

PATTERNS OF MAGNIFICENCE: TRADITION AND REINVENTION IN GREEK WOMEN'S COSTUME

The Hellenic Centre & The Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation

Abundant in local variety, rich in embroidered and woven decoration and monumental in its completed ensemble, Greek traditional women's dress has few equals in other countries.

The exhibition, "Patterns of Magnificence: Tradition and Reinvention in Greek Women's Costume", which will be hosted by the Hellenic Centre in February 2014, will bring over forty of the most splendid examples to London for the first time. They include the richly embroidered costume from Astypalaia in the Dodecanese, the astonishing assembly of fabrics, colours and jewellery from Stefanoviki in Thessaly and the superbly brocaded dress from Jannina in Epirus.

The exhibition will also illustrate the interplay of native tradition and western aesthetic by displaying the court dress of the first Queen of the independent Greek state, Amalia of Oldenburg and that of her successor at the end of the nineteenth century, Queen Olga, the Russian-born consort of King George I. These splendid costumes represent a synthesis that is emblematic of nineteenth century nation building.

During the period of the exhibition the Hellenic Centre will arrange guided tours and hold lectures on costume, textiles, the reception of the indigenous tradition and the history and culture of Greece after independence.

All but two of the costumes come from the superb collection of the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation in Nafplio. The other two are being lent by The Benaki Museum of Athens. The curator of the exhibition is the Foundation's director and renowned expert, Ioanna Papandoniou. The designer is Stamatis Zannos.

A fully illustrated catalogue with 10 essays by specialists in the field alongside catalogue entries and images for each costume will be available and will be the first major English language publication on traditional women's dress in Greece since Angeliki Hatzimichali's two-volume survey, *The Greek Folk Costume*, of 1979/84.

Curator
Ioanna Papantoniou

Designer
Stamatis Zannos

**The exhibition is dedicated to
the memory of Koula Lemos
who gave so much for the Hellenic Centre**

**The exhibition and the associated events
are sponsored by
George & Natasha Lemos and
Dino & Calliope Caroussis**

**Exhibition dates:
4 February - 2 March 2014**

Opening times:

Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm

Saturday-Sunday, 12-6pm

Admission Free**Guided Tours**

by the curator of the exhibition on

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-12.45pm

Further guided tours for groups available on request

Please contact 020 7487 5060

Special Workshops

modelled by the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation

available on request on

Saturdays and Sundays, 12-6pm

Please contact 020 7487 5060

LECTURES

Wednesday 5 February, 7.15pm

From Loom and Needle to Canvas and Paintbrush: Images of Greek Costume in 19th and 20th Century Painting

Evita Arapogou will unfold the story of modern Greek painting through the layers of Greek costumes, the people who wore them and the artists who painted them. Greek costumes fascinated artists of the 19th and 20th centuries. Elaborate depictions of them were drawn to illustrate historical scenes from the War of Independence; beautiful designs and embroideries were meticulously detailed in formal portraits; colourful woven textiles were invoked to describe rural scenes reviving images of everyday village life.

Evita Arapoglou is an art historian, Curator of the A. G. Leventis Foundation Collection of 19th and 20th Greek Painting. She has also written extensively on Greek artist Nico Ghika, including the recent book for the Benaki Museum on the restoration of his house and studio.

Friday 7 February, 7.15pm

Dressed to Kill or Dressed to Rule?

Dr Philip Mansel discusses the politics of dress, with special reference to Greece in the 19th century. Dress could be a means of communicating a political message, as well as of encouraging local industries. In the 19th century most monarchs, wore military or naval uniform, and expected their officials to do the same. Some monarchs, however, particularly in new or vulnerable states, preferred to wear 'national dress' in order to try to assert national identity.

