

The Thread



The Costume Society's
Members' Magazine
June 2022
Issue 2



*A message from Philip Warren,
Chair of the Costume Society*

Hello everybody and welcome to the latest edition of 'The Thread' The Society's members' magazine.

We've had great feedback for the first edition with its increased focus on what our members are doing to further our shared interest in and understanding of the history of clothing.

We know that people join and remain members of the Society for lots of different reasons and although our shared passion for the history of clothing is the glue that binds us all together we also know that you approach that history from many different starting points and have particular focuses for your interest and The Thread will continue to reflect and celebrate that diversity.

In the first edition I wrote of our plans for 2022 which would focus on Menswear. Unfortunately, our plans to host a members' study weekend in Leeds in the spring were affected by the uncertainties of the pandemic and we weren't able to bring the plans to fruition – but we are beginning our planning for next year...so watch out for more news on social media, the [website](#) and in your monthly email updates from Beth, our membership Secretary. We will also publish a programme for the year which we will make sure reaches those of you who don't have an email address or don't follow us on our various digital platforms.

We have managed to arrange two



visits so far this year: Thanks to one of our Elected Officers Danielle Sprecher, members were able to see some of the amazing garments in the [University of Westminster Menswear Archive](#) and at the end of May it was a personal pleasure for me to welcome some of you to the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland to view the archive from the [Wolsey company](#). The events programme will continue with visits to [Manchester](#) on Friday 18th November and in the autumn a visit to the V&A's Masculinities exhibition.

We are all very excited to be able to announce the dates for the Society's online Conference '[Clothes Maketh the Man](#)'. Led by [Shaun Cole](#) former Society Chair (and author of 'The Story of Men's Underwear', 'Don We Now Our Gay Apparel: Gay Men's Dress in the Twentieth Century' and co-author of 'Dandy Style 250 Years

of British Men's Fashion') 'Clothes Maketh the Man' investigates how masculinities are explored through dress. The programme will be on successive Saturday afternoons and Wednesday evenings between 22nd October and 2nd November.

We continue to make a real difference in the various aspects of dress history which we support through our grants and awards. These are only possible because of the generous gifts that members have made to our charity over the last twenty years – earlier this year we heard the sad news that Ann Thomas who was a former Society Secretary and a hard-working member of the programme subcommittee for many years had passed away. She made the Society an incredibly generous bequest in her will and we are currently considering how best to use her legacy to further our charitable purposes.

I'd like to use this chance to thank those members of the executive committee who are leaving us this year; Danielle Sprecher and Hannah Wroe have come to the end of their terms of office as Elected Officers; Susan North stood down from her role as Secretary and Lucy Johnston has had to step back from her role as Vice Chair (Grants and Awards). I'm grateful for all of their hard work over the years.

I'm sure that you would want to join me in thanking all the Society's remaining officers for their continued hard work over the last year.

Finally, and most importantly...

thank you all for your continued membership of the Society and your support for our work.

Best wishes,

Philip Warren

The Chair, Costume Society
The Costume Society is a registered charity: number 262401



Back cover: A fine line in fashion, 8. Christian Lacroix, 2009 Ink, iridescent crayon & soft pastel on paper, signed, 61 x 48 cms, by GPP. See page 14 for more.

Front cover credit: Downton Abbey, Focus Features



Page 16, Collector's Corner



Page 28, Image courtesy of Focus Features

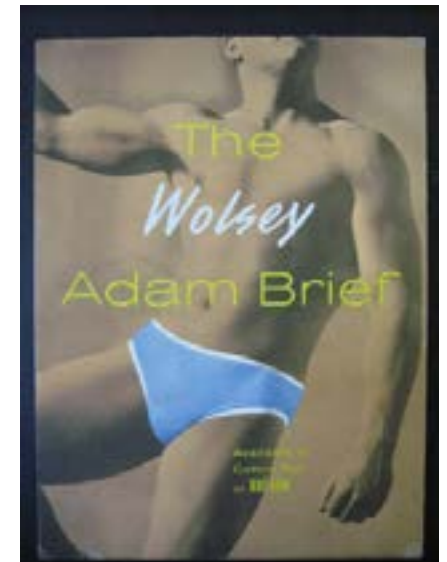
Contents

- 2 *A message from our Chair*
- 3 *The world of the Costume Society*
- 6 *Westminster Menswear Archive Tour Review*
- 9 *MWEG awardee report*
- 11 *What's on your shelf?*
- 12 *Chertsey Museum 18th and 19th century menswear highlights*
- 14 *A fine line in fashion: the art of Gladys Perint Palmer*
- 16 *Collector's corner*
- 18 *Costume*
- 19 *A day in the life*
- 22 *Sir: the forgotten menswear trend magazine*
- 26 *News from our members*
- 28 *Reporting from Downton's wardrobes*
- 30 *What's on*

The world of the Costume Society



Campaign Store Showcard for Wolsey using Courtauld's 'Courtelle' yarn c 1970



Advertising Store Showcard for the Wolsey 'Adam' Brief c 1960

Since our last edition of The Thread in December 2021, we have finally returned to in person events! In March, we enjoyed a fantastic trip to the [Westminster Menswear Archive in London](#) - you can read the full review by our Ambassadors's Officer and Social Media Editor, Annika Gralke in this issue.

In May we visited the [Wolsey Archive of Menswear in Leicestershire](#). Established in the 1740s, Wolsey is one of the oldest existing textile companies in the world. Now an internationally renowned brand, Wolsey sells women's, men's and children's fine gauge knitwear, underwear, and hosiery. In the Archive, we explored decades of images of men's under and outer

garments that form a unique reference collection of stunning original artwork and printed material. We were guided by Archivist Adam Goodwin and Collections and Learning Manager Philip Warren, who is also our much beloved Chair! We are all now busy preparing our blockbuster annual study day event in London on 9 July - so make sure you book your tickets now if you haven't already, as well as our conference later in the year.

