to current - even including hairdryers, toasters, a car and motor bike.

What a lovely way to spend the afternoon before going to the opera and the beautiful Liceu Opera house. The weather was lovely and sunny thereafter!

“If you alter the way the body comes across in the space around it, then the body alters everything in the space that affects it”

(Hussein Chalayan, 2002).



Far left: Green velvet Catalonia Dress, silk, silver and gold bullion embroidery, 1718, Design Museum, Barcelona.

Above: Bell shaped structure made of rings to support the Dress fabric and bind the waist increases the volume of the garment.

Left: Big red bow Dress from the Artificial Silhouette section.

Dior - Designer of Dreams - Paris

Report by Angela Bailey

This was a much- anticipated event. It was a huge and overwhelming show, so this report can only offer a flavour of the experience. Seventy years after the master's first showing of the 'Bar' suit, in February 1947, this celebration of the Dior brand included over 300 outfits plus shoes, accessories, jewellery, toiles and items from the gallery Dior ran in Paris as a young man.

After three attempts to get in, we joined a queue of 30 people at 8 am the following day. We were the 80th and 81st people to gain entry at midday. I left my exhausted husband for a well-earned sit-down after buying our tickets and ventured up, past the glass-cased bar suit at the bottom of a marble staircase, to a darkened room, past the woman who had fainted in the crowd, to see two magnificent embroidered ball gowns, one owned by Princess Margaret (1).

Having opened his house with the aid of textile manufacturer Marcel Boussac, Dior extended his reach early, to hats, shoes and the licensing of stockings, scarves and ties. The scent was launched later in 1947: those who could not afford the fabrics to make

Your roving reporter's latest trip in January 2018 was to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Lessons learnt:

- 1: book a long while in advance;
- 2: learn how to queue-jump in France; and
- 3: avoid 'Blockbuster' type exhibits in future.

copies of his dresses could still feel part of the movement that was the New Look. By 1953 he had opened shops in New York, London and Caracas, as well as a boutique in Paris. Dior's friendship with Man Ray meant that he saw photography as art (Dior had been an illustrator in the 30s) as well as a way to promote his work. Each collection had a theme: *Corolle, ZigZag, Envol*.

But this exhibition was not really about Dior the couturier. It was about the brand. There were themes: travel, gardens, grand balls, each showing the designer's and successors' 'take', though time and time again I was drawn to the original (2).

There are six successors to Dior, who died suddenly in 1957. A few garments were shown separately for each one. Saint-Laurent, the boy wonder assistant who launched the 'trapeze' look in 1958 (3), but on

his return from National Service and finding himself replaced, set up his own house with the compensation paid by his former employer. Marc Bohan, who had been working for Dior in London, took over in 1960.

He seems to have had the reputation of being a safe pair of hands for the house, but his elegant, fluid lines appeared over a total of 57 collections (4). He was succeeded in 1989 by Gianfranco Ferré whose training as an architect shows with his reinterpretation of the New Look (5).

For me, John Galliano, who was with the house from 1997 to 2011, best evoked the founder's sense of history, art, and travel. The crowd really lingered in front of the items on show. The day and evening dresses (6 and 7) really stretched the founder's original concepts, and the suits showed that he could also design for the every-day (8).

After Galliano's departure Raf Simons, another architect of clothing, pared back 'the Look' and concentrated on the purity of line and boldness of colour, and ease of wear. I wanted the beautifully made red coat ! (9).

Dior's current incumbent, Maria Grazia Chiuri, made the headlines



4, 5, 6



1, 2, 3



7, 8, 9



For more information on Dior:

musee-dior-granville.com/fr/infos-pratiques

Book Reviews

Clothing the Past: Surviving Garments from Early Medieval to Early Modern Western Europe

by Elizabeth Coatsworth and Gale Owen-Crocker.

February 2018. Brill,

ISBN: 978-90-04-35216-2, £198.00

Review by Pat Poppy



This is a seriously expensive book, which I have not bought for that very reason. However I can give an outline of what it includes and to an extent what it excludes. For even more information go to the Brill website at <https://brill.com/abstract/title/27148>

The first thing to mention is that although it says "to Early Modern" in the title, the scope of the book is actually to the end of the fifteenth century though, as the authors say, they have extended slightly into the sixteenth century by looking at the gibbonnes (doublets) of Cosimo and Don Garcia de Medici, but none other of the Medici grave garments, nor any other 16th century items are included, except Archbishop William Warham's glove.

The garments covered are grouped into chapters by type: Headwear, Outer garments, Priestly garments, Body garments of wool and linen, Rich body garments, Upper body (coat like) garments, Leg coverings, Minor vestments, Footwear, and Accessories.

For each garment you are given the date, where it is, a general description, the materials it is made from, construction details, dimensions, a list of further reading, and an image.

Obviously many of these garments survived because they were associated with a particular person, some of the examples included are Eleanor of Castile's pellote (sideless surcoat), and the pourpoint of Charles of Blois. Others garments are from archaeological sites, particularly the Greenland garments, but also the Orkney hood and the Bocksten tunic. Some of the Lengberg Castle finds are also included.