Dr Philip Mansel is a historian of France and the Ottoman Empire. His books include a study of court dress from Louis XIV to Elizabeth II, *Dressed to Rule* (2005), and histories of Constantinople (*Constantinople, City of the World's Desire*, 1995) and of Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut (*Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean*, 2010). He is a founding trustee of the Levantine Heritage Foundation

and editor of *The Court Historian*, journal of the Society for Court Studies. In 2012 he received the London Library Life in Literature award.

Wednesday 12 February, 7.15pm

What Lord Byron Saw in Greece (1809-1811)

Prof Roderick Beaton, follows the travels of the young Lord Byron through Greece and western Asia Minor and shows how the strangeness and the newness of all that he saw affected him as a poet and helped him to write one of the most famous bestsellers in the English language, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, whose first two cantos were published in March 1812.

Roderick Beaton is Koraeas Professor of Modern Greek and Byzantine History, Language and Literature at King's College London and Director of the Centre for Hellenic Studies there. His most recent book is *Byron's War: Romantic Rebellion, Greek Revolution*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2013.

Tuesday 18 February, 7.15pm

Traces and Influences of Greek Local Dress in Contemporary Fashion and Costume Design

Dr Sofia Pantouvaki presents a selection of designs from the fields of fashion and theatrical costume by Greek, Cypriot and international couturiers and costume designers. The variety of Greek local dress and its distinctive features have inspired contemporary creative production in the field of design both in present-day fashion and in performance costume. Within a new aesthetic, social and cultural framework, modern creators interpret elements of Greek popular culture moving on from the 'folklore' approach, and transform the forms and meanings of the past into expressive media for the present.

Sofia Pantouvaki, Ph.D., is a scenographer and Professor of Costume Design at Aalto University, Finland. Her design credits include over 60 theatre, opera and dance productions in Greece, Italy, UK, Cyprus and Finland. Co-author of *History of Dress - The Western World and Greece* (2010) and co-editor of *Presence and Absence: The Performing Body* (in press), Sofia has taught, lectured and published internationally.

Tuesday 25 February, 7.15pm

Athena's Craft: Greek Textiles and their Meaning

Dr Ian Jenkins, Senior Curator at the British Museum chairs a panel discussion with Ioanna Papantoniou, curator of the exhibition *Patterns of Magnificence*; Dr Shelagh Weir of SOAS and Dr Athena Leoussi of The University of Reading. The discussion will explore the place of textiles and costumes in life and society generally with an emphasis on the semiotics of the human body and its adornment. The case of Greece will be illuminated through cross-cultural comparisons.

Dr Ian Jenkins is Senior Curator at the British Museum where he has worked since 1978 and where he has been responsible for the presentation of many permanent galleries, and temporary exhibitions. He holds degrees from Bristol and London Universities. He has published many books and articles on his wide ranging research interests, which include both the techniques and the semiotics of ancient Greek Textiles. He holds honorary membership of a number of learned societies and has been a Trustee of Sir John Soane's Museum since 2003. He was appointed OBE by HM The Queen in 2010.

Ioanna Papantoniou Stage and costume designer; Honorary Doctor of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, founder of the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation (1974) and its associated journal, *Ethnographika* (1978). She has written many articles and books widely recognized as ground-breaking. She has curated many exhibitions and has also designed over hundred theatrical productions in collaboration with leading directors. Her numerous awards include the Gold Cross of the Order of the Phoenix, Greece's highest civilian award (2000), an award from the Academy of Athens (1981), a lifetime award from European Museum Academy (2013). In 2004 the Hellenic Centre for Theatrical Research awarded her the Panos Aravantinos Prize for her lifetime achievement in the theatre and in stage design.

Dr Athena S Leoussi is Co-Director of European Studies at the University of Reading, UK, a founder of the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (ASEN), based at LSE, and an editor of the journal, *Nations and Nationalism*. She has published books and articles on the classical tradition in nineteenth-century European culture, and on art and nationalism.

Dr Shelagh Weir is the former Curator for the Ethnography of the Middle East at the Museum of Mankind (British Museum), and is now an independent researcher and writer. Her publications include *Palestinian Costume* about the language of dress among the villagers and bedouin of Palestine, and several on Palestinian embroidery.