If you missed the first conference keynote by Dr Hormazd Narielwalla last year, we have now published this talk onto our [YouTube channel](#), as well as a fascinating range of menswear themed blog posts.

Westminster Menswear Archive Tour Review

By Annika Gralke



The Costume Society was delighted to be able to kick off their first in-person event of the year 2022, which revolves all around the fascinating topic of Menswear. On Friday March 18th, a lovely and inquisitive group of members and non-members were invited to look behind the scenes of the [Menswear Archive of the University of Westminster](#). Located in their campus in Harrow, the Archive is home to over 2,000 examples of primarily western and British men's dress from the last 200 years. During the tour, Archive Curator and Costume Society Trustee [Dr Danielle Sprecher](#) presented some of the collections' highlights while exchanging intriguing facts and anecdotes about the history of menswear with us and

our guests.

The Westminster Menswear Archive was established in 2016 by fashion design teaching staff [Robert Leach](#) and [Professor Andrew Groves](#). Typically, menswear fashion takes recourse to archetypal uniform designs such as from the military – think of trench coats, navy pea coats, Army field jackets or bomber jackets. Oftentimes, however, these iconic foundational garments become so heavily reinterpreted that it is easy to forget the original point of reference. To facilitate access to these archetypal garments and enable a better understanding of their construction, manufacturing, proportion, fit, and other technical and material details, the Archive serves as a teaching collection to its students – both from the university and the fashion

industry. Moreover, the Archive aims to amplify the status of menswear within fashion generally because, as Dr Danielle Sprecher said, “when people think or talk about fashion, they usually don't include Menswear”. Thanks to the Archive, and other current occurrences such as the [V&A's "Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear"](#), or our very own Costume Society 2022 “[Clothes Maketh the Man](#)” conference, this changes slowly.

The tour then started with a presentation of some early Alexander McQueen garments such as a tyre-print shirt from his Spring/Summer 1997 collection. The original print was created using the spare tyre from print designer Mark Eley's Saab and originally used for some of McQueen's womenswear collections, but later re-used for some menswear pieces. Indeed, despite his foundational training at Savile Row, McQueen is nowadays mostly remembered for his spectacular womenswear designs. Yet, with over 80 acquired pieces, the Archive gives exclusive insight into his menswear designs up to the early 2000s. Other contemporary avant-garde menswear designers that the Archive includes and which the visitors could browse through, are John Paul Gaultier, Comme des Garçons, Craig Green, Stone Island, Carol Christian Poell, and so many more.

Another ambition of the Archive is to showcase both established and niche British fashion history. Among them is the label Male by Paul, a Carnaby Street boutique opened by the Jewish designers Nathan and Susie Spiegel in the 1960s. The blazer jacket shown was made of an orange, yellow and beige

wide striped fabric and immediately roused that Swinging London feeling. Talking of Swinging London, of course what must not be missing was a piece from the legendary Tommy Nutter. The dark blue, windowpane checked wool single-breasted jacket was tailored for London hair stylist Michael Rasser of salon Michaeljohn and acquired via eBay from his nephew. Most of the acquisition process runs indeed via auction houses and second-hand online markets such as eBay or Etsy. In the initial years, the collectors were funded by the Quintin Hogg trust, whose specific purpose is to support projects proposed by staff and students from the University of Westminster to advance students' education. One of the oldest pieces – a delicate 18th century beige-pink frock coat from the wardrobe of Thomas Crewe Dod (1754-1827) of Edge Hall, Cheshire – was bought off a historic house collection owned by a French dealer. The frock coat featured cutaway fronts made of beige pink wool facecloth and ten large faceted and cut steel metal buttons. It was mentioned as one of the favourites by several of our participants!

Among the main challenges of any Costume and Textile Collection is to showcase garments that come from different levels of society – often, it is only pieces that belonged to the elite that survive. To counteract this, the Westminster Menswear Archive have acquired a couple of late 19th century waistcoats, jackets and trousers which have likely been worn by men from lower social classes. One of the waistcoats that our visitors

were shown revealed a fading of colour on its back – implying that it might have been worn without the jacket, indicating manual labour. Furthermore, the Archive is in possession of a three-piece Demob suit, a suit of civilian clothing granted to soldiers upon their demobilization from the British armed services at the close of WWII.

Lastly, our participants were presented a couple of original military pieces. As said before, bomber jackets and other key military pieces represent an important part of what Dr Danielle Sprecher coined as the “fashion language” of menswear. Many of the uniforms’ features were closely tied to utilitarian purposes and changed alongside advancing technology. The first was a very rare forerunner of the MA-1 Flight Jacket, a US Air Force B-15D Mod flight jacket. The ‘mod’ designation refers to the fact that this jacket was formally modified by the United States Air Forces in the 1950s. The original B-15D jackets came with mouton fur collars, but the USAF determined that they were a flammable fire hazard, hence the fur collar was removed and replaced with ribbing. Although the Archive does not own an original MA1 yet, we were presented with a fashion version made publicly available by Alpha Industries. Some of its details, like the orange lining which was originally intended as an emergency aid signal, probably don’t have a real function to its wearers anymore but have become an iconic feature.

The tour ended with the opportunity for us to browse freely through the Archive’s treasure chamber. Thereby,

our guests reiterated how great it was to see and touch the garments so closely, and that the collection was aimed not for PR in the first place, but rather for designers and fashion students. Surely, our perception of the history, scope, and variety of Menswear had widened immensely. “People always say that women dress to impress men”, one of our guests remarked, “but men do the very same!”

Annika is our Ambassadors’ Officer and Social Media Editor



Image credits:

1. *Discussing a stripey Male by Paul jacket*
2. *Examining an c18th coat*
3. *Exploring the roller racking*

MWEG Awardee Report

We were delighted to hear from [MWEG](#) 2020 recipient Greer Parker, who wrote this [report](#) about her experiences working at North Hertfordshire Museum’s shoe collection exclusively for us.

