**"Shooting Style: Fashion on Screen" - the Costume Society's Study Day on 19th October 2013, at London College of Fashion**.

After we were welcomed to London College of Fashion, Pamela Church Gibson began a packed day with a talk appropriately entitled “Setting the Scene.” Discussing the selling power of movies, Church Gibson took us from from the birth of Hollywood’s Movie Merchandising Bureau in the 1920s, through to Prada’s costumes for Baz Luhrmann's 2013 adaptation of The Great Gatsby. She also discussed the dichotomy between fashion designers and costume designers in film, reminding us that "luxury brands have taken centre stage in cinema in a way that is unprecedented."  
  
Next, Matteo Augello spoke to us about one of Hollywood’s expert practitioners of glamour, Gloria Swanson, who was said to have collaborated with her favourite costume designer for both her on- and off-screen clothing. Augello’s talk was full of interesting snippets, like Swanson declaring herself to be the inventor of the girdle after wearing a rubberised undergarment to a Chanel costume fitting. Her clothing line, Forever Young, apparently included extra fabric in the seams so that women could let the garments out if they gained weight.  
  
Taking us up to lunch was Christopher Frayling, speaking about “How the West was worn: the style of Spaghetti Westerns.” These were films about films, made at a time when it was unusual to reference cinema and not the real world. The Italian Western centred on music and image, machismo, a new kind of hero, and a love/hate relationship with the American Western. Frayling also revealed that Clint Eastwood's iconic poncho from Sergio Leone’s Dollars Trilogy didn’t feature in the V&A’s Hollywood Costume exhibition because Mrs Eastwood wears it to charity events!  
  
The afternoon session began with Stella Bruzzi’s talk on "Costumes that changed fashion: Hollywood's influence on how we look." The 1934 movie It Happened One Night influenced men's underwear sales because Clark Gable wasn't wearing a vest under his shirt. Gable had trouble removing the vest whilst continuing the scene's banter, so the garment was ditched. Bruzzi also discussed the influence of stars like Joan Crawford and James Dean, the clothing of Ralph Lauren, and the movies of Quentin Tarantino. Next, Catherine Hulme analysed the referencing of Fragonard’s painting The Swing in 1976 British musical The Slipper and the Rose. Hulme’s talk, "Cinderella the Courtesan: transposing costume from artworks into film", told us how Fragonard’s symbolism was missed by costume designer Julie Harris who had no idea of the sexual nature of the painting she replicated.  
  
Cosprop costume designer Susan Hardy followed with a talk entitled "Couture for the Cinema: Creating clothes rather than costumes for film and TV." We discovered that Cosprop look for authenticity in the film clothing they produce. They research every aspect – including underwear and fabrics – and the result of their high standard of making is that even their old costumes can be filmed in HD due to the level of detail. Hardy defines film "clothes" as being correct for the era they represent whereas "costume" can deviate from this. Finally, Nathaniel Dafydd Beard talked to us about "The Allure of Fashion Film: The hottest new accessory?" Discussing the relationship between fashion and film, Beard pointed out that directors often had limited knowledge of fashion and so tended to use pastiche rather than accuracy. These days, the designer has become the director.  
  
The 2013 study day was a tremendous success with a very interesting topic and a truly fascinating selection of speakers.

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