The book brings together one hundred surviving, mainly complete, medieval garments.

Fashionable white-embroidered accessories c1840 to 1900

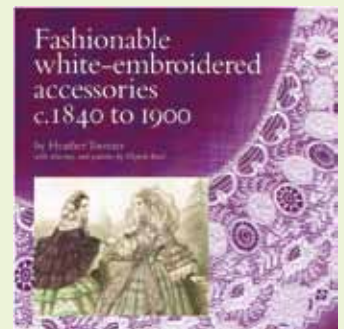
by Heather Toomer with drawings and patterns by Elspeth Reed

Published by Heather Toomer £19.95

ISBN 978-0-9542730-4-0

htac2000@gmail.com for more information or to order

Review by: Fiona Starkey



This is the latest book in a series and having read (and studied) previous publications, I was more than happy to be given this one to review. She's done it again. Clearly written and chronologically laid out, the 190-odd pages take you through 60 years of whitework accessories. Collars, cuffs, chemisettes and new fangled undersleeves to fill the openings of wide bodice sleeves were the main opportunities to show off your wealth, taste and/or stitching expertise. Actual examples are plentiful and often accompanied by contemporary fashion plates to put the item in context. The photographs are unfussy, clear and detailed, usually with close ups, and just as helpfully, frequently show the reverse.

Being able to see the back of a piece is really useful to identify stitching techniques and if you're going to reproduce the designs yourself are an invaluable guide to the workings out. Elspeth Reed has in many cases provided drawings and patterns which further explain the details and offer practical guidance.

I was wishing at one point that I'd had this book when, way back in 2004, we did the original Janet Arnold Day 'making' of the 1852 dress. It would have saved an awful lot of research!



10, 11



on her arrival in 2015 with 'statement' t-shirts, but these were not in evidence here. Instead she is presented as the woman designing for women, and as a result is producing clothes with softness, movement, and grace (10). Early days.

The final room of the show in the magnificent white ball room was worth the wait. Two displays of triple decker stands, each with red - carpet ball gowns, were overwhelming.

My favourite ? The Gruau dress from 1949, a triumph of design, colour and glamour (11).

But ... My next report will be from a smaller show, with better labelling of items, more film showing the movement of the garments, and no queues.



WECS has been given a wonderful collection of well over 100 fashion books, mostly C20th, but by no means all, which are currently being catalogued for sale to raise funds for the Society.

Calling all Bibliophiles!

They will be making a staggered appearance at the sales table over the next few meetings.

In the meantime, if there's something you've had an eye on for a while, get in touch with Sarah Bartlett

sarah@tiramisu.co.uk

for a listing and make an offer!

Cutoff date for offers to be announced at the next meeting.



Corsets Summer School

with Jill Salen

Held in the costume department of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff, an intensive four day course from Tuesday 17th July to Friday 20th July. Participants will learn how to construct a corset using traditional techniques and fabrics - £465.

We usually construct C19th century corsets; this can be decided by discussion prior to the course. Course leader Jill Salen is an expert in the art of corsetry and period costume making and the Author of *Corsets: Historical Patterns and Techniques*.

The class is only open to a maximum of six students, there is usually a stimulating mix of students from diverse backgrounds.

If you would like further information, please e-mail jillsalen28@hotmail.com.



Free to a good home

A storage box full of fashion articles taken from papers and magazines from 1960-1980.

A great resource for anyone interested in the period.



Contact Liz Booty
lizbooty@icloud.com
01225 722208
0777 599 7376.

WECS Christmas Quiz Answers

- C** Chantilly Type of lace, usually black with scattered dots on a fine background
- H** Hobble Skirt style introduced by Paul Poiret in the build up to WWI
- R** Reefer Single or double breasted top coat worn by sailors during C19th
- I** Ikat Type of woven fabric made in Java and Sumatra, Indonesia.
- S** Schiaparelli Italian designer whose career was launched in the 1920s when she designed a black sweater knitted with a white bow creating a trompe l'oeil effect
- T** Terylene Man made fabric developed in 1941 and produced by ICI
- M** Mantua, mantle (also burnous, but then the answers wouldn't have spelled Christmas) Hooded cloak with silk tassels worn by women as an outer garment during the mid to late C19.
- A** Gilbert Adrian Designer who created garments for, amongst others, Joan Crawford, Garbo and Hedy Lamarr - known by his surname
- S** David Shilling Born in 1953, this designer made his first hat for his mother to wear at Ascot when he was only 12.

Copy for the next newsletter to Vibeke Ormerod by 17 October please

With this Spring issue of the magazine you should have:

- Booking forms for Killerton House and Bristol University visits

tulsi
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Short extension to Kipling camp at Kanha Wildlife Reserve
November 2018

Textile and craft tour of the Rann of Kutch combined with visits to important textile museums in Ahmedabad, Gujarat
January 2019

Craft and textile journey through Rajasthan ending with the craft mela in New Delhi.
February 2019

Individual unaccompanied tours to India and Bhutan can be arranged at any time

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