Whilst undertaking my MA degree in [Fashion Curation](#) at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, I was awarded a Costume Society-funded placement with [North Hertfordshire Museum](#), Hitchin. Unfortunately, due to the Covid restrictions, it was a year before I was able to begin. When restrictions eased, from September 2021, I was able to commute from York (where I now work) and finally undertake my placement.

The North Hertfordshire Museum shoe collection is made up of men’s, women’s and children’s shoes from the 18th century to the present day. The aim of the placement project was to update and upload the historic shoe collection to the [online collection system](#), meaning objects that were barely seen in person are now easily accessible to a much wider audience. To do this, I spent six weeks condition checking objects, measuring, photographing and updating digital files. I completed the project by curating a temporary display cabinet inside North Hertfordshire Museum, to show my findings. Here visitors can see a selection of the more unusual and aesthetically pleasing items which form the collection. These range from the diamante

studded shoes of the 1920s, shoes made in miniature for infants, to 18th century dance slippers with ‘gauche’ (left) and ‘droite’ (right) written inside, to ensure they were worn on the correct feet. The oldest shoes in the display are small red shoes for an infant, from the 1790s. It is always intriguing to see something made so long ago, not to mention something made so precisely in a miniature size.



Red leather infants’ shoes, 1790-1800



Selection of shoes from the North Hertfordshire Museum collection, 1790–1930s, image by Greer Parker



Object label showing previous numbering system, with infants' shoes made of plaited purple and natural straw, 1830-70

My background is in historic dress research and production, so I have been able to bring my knowledge of historic dress to the project, whilst also getting the opportunity to work hands on with a historic shoe collection. I have really enjoyed my time with the museum, gaining incredible experience of working with curators and a digital archiving system, along with the modern practice of blended working, both on site and from home.

In the future, I would love to continue working with historic dress and social history collections, as clothing is such an emotive link with the past. Knowing

an object had a life before accession into a museum's collection creates a very tangible link with the past and a visual representation of our cultural heritage.

I would like to say thank you to the North Hertfordshire Museum and the Costume Society - this experience has been incredible. After studying during the lockdown, being able to undertake a project in person has been enjoyable and incredibly rewarding, allowing me to gain valuable hands-on experience of working with a museum collection.

What's on your shelf?

Four of our members share their latest costume reads.

Haleh Moravej: A Costume Society Trustee and Founder of MetMUnch
Costume in Detail: Women's Dress, 1730-1930 by Nancy Bradfield

I love the detailed line drawings and little explanations as I build my expertise. My copy was a surprise find in the Stockport Vintage Market. As a newbie to The Costume Society, I find the book informative and the notes on constructing each costume creative and helpful.

Alexandra Kim: Co-editor Costume and Administrator for Spadina Museum and Mackenzie House with the City of Toronto

Wendat Women's Arts by Annette W de Stecher

Working in a Canadian museum I've been looking more and more closely at the rich and vibrant textile and embroidery traditions of many Indigenous communities, which survived despite settler attempts at wiping out Indigenous cultural practices. This book shares the embroidery traditions of the Wendat First Nation of Wendake in Quebec and provides an insightful exploration of the rich history of embroidery in the community, including its vibrant practice today. I love the way the book brings together different types of sources, including visual material and surviving garments, and how it demonstrates the important role of women within Wendat communities and ceremony. It's a beautiful book and one which highlights the creativity and resiliency inherent in these wonderful textiles and clothing.

Helen Persson Swain: A Costume Society Trustee and a AHRC PhD student at University of Glasgow.

Fashion History: A Global View by Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun.

Although four years old, this book is relevant in today's decolonising discussions. Welters and Lillethun argue that research needs to move beyond the Eurocentric approach to fashion history. The authors clearly and concisely present arguments for fashion as a global phenomenon and that fashion cannot be defined by one fashion system: the modern Western one. They trace fashion impulses in the archaeological finds of the late Stone Age, among the Native Americans in New England, in Edo period Japan and Latvian folk dress. And for once, this fashion theoretical book is an easy read, even joyful at times.

Shaun Cole: Associate Professor of Fashion, Winchester School of Art
House of Nutter: The Rebel Tailor of Savile Row by Lance Richardson

I met Richardson when he was researching his biography of the Savile Row tailor and his photographer brother David to discuss sexuality and fashion. I recently read this fascinating insight into two brother's intersecting careers while writing a book chapter on the relationship between gay men and mods in 1960s London and doing research for the forthcoming Dandy Style exhibition at Manchester Art Gallery.

Chertsey Museum 18th and 19th century menswear highlights

By Grace Evans, Keeper of Costume, Olive Matthews collection, Chertsey museum, Surrey

When I discovered that the Costume Society was celebrating all things menswear during 2022 my thoughts turned to a pair of films that we made during 2020 which are to be found on our YouTube channel: [Chertsey Museum](#).

The [first film](#) focuses on a beautiful dove grey dress suit from the 1780s. This piece was a particular favourite of Miss Olive Matthews, founder of the [Olive Matthews Collection](#) of dress, which is now housed at [Chertsey Museum](#). It is in near pristine condition and features a matching coat, waistcoat and breeches. All three elements have been beautifully hand embroidered in coloured silks with flowers. Garlands of roses wind their way across pocket flaps, around collars and down jacket and waistcoat fronts. They have all been hand embroidered in tambour work, and the stitching is so even that only a highly accomplished professional embroiderer could have completed it. The suit epitomises many of the fashionable features of 1780s formal men's dress, particularly in its streamlined silhouette and high collar. The colours and style of decoration suggest that it may well have been worn by a bridegroom.

