

New Mexico Museum of Art News

Media Advisory

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PERIOD COSTUMES CREATED FOR THE SCREEN HIGHLIGHT EVOLUTION OF FASHION THROUGH FIVE CENTURIES FROM CONCEPT TO CREATION

October 17 – January 4, 2009

Santa Fe, NM—*Evita . . . Out of Africa . . . Dangerous Liaisons . . . Emma . . . Titanic . . . Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Characters we cannot forget will step out of these memorable films in an exhibition of fashion in film that will open at the New Mexico Museum of Art on October 17, 2008 under the auspices of the Trust for Museum Exhibitions and the London costumier, Cosprop Ltd.

Fashion in Film: Period Costumes for the Screen will highlight 36 original costumes made for these and other recent films, many singled out for Academy Award and other nominations for costume design. All were made for period productions set from the 16th to the middle of the 20th centuries. Some were based on historical figures, such as Elizabeth I, Thomas Jefferson and Eva Peron; some on characters from classic works of fiction, like *Sense and Sensibility*, *Hamlet*, and *Murder on the Orient Express*; and others, like *Gosford Park*, on original works. They include evening wear, day wear, wedding dresses, and fanciful outfits like the Cinderella character's dress in *Ever After* and the little Maharajah's turban and tunic in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*.

This exquisite selection comes from a stock of nearly 100,000 costumes and accessories made by the renowned British costumer, Cosprop. Founded in 1965, Cosprop specializes in creating costumes for film, television and theater, which are historically authentic in the cut and construction and use natural fabrics and original trimmings. The exhibition will demonstrate how costumes, while based on historic models, sometimes take off in new directions under the eye of an artistic director hoping to create a certain mood or trying to give a certain character a distinctive look (as in good guy verses bad guy – or Miss Bennet vs. Miss Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice*).

The exhibition will be presented in three sections:

The first section, covering the early 16th century through the nineteenth, is dominated by historical figures, including Cate Blanchett as Elizabeth I and Michael Lonsdale as Louis XVI. The latter part of this period is represented by adaptations of the works of the great Regency novelist, Jane Austen. These were filmed within a very short time of one another, but the costume designer of each has given his production a very distinct character. *Sense and Sensibility* (costumes worn by Kate Winslet and Alan Rickman) was set around 1800, close to the time the novel was written, and features the fuller, classical look and cool colors of the late 18th century, whereas *Pride and Prejudice* (Colin Firth) adheres more to the publication date of 1813 with a slimmer line and hot earthy colors. *Emma* (Gwyneth Paltrow) has been given a more modern 20th century slant, reflecting the vision of its director, Douglas McGrath.

Section two focuses heavily on adaptations of classic literary works, from Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* (Ralph Fiennes) to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (Julie Christie) and three novels by Henry James, *The Europeans* (Lee Remick), *The Portrait of a Lady* (Nicole Kidman) and *The Golden Bowl* (Uma Thurman, Kate Beckinsale and Anjelica Huston). This period in history, from 1827 to the late 19th century, saw a rapid progression of styles of increased complexity owing to advances in production methods and an increase in consumerism. Usually a costume was built up from the correct underwear to achieve the correct silhouette; over-trimmed outfits of unnatural shapes dictated by fashionable corsets, crinolines and bustles put great demands on designers and costumiers.

The last section brings the exhibition into the 20th century with costumes ranging from the lavish, high Edwardian costumes of *A Room with a View* (Helena Bonham Carter) to the svelte early 1930's evening dresses from *Gosford Park* (Kristin Scott Thomas) and Madonna's "New Look" outfit worn in *Evita*. This period, which covers only 50 years, reflects the huge impact the two world wars had on fashion, which changed both society and clothes irrevocably. Three costumes in this section were worn in films set during one of these wars, two from *The Shooting Party* (Cheryl Campbell and Judi Bowker) and the World War II spy story, *Shining Through* (Melanie Griffith). Contrary to appearances, the simpler, looser lines of clothes made between the wars did not make them easier to design, construct and fit than the ornamented, restricting garments of the early 1900s. Their simplicity of line was often achieved by complex seaming and construction which threw greater emphasis on choice of fabric and fit of underwear.

After the New Mexico Museum of Art the exhibition will travel to the Taft Museum of Art in Cincinnati, Ohio (February 6 – May 3, 2009).

The Trust for Museum Exhibitions is a Washington, D.C. based non-profit service organization committed to providing the finest in exhibition and technical support to museums and cultural centers throughout the U.S. and abroad. For further information, please visit the Trust's website at <http://www.tme.org>

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The New Mexico Museum of Art was founded in 1917 as the Art Gallery of the Museum of New Mexico. Housed in a spectacular Pueblo Revival building designed by I. H. and William M. Rapp, it was based on their New Mexico building at the Panama-California Exposition (1915). The museum's architecture inaugurated what has come to be known as "Santa Fe Style." For more than 90 years, the Museum celebrates the diversity of the visual arts and the legacy of New Mexico as a cultural crossroads by collecting and exhibiting work by leading artists from New Mexico and elsewhere. This tradition continues today with a wide-array of exhibitions with work from the world's leading artists. The New Mexico Museum of Art brings the art of New Mexico to the world and the art of the world to New Mexico.

The New Mexico Museum of Art is a division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs.

Information for the Public

Location: Santa Fe's Plaza at 107 West Palace Avenue.

Information: 505-476-5072 or visit www.nmartmuseum.org

Days/Times: Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. Open Free on Fridays, 5:00-8:00 P.M., with the exception of major exhibition openings.

Admission: School groups free. Children 16 and under free. New Mexico residents with ID free on Sundays. New Mexico resident Senior Citizens (age 60+) with ID free Wednesdays. Museum Foundation members free. NM Veterans with 50% or greater disability free. Students with ID \$1 discount. Single visit to one museum: \$8.00 for non-state residents, \$6.00 for New Mexico residents. Four-day pass to five museums including state-run museums in Santa Fe plus The Museum of Spanish Colonial Art \$18.00. One-day pass for two museums (Museum of International Folk Art and Museum of Indian Arts and Culture OR New Mexico Museum of Art and Palace of the Governors) \$12.00. Group rate for ten or more people: single visit \$6.00, four-day pass \$16.00.