



Wednesday 2 December 2009

Welcome to your Midweek Moments and welcome to summer, well officially anyway. It already feels as though we've been experiencing summer for the last few weeks, even though the solstice isn't until the 22nd. You'll find some of your usual columns in this week's issue, including Show and Tell and Wardrobe Mistress, which this week details Edith Head's 30-year collaboration with enigmatic director, Alfred Hitchcock.

Wardrobe Mistress

The life of legendary Hollywood costume designer, Edith Head.

Episode 6 - Edith and Albert

By the 1950s, Edith Head's name was firmly established in Hollywood as the seminal costume designer and as she amassed her dazzling collection of Oscars, her fame, reputation and influence grew. While she enjoyed professional relationships with many of Hollywood's biggest names, such as Bette Davis, Barbara Stanwyck and Audrey Hepburn, her most famous professional collaboration was with the equally legendary director, Alfred Hitchcock.

She first worked with Hitchcock in 1946 with the black and white spy romance *Notorious*, starring Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant, dressing Bergman in stylish '40s outfits that were distinctly reminiscent of her famed portrayal of Ilsa Lund four years previously in *Casablanca*. However, Head and Hitchcock didn't team up for another eight years after that, waiting until 1954's furtive thriller, *Rear Window*, starring James Stewart and Grace Kelly (pictured). This movie proved significant as it was the inaugural appearance of what would become known as the Hitchcock "icy blonde", cool, aloof, sophisticated blonde women dressed mainly in well-tailored jacket and skirt combinations. Grace Kelly was the first actress to demonstrate this look to movie-goers, and she was followed over the years by many others.

Other famous Hitchcock films that Head worked on were *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956), in which Doris Day played the "icy blonde", *Vertigo* (1958) with Kim Novak and 1963's chilling *The Birds*, with Tippi Hedron (also pictured).



*Grace Kelly with James Stewart
in Rear Window (1954)*



Tippi Hedron in The Birds (1963)

Head became Hitchcock's favourite costume designer and he specifically requested her for most of his films. Head's collaboration with Hitchcock spanned 30 years and ended with 1976's *Family Plot*. It was one of Hollywood's true great partnerships and although it didn't directly bring Head any of her statuettes, it created an instantly recognisable look for the movies' female leads – a look that was both aloof and alluring.

Tune in next week...

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Show and Tell

Show us the item and tell us the story

Rosalie Gessey's folded log cabin cushion

What was your inspiration for this cushion?

I liked the simplicity and appeal of the design. I'm not particularly fond of log cabin patchwork, but this one was different. I made it about a month ago at a workshop with Jackie at Blueberries. I chose half a jelly roll, two and a half inch fabric strips cut to different sizes to fit this particular block. It's mainly pinks and browns.



How long did it take you to make?

It took about a week to finish it, which was a record for me. I hadn't decided who to give it to but I like it so much I think I'm going to keep it.

Have you been a sewer for long?

I was a basic home sewer, making clothes for the kids. My Mum wasn't a sewer but Dad was. He was a train driver and a bus driver and he could sew. He'd sit there with Grandma, both on their treadle machines and sew. He made our sandals which I wasn't particularly fond of, so I vowed to take up sewing myself, mainly so I didn't have to keep telling people that "my dad made them" (laughs).

Til next week!

The Blueberries Team.