The [second film](#) looks at a man's tailcoat from the late 1830s. Produced as English tailors were really getting into their stride in terms of cut and technique, it is made from superfine wool facecloth and embellished with fine gilt brass buttons. As well as



Detail of embroidery from Man's suit, 1780s



Man's suit, 1780s

discussing the fashion context, the film explores the subtle techniques for enhancing fit and flattering the male form. We also zoom in on the small details associated with finish and comfort which really mark this piece out as a high-quality bespoke garment. Whether on horseback on or foot, a man about town could really cut a dash in this beautifully tailored coat.

The dove grey suit is currently on display in Chertsey Museum's Blooming Marvellous – Flowers in Fashion' exhibition which runs until the 3rd September 2022. You can also access [a virtual tour online](#).



Man's brown wool tailcoat, 1830s

All images © Olive Matthews Collection, Chertsey Museum, Photos by John Chase Photography.

We want to hear from you!

We are keen to highlight all your fantastic news and successes in upcoming issues. Do you have any Costume-related news to share with us?

- how have you been promoting the study of clothing & textiles in dress?
- have you held a costume-related event during the last few months?
- have you completed any costume-related research or qualifications?
- have you designed and/or made any costume-related artefacts?
- have you curated a costume-related exhibition?
- have you published a costume-related book recently?

Or maybe you fancy writing a costume-related blog post for the society's popular blog?

If so, please let us know by emailing our News Editor Babette newsletter@costumesociety.org.uk

Also, don't forget when you are sharing your costume-related news on social media to tag us so we know what you're up to and so we can share too! Digital copies of The Thread are available in the membership section of our website. If you would prefer not to receive a print edition, please do let our News Editor know.

A fine line in fashion: The Art of Gladys Perint Palmer

By Babette Radcliffe-Thomas

One of the highlights of London Fashion Week was an exhibition featuring over 30 original fashion illustrations by artist, journalist and fashion illustrator extraordinaire [Gladys Perint Palmer](#) - or [GPP](#) as she is known in the industry – although, out of respect, Karl Lagerfeld would only ever call her Madame Palmer.

In a career lasting more than half a century, GPP has depicted some of the most famous fashion runways and has perfected the art of capturing a moment in fashion history with a sweep of her pen. Her elegant, vibrant illustrations transport viewers to the front rows of some of the most iconic fashion shows ever staged. In the words of Valentino, ... “what makes a difference between Gladys’ work and most of the others is that she does not draw a still subject, but her drawings have life because they capture a moment, a situation...” So it was a rare treat to see a selection of her artworks on show at [Gray M.C.A.’s](#) London-based gallery at Cromwell Place.

In 1998 Fashion Book named GPP as one of 500 people of influence since 1860. Jean Paul Gaultier said of her work that “when she sketches some of my clothes or other designers’ clothes, but especially mine, I say, now I have to produce the clothes in the way that she did it. She interprets with her own personality”. GPP has worked with some of most influential names in fashion publishing. GPP’s illustrations have featured in the pages of *The New York Times*, *The Sunday Times UK*, *Elle*, *The Washington Post* and many



Philip Tracey, 1998 Ink & pastel on paper, signed, The Sunday Times 1998, 61 x 46 cms

international editions of *Vogue*. Gianni Versace commissioned her to illustrate his 1996 book *Do Not Disturb* and her fashion illustrations have even adorned Hong Kong’s iconic trams. Fashion illustration has even taken her behind the silver screen – film director Robert Altman invited GPP onto the set of *Prêt-à-Porter* to draw acting giants including Sophia Loren, Richard E Grant and Kim Basinger.

GPP and Gray MCA’s collaboration started a few years ago with a series of popular virtual masterclasses held during the pandemic. During the run of *A Fine Line in Fashion* a few lucky visitors were treated to an extensive guided tour given by Gladys herself where she regaled us with tales from her life in fashion. Although GPP is an extremely talented and successful artist, she remains humble and is



Valentino Haute Couture, 2013 Ink on paper, signed, Nob Hill Gazette March 2013, 64 x 78 cms

witty and very entertaining. There is definitely a story behind every image and we heard how her artistry has taken her around the world from Hong Kong to San Francisco, how she perfected her technique of pinching front row fashion week seats, and which editors she loved - and those she found a little terrifying! GPP is renowned for depicting not only what is on the catwalk but also whatever takes her fancy from her surroundings. She is often drawn to the colour and attitude of those occupying the front row, and GPP tells an amusing anecdote about how she once spotted Anna Piaggi, the legendary editor of *Italian Vogue*, in the audience and took pen to paper sketching her fabulous look. Stealing someone else’s front row seat, GPP later ended up sitting next to Anna, who was intrigued and asked to see the picture. Of course, she loved it and this chance encounter sparked a collaboration that lasted a lifetime. Piaggi swiftly arranged a solo

exhibition of GPP’s work in Milan during fashion week in 1989.

Intriguingly, the back cover of the exhibition catalogue depicts a sole elegant chair at the Christian Dior show adorned with GPP’s name. Talking about how this illustration came to be GPP shared another entertaining ‘behind the scenes’ anecdote about how fashion PRs, invitees and audience members jostle for places and over the hierarchy of who sits where to see the shows. In this particular instance, despite being on the guest list GPP had been refused entry, but she finally succeeded in entering the show on the arm of renowned patron of John Galliano, whereupon she discovered that this elegant chair had been hers all along!

Read an extended version of this article on our [blog](#).

Collector's Corner

Legendary Parisian fashion museum, Palais Galliera, is currently celebrating museum collection and curation in its latest exhibition, 'A History of Fashion'.

