



CREATING COSTUMES: From left to right: Deborah Nadoolman Landis, Arianne Phillips, Salvador Perez, Janie Bryant, Lyn Paolo and Lindsey Camell

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The Secret to Combining Costume Design With Fashion Design By Deborah

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Costume designers and fashion designers are two separate worlds, but in recent years the two professions have begun to overlap.

“Once someone started working in the movies, they pretty much spent their career working in the movies, and there pretty much was never a crossover,” said Deborah Nadoolman Landis, director of the **David D. Copley Center for Costume Design** at the **University of California, Los Angeles** and a costume designer who worked on such films as “Raiders of the Lost Ark,” “The Blues Brothers” and “Trading Places.”

But that is starting to change. A panel discussion organized by **Fashion Group International of Los Angeles** on June 3 with several well-known costume designers

highlighted the various opportunities that are popping up when consumers fall in love with the costumes featured in popular TV shows or movies.

Janie Bryant, who designed the costumes for the long-running “Mad Men” TV series, did three Mad Men collections for **Banana Republic**. “I had no idea that the fashion community or even the audience would be so excited about the clothes on the show,” she said. She was approached by Matthew Weiner, the show’s creator, about working with Banana Republic.

Having the backing of an entertainment project’s producer is paramount to making the collaboration with a retailer or fashion label successful. It also helps to have the costume designer involved in the project. “Matt told them [Banana Republic] that the only way to do a collection was with my help,” she said. “The three collections were very successful, and all of them sold out in two weeks.”

Lyn Paolo emphasized that having the costume designer on board is essential for a hot-selling collection. Paolo is the costume designer for the television series “Scandal,” starring Kerry Washington as Washington, D.C., crisis manager Olivia Pope. Washington’s character is always immaculately dressed in stylish and sophisticated clothing. “Olivia Pope has an iconic look,” Paolo said.

Paolo was approached by **The Limited** to create the “Scandal” collection, which she coordinated with Elliot Staples, head of design for The Limited. The first collection for Fall debuted last September. “We had huge discussions about being true to the character. I was not willing to do the collaboration if I was just designing fashion,” said Paolo, who has also worked on the TV series “The West Wing” and “E.R.” “I also think these collaborations truly only work if you have your producer backing you up.”

For Spring 2015, the collection centered around neutral colors in things such as wide-leg trousers, jackets, feminine blouses and outerwear.

She said The Limited collection sold \$30 million of clothes in seven months, but she has chosen not to go forward with a third collection. “I felt we did it and that was enough and let’s move on to something else,” she said.

Costume designer Arianne Phillips—known for her creations on movies including “Walk the Line,” “The Mod Squad” and recently “Kingsman: The Secret Service”—said creating a men’s collection based on the costumes worn by Colin Firth, who plays a spy, and other members of the “Kingsman” cast was an idea launched by Matthew Vaughn, the film’s director and cowriter of the screenplay. “He kept saying, ‘I have something I want you to do,’” she said.

Long before the movie appeared in movie theaters, Vaughn had been discussing selling a Savile Row–style men’s collection with **Mr. Porter**, the men’s section of the online high-fashion e-commerce site **Net-a-Porter**.

Phillips created a bespoke collection of tailored apparel manufactured in Britain from heritage manufacturers. Suits sold for \$1,200 to \$1,500. “The collection we created was available during **Men’s Fashion Week** in London in January, and the film launched in February,” Phillips said, noting the collection sold out quickly. She has been retained to do three more collections that will be exclusive to Mr. Porter, and there is the possibility that a “Kingsman” sequel will be made, which could mean more collections sold on Mr. Porter.

Translating TV and movie costumes into consumer fashion is a trend that has been growing in the past 10 to 15 years, said Lindsey Camell, director of retail development for partnerships and licensing for **Universal Studios**.


Camell put together the deal between Banana Republic and the movie “Anna Karenina” for a film-inspired fashion line curated by costume designer Jacqueline Durran, who won an **Academy Award** for the film. Camell also worked with **HSN**

(**Home Shopping Network**) to sell a fashion collection inspired by “Snow White and the Huntsman.”

The Universal Studios executive often starts working on film projects about one year before the movie debuts to coordinate a fashion collection with a retailer. She said fast-fashion retailers can’t think that far out and have a shorter time frame for launching these kinds of collections. “Film is different from a TV show that has multiple seasons,” she noted.

This crossover trend from film to fashion is good news for costume designers who do not receive movie residuals. Salvador Perez, president of the **Costume Designers Guild**, Local 892, in Los Angeles, said the guild has been pushing for years to get costume designers residuals, but the union has not been successful.

Perez, who works as a costume designer on “The Mindy Project,” said costume designers don’t set out to be fashion designers. But the extra revenue stream helps. “I like to say costume designers take the ordinary and make it extraordinary,” he said. “It seems people want to aspire to what they see on the screen.”

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