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Inside The Royal Wardrobe: A Dress History Of Queen Alexandra (Dress And Fashion Research)



Synopsis

Queen Alexandra used clothes to fashion images of herself as a wife, a mother and a royal: a woman who both led Britain alongside her husband Edward VII and lived her life through fashion. *Inside the Royal Wardrobe* overturns the popular portrait of a vapid and neglected queen, examining the surviving garments of Alexandra, Princess of Wales – who later became Queen Consort – to unlock a rich tapestry of royal dress and society in the second half of the 19th century. More than 130 extraordinary garments from Alexandra's wardrobe survive, from sumptuous court dress and politicised fancy dress to mourning attire and elegant coronation gowns, and can be found in various collections around the world, from London, Oslo and Denmark to New York, Toronto and Tokyo. Curator and fashion scholar Kate Strasdin places these garments at the heart of this in-depth study, examining their relationships to issues such as body politics, power, celebrity, social identity and performance, and interpreting Alexandra's world from the objects out. Adopting an object-based methodology, the book features a range of original sources from letters, travel journals and newspaper editorials, to wardrobe accounts, memoirs, tailors' ledgers and business records. Revealing a shrewd and socially aware woman attuned to the popular power of royal dress, the work will appeal to students and scholars of costume, fashion and dress history, as well as of material culture and 19th century history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Queen Alexandra used clothes to fashion her self-image throughout her life and Kate Strasdin's

fascinating new book shows us how. From tight tailoring and glamorous evening wear to elegant mourning, *Inside the Royal Wardrobe* provides an innovative, engaging analysis of how Alexandra led fashionable society. -- Maria Hayward, University of Southampton, UK *Inside the Royal Wardrobe* is an illuminating and poignant study of the clothes that made Queen Alexandra the most stylish woman in Britain. Skilfully weaving together public and private life, Strasdin shines new light on her compelling story. -- Lucy Johnston, author of *19th-Century Fashion in Detail* Kate Strasdin's fascinating book gives us an intimate history of a queen who dressed to impress, and sets the stage for new understandings of the work that goes into fashioning celebrity. -- Alison Matthews David, Ryerson University, USA

Kate Strasdin is Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the Fashion and Textiles Institute, Falmouth University, UK, and a Visiting Lecturer at DeTao Masters Academy in Shanghai, China. She is Deputy Curator at the Totnes Fashion and Textile Museum, one of the largest private collection of dress in the UK.

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