On October 2, 2021, [the Palais Galliera](#) opened the first tour of its fashion collections housed in their exciting, new gallery spaces. The first stage of the '[A History of Fashion: collecting and exhibiting at the Palais Galliera](#)' exhibition traced the history of the Palais Galliera and its collections. The second stage opened more recently on the 2nd April 2022. The exhibition adopts both a chronological and thematic approach to show visitors a history of fashion from the eighteenth century to the present day with over 300 pieces. Some of the most beautiful pieces of the museum are on show, from the robe volante dress to the creations of Comme des Garçons. Each chronological section addresses



the specifics of the period, from eighteenth-century men's clothing to Rick Owens' avant-garde creations, from nineteenth-century corsets to 1950s cocktail dresses.

The history of the collection is also told, including the constitution, preservation and presentation over time, which all testify to a long museum tradition and the major role of the Palais Galliera in the study of the history of fashion. Their blockbuster exhibitions and the remarkable acquisitions of the museum are highlighted, since the first founding donation made to the City of Paris by the Costume History Society in 1920 until more recent acquisitions made possible in particular thanks to the Vogue Paris Foundation.



In a scenography inspired by the world of the museum's reserves, the exhibition brings together almost 350 pieces from the collections including clothing, accessories, graphic arts and photographs. In April 2022, a large part of the works were renewed for reasons of preventive conservation and this second hanging offers visitors the opportunity to return and discover new masterpieces or view pieces more rarely exhibited.

Marie-Laure, the head of the accessories department, spoke exclusively with the Costume Society giving us a fantastic view behind the scenes. "For this first tour of the collections, we wanted to trace the history of the museum and its collections, such as the role of the Costume History Society, major donations, major acquisitions and prestigious wardrobes. It also seemed important to pay tribute to the directors who succeeded each other at the head of the museum, Madeleine Delpierre, Guillaume Garnier, Catherine Join-

Dieterle and Olivier Saillard, each of whom contributed to making the Palais Galliera what it is today, a reference in the field of fashion history. For this tribute we have chosen to gather archival images, which are much stronger than a text that we could have written.

"We have nearly 200,000 works, costumes, accessories, photographs, graphic arts and dolls at the Palais Galliera. For this first tour, we wanted to offer the public not only some of our greatest masterpieces but also pieces that are less known or never presented before in exhibition."

The exhibition is open until the 26th June and for more insights, read the extended version of this article on our [blog](#).

Image credits:

- 1) Robe à transformation 1883
- 2) Robe à l'anglaise 1775-90
- 3) Gants 1930
- 4) Molyneux 1937

Costume: Volume 56 issue 1

As we wrote this editorial, the climate change conference COP26 to be held in Glasgow was imminent and the world was still navigating its way through the impact of the COVID-19. Both the climate crisis and the global pandemic have forced us to think about fashion from new and radical viewpoints and have prompted creative solutions to address some of the many challenges created by the existing fashion system.

This issue of [Costume](#) contains a group of articles which consider both the function and the formulation of fashion, the how and why of its creation. The issue begins with an article by Myriam Couturier which explores the changing role of the linen duster coat, which began as a garment worn for travel on trains and steamships but evolved to become a key garment associated with the early years of the motor car. Through an examination of its representation in the visual arts and texts of the time Couturier reveals its combination of practicality and style.

Dries Debackere's article focuses on a fascinating group of lace panels, which had an intended fashionable purpose, carefully shaped to form a dress, but which were never realized as a worn garment. In his article Debackere carefully considers what a dress might have looked like, using contextual evidence from the period before exploring possible methods of display to recommend a method that might most authentically represent a dress made from the panels. In doing so his article delves into both the conservation and interpretation of fashion. Cally

Blackman's article illuminates the value and significance of the Salon du Goût Français, a 1920s government-backed exhibition of French luxury commodities, which capitalised on the use of the Autochrome, a photographic technique offering dazzling colour representation. Through the article Blackman reveals not just the technical and artistic mastery exhibited by the Autochrome, but also demonstrates the way in which the exhibitions, both in France and abroad helped to shape and form the perception of French fashion.

Kevin Almond and Elaine Evans' article uses an oral history workshop concerned with capturing experiences of making, buying and wearing ordinary clothing in Yorkshire 1939-1979 to investigate dress through the lens of regional social history and to highlight people's emotional attachment to dress. Finally, Jade Halbert reveals how the fashions of the Swinging Sixties were formed, not in the epicentre of London, but in Glasgow, highlighting the changing fortunes of boutique culture and department stores, as this Scottish city created its own unique interpretation of the decade's distinctive fashions.

There is a range of reviews offering insightful commentary of some of the latest books in dress history. Hilary Davidson has brought together an extensive list of articles published in the last year which demonstrate the popularity of the field and the range of new scholarship to be found.

A day in the life : David Evans of [Grey Fox Blog](#)

Describing a typical day in my life is a huge challenge - there is simply no standard day. I'm retired from paid employment and my daily activities as a blogger, menswear style enthusiast, writer and (others' description, not mine) 'influencer' (surely there's a better word) vary from day to day and have to fit round life as a husband, father and grandfather.

The day starts around 7am when I wake and go down to make tea. I'm not a great sleeper and find that the small hours are full of thoughts and ideas for my writing and social media, so the tea is an essential perk-me-up. I'm met enthusiastically by Harry #blogdog, our labrador retriever, whose life, like all labs, revolves around his stomach. He plays a great part in my day and has an enthusiastic following.

One thing that is consistent is that every day I'm on social media. I'm not quite addicted to my phone, but I like to keep my Instagram as interactive as possible, responding to comments, messages and e-mails. People often contact me direct asking questions such as where they can buy a certain item of clothing, what they should wear for a particular event or what to wear with a particular jacket/pair of trousers. All this is slightly ironic as I had no background in menswear, fashion or style when I started Grey Fox Blog over ten years ago, but if you set yourself up as a specialist you are seen as an expert, justifiably or not.



