



Scandal Costume Designer Talks Scandal Style Secrets, Putting Kerry Washington in Color



The *Scandal* cast is back, and they're all more gorgeous than ever! So much so that when the official [fourth season cast portrait](#) was revealed on [TVGuide.com](#) on Sept. 9, featuring [Kerry Washington](#) and all of your favorite Gladiators in looks worthy of a black-tie affair, we went straight to the woman behind the glam: costume designer, **Lyn Paolo**.

As it turns out, the inspiration behind the refined looks came

from an unexpected source: the [2014 Met Gala](#) honoring couturier Charles James' fashions. "ABC had this great idea that our cast should be in evening attire," Paolo told **Us Weekly**. "I asked **Shonda Rhimes** if it would be okay for us to dress the men in white-tie and our ladies in ball gowns, as a homage to [this year's] Met Gala [honoree] Charles James."

Paolo quickly chose Brooks Brothers tuxes for the men. As for the ladies, she said she was "so lucky" to have found a beautiful dress and impeccable platinum jewelry for each, as it was the height of dress-shopping season for the [2014 Emmys](#) at the time of the shoot. "It was tricky because I asked my amazing assistant, Kristine Haag, to find either prime colors or pastels," Paolo told Us. "Talk about making it tough on your team."



Another point of note is that while **Bellamy Young** (in pink), **Darby Stanchfield** (in green) and **Katie Lowes** (in blue) were all in color, Washington, 37, was in her character Olivia Pope's preferred black and white. "There was a lot of discussion involved—should we change the palette? Should Olivia be in a color?" But no, "Kerry and I talked, and we loved the idea of her being in her traditional white, but this time there is an edge [with the black bodice by Vera Wang and black gloves by Gaspar Gloves]. I also love how our lovely actors frame her in their white tie."

For three seasons, Pope's crisp, clean, ladylike wardrobe has been beloved by viewers and fashion lovers alike. And yet, Paolo says that sartorial perfection is never on her mind. "I just want to tell the story that Shonda Rhimes and our amazing writers have come up with. For me, costume design is about telling the story and not about being perfect," the designer, who will be releasing a [limited-edition Scandal collection](#) with The Limited on Sept. 23, told Us.

If the [season four trailer](#), released Sept. 9, is to be believed, Olivia Pope is headed to a beach for some fun in the sun—and maybe some chic beachwear! Will we finally see our red wine-loving heroine working a serious caftan? "Shh! I think all of that is a secret right now," Paolo teased.