Friday 28 February, 7.15pm

“Old Embroideries of the Greek Islands and Turkey” An Exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club 1914: A Celebration and Commemoration

Ann French uses selected embroideries from the 1914 pioneering embroidery exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in London, to trace their individual collecting histories and reveal the different contexts, interpretations and values placed on them within UK based collections and museums. The exhibition, which drew on the leading collections of the day, primarily from the archaeologists R M Dawkins & A J B Wace, of Greek Embroideries displayed, for the first time in the UK, historic Greek Embroideries as an art form.

Ann French is a Textile Conservator at the Whitworth Art Gallery, the University of Manchester; teaches conservation and collection care seminars at Manchester, Glasgow & East Anglia Universities and is working towards a PhD on *Archaeologists as Collectors The Greek Embroidery Collecting of R M Dawkins and A J B Wace*. She has also worked for the Victoria and Albert Museum, Glasgow Museums, the Area Museums Council for the South West and the National Trust for England and Wales.

**Free entry to all lectures but limited availability
Booking essential on 020 7563 9835 or at press@helleniccentre.org**

Events at the British Museum Parallel to the Exhibition

A Gift for Athena: Ancient Marbles and Modern Textiles

In response to the exhibition at the Hellenic Centre, the British Museum is showing textiles from its permanent collection. These are exhibited in the Parthenon Galleries where, in the Frieze, Athena's invention of weaving is famously celebrated.

Wednesday 12 February, 1.15pm-2pm

Ancient and Modern Greek Textiles and their Meaning

Joint Gallery talk by Ian Jenkins (Senior Curator at the British Museum) and Natasha Lemos (Hellenic Centre)

Projects Inspired by the Exhibition

Subtle Silk: Athena Prokopiou, Greek-born designer with her own scarf and coverup brand, is to launch two exclusive scarf designs to help promote Patterns of Magnificence, in a collaboration which celebrates the elegance and splendour of Greece's distinctively rich textile heritage. Highlighting the luxury of traditional Hellenic textiles in these exclusive designs, this is an exciting project for the Central Saint Martin's graduate, whose kaleidoscopic, ethereal prints are inspired by folkloric culture and her personal travel experience.

Versatile Felt: Dimitra Antonopoulou, architect, weaver and felt maker using the felting technique swiftly turns wool into jewellery and soft objects original in texture, colour, shape and design. Inspired by traditional women's costumes in the exhibition she combines her own weaves, textures, colours and shapes and creates designs unique to the exhibition thus paying tribute to the rich weaving and textile history of Greece.

Structured Paper: Eleonora Paspaliari, prize winning architect, urban planner and designer prints and frantically folds and unfolds paper into intricate jewellery which springs from a dynamic combination of traditional Greek textile designs and bold architectural shapes.

Innovative Designs: Stamatis Zannos, the exhibition's designer, was born in Athens where he studied interior design and graphic arts at the Doxiadis School and at the Vakalo College of Art and Design. He has been designing jewellery since 1980. He is also an interior designer and curator of international exhibitions. He has collaborated with major Greek institutions including the Greek Ministry of Culture, the Benaki Museum and Alpha Bank among others. He has shown his work at solo exhibitions in Greece and has been commissioned to design objects for La Chrysotheque Zolotas and The Tsitouras Collection. In his innovative jewellery inspired by Patterns of Magnificence traditional designs are refracted through the transparency and plasticity of contemporary materials.

Traditional Economy: Olymbia Basklavani is a painter, drama therapist and author of books on art with a long service in TV(set design, costume design). She also runs a workshop for expression and creativity. In the spirit of economy evident in all aspects of traditional culture she turns recycled materials into beautiful double faced bags which she decorates with printed photographs.

The above items and the exhibition catalogue
will be available for sale at the Hellenic Centre