Johnstons of Elgin visit Hawick

Men are hungry for ideas and advice about style. In days past such advice was usually available from your menswear store, but online shopping means that we have turned to social media for inspiration. The wide range of types and styles of clothing available since the 1960s makes men's choices even harder. While previously a man would choose a shirt, tie, trousers and jacket from a small selection, he now has a wardrobe full of tailoring, casual, sportswear or athleisure. Fashion brands have skilfully convinced us that we need stuff that in reality we probably hardly ever wear so, without preaching, I try to push a message that buying fewer high quality products, where possible locally, is a sustainable way forward. Menswear brands are keen to appear green but generally tend to be over-



Ettinger visit

optimistic at best and misleading at worst in selling their sustainability credentials.

I spend a few hours each day researching menswear, its history, modern styles, fashion, by looking through Pinterest, Instagram or reading from my increasing library of menswear books. I take more interest in what men wear day to day than in high fashion. I know little about designers or what's happening on the world's catwalks but I appreciate that fashion depends on classic style and vice versa. I've written the outline of a book on the global influences of British menswear style, but while it's early days, have had no luck with publishers so far. All is not wasted as I use the research in my writing for

the blog or The Chap magazine (for which I write a column).

I'm also interested in products made here in the UK. Before covid I was often invited to factories, mills and workshops all over the country to see clothes and accessories being made by dedicated and enthusiastic men and women. One of my most memorable visits was as a guest of the Harris Tweed Authority to Harris and Lewis where cloth has to be finished in weavers' homes to merit the Harris Tweed orb which is stamped on after the cloth is finished in a local mill. These factory visits are restarting now that we are out of covid.

At least twice during the day I take Harry for a walk and get more vigorous exercise with cycling or

brisk walks. I make more effort to keep in shape now I'm past my mid-sixties as I have a large wardrobe of bespoke and made to measure tailoring that won't fit me if I let things slide. I tend to be sent a fair amount of products to try and review, but I only accept items I need or want to feature and I turn away a lot that doesn't fit with my theme of quality, sustainable clothing.

One of the greatest delights of my days is meeting the creative and entrepreneurial men and women who design, make and sell menswear. At least once a week I travel into London to meet tailors, stylists, store owners and others to keep up with what is happening.

Lunch is usually a sandwich, whether I'm at home or out and about. Harry limits my movements to some extent, but we have excellent dogsitter that he loves.

I try to cover the costs of doing what I do by accepting a few paid projects each year, but most of what I do is uncompensated. The problem with being paid to do something is that authenticity is easily lost on social media if you are not truly enthused by the task. Anyone who thinks of me as a highly paid influencer jetting off to sunny climes, being wined and dined in exotic locations and being supplied daily with expensive designer outfits is sadly mistaken (although the odd sunny trip would be nice).

The evening is often spent out and about, or at home half watching television while I work on writing or social media or edit photographs. Bed is usually after the Ten O'Clock news and the period before I sleep I catch



Budd shirtmakers

up with fiction - re-reading James Bond, Patrick O'Brian or Ben Aaronovitch's excellent Rivers of London series.

Sadly Harry #blogdog passed away very suddenly as I was finishing this piece, leaving a huge hole in our day, so this is in memory of him.

To see more of David's life, do check out his fantastic website www.greyfoxblog.com and his Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/greyfoxblog/>

Sir: The forgotten menswear trend magazine

By Eric Musgrave

The Autumn 1957 issue of Sir had exciting news for its readers. René Gruau, possibly the most famous fashion illustrator in the world at the time, had joined the editorial staff to present quarterly visions of his take on current menswear trends. Also, Sir revealed, the Italian aristocrat artist, who was based mainly in France, was to collaborate with Christian Dior, definitely the most famous fashion designer of the era, on menswear.

“Gruau in future will design and supervise the production of Dior’s men’s fashion department. This sensational, creative cooperation will set up an entirely new and forceful source of inspiration in the men’s fashion field,” stated the magazine, which described itself as the “men’s international fashion journal”.

Alas, Dior died in Italy on 24 October 1957, soon after the issue appeared so the Gruau-Dior menswear alliance never achieved its potential but the link with Sir was much more fruitful. More than 20 years later, Gruau’s enchanting sketches of the latest trends were still given prominence in Sir and his evocative full-colour covers graced the magazine. It is an indication of Sir’s worldwide influence that Gruau – who was born Renato Zavagli Ricciardelli delle Caminate in Rimini, Italy, on 4 February 1909 – worked so closely with the title for so long. Yet, more than 35 years after its closure, very few people in the contemporary menswear world have heard of Sir.

The connection with Gruau is usually the only point of connection, which is disappointing as Sir was one of the most important trade publications of the post-WW2 era, a period of colossal change for the worldwide menswear industry. The last issue of Sir appeared in 1986, the year I moved to Amsterdam to work as deputy editor on International Textiles, Sir’s much better-known “big sister” publication. Having been writing about the fashion business since 1980 and specialising in menswear since 1982, I had been an occasional contributor of trade fair reports to Sir before I relocated to the Netherlands. International Textiles, or IT as it is often called, was established in Amsterdam in 1933 by Ludwig Katz, a Jewish émigré from Hitler’s Germany. It achieved a unique reputation for taking a comprehensive and coordinated look at the European textile and clothing industry, which at the time was huge and varied. (IT survived until around 2000 although its best days were long behind it by then). Gruau began to produce cover images for IT in 1948. As European commerce recovered after the Second World War Katz added two more titles to his group – Sir, and Interior for the home furnishings sector. IT was a monthly, Sir appeared four times a year and Interior three times. There seems to be precious little about Sir online and I have been unable to discover when the first issue appeared, although I suspect it was 1950. I would be delighted if anyone can enlighten me.

Sitting in my own library are almost



Sir, 1961



Sir, 1961

25 years of Sir, from 1954 to 1979. Annoyingly, the volumes for 1959 and 1960 are missing but I still have 90-plus issues to enjoy. As the publisher described it in the mid-1950s: “Sir appears at the beginning of each of the four seasons. Each issue gives a comprehensive survey of the man’s world, man’s styles, formal and sportswear.” In another issue it stated: “Sir is a guide through the world’s style news, a link between the important centres that work on men’s apparel; a constant source of new ideas.”

Unlike national trade titles such as Men’s Wear in the United Kingdom, which in 1902 was spun out of The Drapers’ Record (founded 1887), Sir always had an international vision, which freed it from any patriotic bias. It was a visual magazine with relatively little copy because all the text was printed in

English, French and German on the page. The most important texts were also translated into Italian, Spanish and Dutch and printed at the back of the book. Sir’s interest in men’s fashion consistently began with cloth. Pages after pages were devoted to flat shots of the fabric stories of the season. Bizarrely to our modern eyes, most of the trend direction spreads were printed in black and white, even up until the late 1970s, such was the cost of colour printing until the 1980s. Up until the mid-1960s, for its ideas for finished clothes Sir gave prominence to the work of leading bespoke tailors from London, Paris and Rome in particular, although others from lesser menswear capitals were included.

What is most interesting for the menswear historian is Sir’s unique

coverage of ready-to-wear styles from dozens and dozens of companies, including major brands that are still with us and long-forgotten firms from countries as far apart as Sweden and Spain, Finland and the Netherlands. Before Gruau arrived in 1957 to become its main illustrator, Sir used significant commercial artists of the day, notably Alexis Delmar, a Hungarian living in Paris, and Arne Carlson, of whom I have found few details. Their fine work, in which a few strokes of the brush or pen create a powerful impression, reminds us that fashion illustration is almost a lost art these days.

Katz, who died on 19 January 1964 aged 77, ran the International Textiles Publishing Company as a very commercial operation. The issues of Sir are packed with advertisements, which are another treasure trove for the menswear historian. Among its many services the group had a photographic studio and so produced advertising campaigns for clients. In its pages you can spot which shoots were done in-house as different brands from different countries are featured on the same model or models.

The target groups for the magazine stretched from yarn producers to weavers and knitters, via the chemical companies behind the synthetics book of the 1950s and 60s. It appealed to menswear producers from bespoke tailors to industrial manufacturers. And it also was a unique reference publication for retail buyers who wanted to be informed of international trends.

Unsurprisingly the 1960s were the boom time for Sir. Its four issues a year amounted to well over 500 pages in total even though the magazine was always spiral-bound on wire, perhaps to suggest a workbook. It was an impressive production being almost A3 in size until 1976 when it slimmed to around A4. For an example of its approach, the Winter 1968 edition hit 176 pages, with about one third being advertisements, including eight pages from the Italian Foreign Trade Ministry promoting the nation's cloth and clothing producers, and 24 pages for Koratron, an American permanent press treatment.

By the mid-1970s the menswear industry was a much more varied, international and sophisticated arena than it had been in the early 1950s. Other sources of information, such as professional trend agencies, offered a more targeted service to large companies than Sir could.

For 20 years from the mid-1950s, however, Sir was unique in taking an international view of menswear. More people ought to know about it but locating copies is a challenge. If anyone can let me have the issues from 1959 and 1960, please let me know.

Read an extended version of this article on [our blog](#).

Eric Musgrave is the author of "Sharp Suits", a photographic history of men's tailoring. As editor of Drapers, he was twice named UK Business Media Editor of the Year, in 2003 and 2015. Many examples of his work since 1980 can be found on www.ericmusgrave.co.uk. His Instagram feed is [@musgraveeric](#)

Images clockwise from top left: 1957, 1961, 1959 and 1958



News from our members

We were delighted to hear from so many of our members keen to share their news and successes with us. We have featured some of these in more depth on our blog as well as on social media so do keep sharing your news with us!

Claire Cheshire: "The Worcestershire County Costume collection is a real hidden gem - comprising over 2,000 examples of men's, women's and children's clothing and accessories from the late 18th to the late 20th century. Due to space restrictions very little has been on display to the public, just the odd piece here and there across the various museum galleries. That all changed in February of this year, however, when we were delighted to open our first dedicated costume gallery at Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle." [For more, see our blog soon!](#)

Sarah Thursfield recently hosted a wide range of fascinating clothing weekends including Shirts and Shifts from Iron Age to Steam Age, and "1403 – Tailoring for Two Centuries". **Kelly Mann** launched a course in late Victorian underpinnings in the Spring that included extensive material on the history of the corset and how to make a corset. "I am committed to creating courses for people who are overwhelmed and hesitant about getting started in historical costuming. The focus is on progress

over perfection, with the student's transformation into confident creator being paramount...Last September, I launched my inaugural course The Ultimate Regency Gown Course, with eleven students. Throughout this course, the students received detailed instructions on completing an entire Regency ensemble, from shift to gown, including a Spencer and bonnet module."

Bianca M. du Mortier has been busy creating a common digital platform allowing the general public to search various museum collections from one starting point & to share our knowledge to whoever is interested in costume and fashion. The Modemuze (Fashion Muse) site is being updated currently they hope to start an ambitious plan of 3-D scanning museum objects for which they have just been awarded a large grant. For more, keep an eye out on our blog soon!



Worcester Museums

Reporting from Downton's wardrobes

By Nivera Gilbert, Junior Costume Maker

In 2020 I was [Highly Commended](#) at the [Costume Society Patterns of Fashion Awards](#). I selected the 1837-41 Morning Dress from Patterns of Fashion 1 as it fit my time frame and displayed a range of techniques and skills. The Museum of Gloucester was very kind and let me examine the original dress which was especially useful to my research.

After the judging, I was ecstatic to receive a very special email stating that Michele Clapton wanted to offer me further work in the costume industry! Michele brought me onto the first season of HBO's 'The Nevers' where she is the lead Costume Designer. The Nevers is set during the 1890s with a blend of science fiction, Michele has designed unique costumes within this world. It was my first time working in a studio workroom and there is always something interesting to see like bumping into actors in full costume in the halls or watching a futuristic Victorian car be driven around the building! I also had the opportunity to work on location in North London which was a very new experience for me. Running between the trucks and the set, supporting the costume standbys and seeing great action scenes.

Last year I started a job as a Trainee Costume Maker on the second [Downton Abbey film](#) which was an absolute blast and I learnt so much! There was work that involved altering and general maintenance on costumes

from the last film for the 'downstairs' cast - of course the 'upstairs' cast women had new wardrobes. I didn't realise previously that many of the evening gowns, particularly the beaded ones, are original dresses from the 1920s. These dresses required a lot of care and were very special to work with. It was truly wonderful looking at those beaded dresses and the craftsmanship that went into them.

Last month, I finished working on Downton Abbey and returned for the second season of The Nevers where I'm currently working, this time joining solely the workroom team as a Trainee Costume Maker. What I love about the workroom is that there's always something new to work on every couple of days. I might spend a few days making multiple copies of a blouse for one character and spend the next day helping other makers add the finishing touches to a statement principal costume. Although I still haven't come to terms with beautifully finishing a garment and having it immediately sent to the break down department - maybe that comes with time!

I really enjoy being a costume maker, it's a very exciting job and I've only tasted one year of it. My aspirations for this industry is to work my way up to a Pattern Cutter position. I have so much respect for Pattern Cutters, it is a craft I'd like to master. The Costume Society Awards opened many doors for me in the industry and I am especially grateful to Michele Clapton for bringing me on.



Downton Abbey: A New Era (2022) All images courtesy of Focus Features

What's on

Here is a just a small selection of exciting events. For more, visit the Exhibiting Fashion online archive.

[The Costume Society's Annual London Study Day](#)

As part of our 2022 focus on Menswear, we are delighted to invite you to an exclusive opportunity to view the costumes shortlisted for this year's Patterns of Fashion and Patterns for Performance Awards. Join us for an afternoon celebrating aspects of cool in menswear with two key-note speakers Dr. Michael McMillan and Dr Llewella Chapman, and the presentation of the Janet Arnold Patterns of Fashion and Patterns for Performance Awards. Tickets are now on sale via the website so do book!

[The Costume Society's Conference 2022: Clothes Maketh the Man](#)

22, 26 and 29 October and 2 November 'Clothes Maketh the Man' provides a thought-provoking platform for exploring men's dress and how concepts of masculinity are expressed through male appearances. The online conference will showcase and celebrate the unique characteristics, influences, manufacture, methods of communication and inspiration involved in clothes for men.

[Blanford Fashion Museum](#)

Is now open and we can't wait to visit!

[Chertsey Museum](#)

Blooming Marvellous, Flowers in

Fashion, 1700s – 2000s
See The Thread Issue 1 for more info.
18th September 2021 - 3rd September 2022

Styled bodies, fashions of the 1930s
Opens 17 September 2022 - 2 September 2023

The sophistication and glamour of the 1930s will be explored in this exhibition of stunning garments from the Olive Matthews Collection, Chertsey Museum. Pieces include men's women's and children's daywear and a wealth of women's eveningwear and accessories. Many of the pieces have never been displayed before and include couture garments from celebrated designers such as Lanvin, Vionnet, Schiaparelli and Molyneux.

[Fashion Museum, Bath](#)

You Choose
Open now until Autumn 2022
A unique exhibition co-curated by local people.

[Musée des Arts Décoratifs](#)

Shocking! Les mondes surréalistes d'Elsa Schiaparelli
6 July 2022 to 22 January 2023

[Palais Galliera](#)

Une histoire de la mode. Collectionner, exposer au Palais Galliera.
Open now until 26th June 2022

Love Brings Love, le défilé hommage à Alber Elbaz.

Open now until 10th July

[Royal Pavilion Brighton](#)

The Regency Wardrobe
Open now - 11 September 2022
Regency costumes crafted from paper and thread by artist Stephanie Smart

[The American Museum, Bath](#)

Dress to Redress: Exploring Native American Material Culture
Open now until 3 July 2022
An exhibition of the work of contemporary Anishinabe artist Celeste Pedri-Spade. It focuses on the role of strong women in community, using fashion to explore how stories and experiences of Indigenous and European women both connect and disconnect.

[Totnes Fashion & Textiles Museum](#)

Bold & Brash, Colourful Fashion 1770-1990
Open now - 30 September 2022
Home of the Devonshire Collection of Period Costume.

[Ulster Museum](#)

Belle Époque: Fashions of the 1870s – 1910s Fashion.
See The Thread Issue 1 for more info.
Now – Sept 2022

[V&A, South Kensington](#)

Beatrix Potter: Drawn to Nature. open now – 25 September 2022
Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear. Open now – 6 November 2022
Africa Fashion. 11 June 2022 – 16 April 2023
Hallyu! The Korean Wave. 24 September 2022 – 25 June 2023
Coco Chanel Retrospective. September 16 2023 - February 25 2024

[V&A Dundee](#)

Plastic: Remaking Our World. 29 October 2022 - 5 February 2023
Tartan. 2 April 2023 - 3 September 2023

[Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool](#)

Shimmer and Shine: Beaded Evening Dresses, 1920-1940
Open now until Autumn 2023
This glittering new display, in the Walker Art Gallery's Craft & Design Gallery, features 14 outfits from the 1920s and 1930s, all beautifully embellished with glass bugle beads and sequins.



A detail from a Jeanne Lanvin 'Dinner Gown' from 1938. Image Copyright The Olive Matthews Collection, Chertsey Museum. Photo by John Chase Photography'.



Costume
Society