

ACCADEMIA DI BELLE ARTI DI CATANIA – TRIENNIO – A.A 2024-2025

PROF.SSA G. ARCIDIACONO – “INGLESE”

MODULO D (FASHION DESIGN+SCENOGRAFIA)

LIST A

(The Noughties, The Twenties, The Thirties)

- ❖ “The Twentieth Century”, by Clare Hibbert, Adam Hibbert, Vol. 8, in *A History of Fashion and Costume*, New York City, Facts on File Inc., Bailey Publishing Associates (July 1, 2005).

The Noughties

The dawn of the twentieth century was a time of excitement and optimism. The first skyscrapers were appearing on the skylines of cities such as Chicago and New York. In Paris, France, the World’s Fair of 1900 gave countries from around the world the chance to show off their latest achievements and inventions. Powered flight was just around the corner – the Wright brothers mastered it in December 1903.

The new century promised many changes and improvements, but at first, fashion remained much the same as it had been at the end of the nineteenth century. Styles for men, women, and children were extremely restrictive.

Hourglass Figures

For fashionable women at the turn of the century, the ideal body had an ample bosom, tiny waist, and large hips. Known as the hourglass or S-bend (because it followed the curves of a letter “S”), this silhouette was achieved by wearing a rigid, boned corset.

Helped by their maids, fashionable women usually changed clothes several times a day, wearing different outfits for morning, afternoon, and evening. Daytime clothes covered the whole body. Whether in dresses or separates, women wore high collars, puffed-out bodices, and full skirts, worn over layers of rustling petticoats.

Clothes were generally made by hand and involved enormous amounts of labor. Some dresses were embroidered with tiny flowers or draped with lace. Bodices or blouses were often pintucked, or decorated with sewn ribbons and bows.

From Teatime to Evening

The one time of day when women could escape their tight corsets was late afternoon. The tea gown was a loose, flowing gown worn before dressing for dinner. Comfortable but elegant, it was often made of light, floaty fabrics such as crêpe de chine, chiffon, or tulle. The most glamorous tea gowns were designed by exclusive couturiers, such as Lucile, Jacques Doucet, and Fortuny.

In the evening, wealthy women's dresses still swept the floor—some even had trains—but necklines plunged to reveal daring amounts of bosom. Sparkling beads and sequins decorated dresses, purses, and shoes.

At Work and Play - Women at Work

The satins, silks, and tulles worn by ladies of leisure were impractical for the growing numbers of independent middle-class women who went out to work. Sensible suits, known as tailormades, were aimed at governesses, typists, and store assistants. Made of hard-wearing tweed, which did not show the dirt, tailor-mades were also worn by wealthier women for traveling. They were teamed with a blouse which could be changed and washed more often.

Wearing separates, rather than an all-in-one dress, was popularized in the United States by an illustrated character known as the Gibson Girl. Created by artist Charles Gibson, she represented the new, modern woman and was often shown taking part in activities such as bicycling or playing tennis.

Men's Dress

Businessmen wore black morning coats with pinstriped trousers. Tweed or checked three-piece suits—a matching jacket, vest, and trousers—were also worn. All respectable men wore a hat outdoors, such as a derby, trilby, or even a straw boater.

On formal occasions, men still dressed in a top hat and frock coat, as they had in the 1800s. Originally based on a military coat, the frock coat was knee-length, came in at the waist, and was full at the back with pleats, buttons, and vents. It was worn with a vest and checked or pinstriped trousers.

The Twenties

Known as the *Roaring Twenties*, the decade that followed the war was a time of excess and partying—for the rich at least. Relieved to be alive, the young indulged in the latest dance crazes, listened to jazz on the radio, and went to the movies. *The Jazz Singer* (1927) was the first “talkie,” or film with sound. Before then, people watched silent movies with musical accompaniment.

The twenties saw greater freedom for women, as suffragettes’ protests finally paid off and many gained the vote for the first time. Married women also had the option of planning their families: Margaret Sanger had opened her first birth control clinic in the United States in 1916, and Marie Stopes opened Britain’s first in 1921.

Not everyone enjoyed the twenties. Some of the young men who had survived the war suffered a mental disorder known as shell shock, haunted by the horrors they had witnessed. And the twenties ended with the devastating stockmarket crash of 1929, which marked the beginning of a decade of economic depression.

Flappers!

“Flapper” was the name given to fun-loving young women in the twenties. Flappers wore shockingly short skirts—some just below the knee—and hid any womanly curves.

Tight underwear kept the chest flat, and drop waists hid the hips. Dresses, often in sheer fabrics, complemented dance moves: pleats gave freedom of movement, while fringing, beads, and tassels swayed with the beat.

During the daytime, the most fashionable young women wore comfortable twinsets (knitted tops and cardigans), like those designed by French couturier Coco Chanel.

Chanel’s clothes often had a nautical theme, and she popularized trousers for women. The boyish look was completed with shortcropped, or bobbed, hair, worn under a bell-shaped cloche hat.

For those who could not afford couture, ready-made clothing was becoming more widely available in department stores, while cheaper sewing machines made it possible for ordinary women to copy some high-fashion styles at home.

Accessories

Showy costume jewelry was popular in the twenties, including enormous fake gems, known as paste or rhinestones. Long strings of pearls sat well on a boyish flat chest and swung about to emphasize energetic dance moves.

Evening purses had tassels for the same reason. Smoking was taken up by the “fastest” young women and even this had its glamorous accessories—long, jewel-encrusted cigarette holders, as well as slim cigarette cases and lighters.

The Great Gatsby

The look for fashionable young men during the twenties was captured in the fictional character of Jay Gatsby, created by the American author F. Scott Fitzgerald for his novel, *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Gatsby was wealthy, well connected, and dressed in lounge suits of pale linen, checked tweed, or soft, gray flannel.

The style for young men was relaxed. Suits had wide shoulders, roomy trousers, and modern zip flies instead of buttons. Informal shirts even had soft collars, instead of stiff, starched ones. Brogues were the usual footwear for daytime.

The Thirties

After the high-living twenties, the thirties were a sober time. Following the Wall Street Crash (1929), economies slumped and the Great Depression took hold, with millions finding themselves unemployed.

In the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal went some way toward providing help, but there was more trouble to come. Countries such as Germany and Japan began to build up their military power. The decade ended with the outbreak of World War II (1939–1945).

Fashion reflected the difficult times. Clothes were in subdued colors, such as black, gray, navy, and brown. Many families could not afford new clothes and managed with hand-me-downs. Designers responded to the depression by creating more ready-to-wear outfits in less costly fabrics, such as cotton and rayon.

Schiaparelli the Surrealist

One of the most outrageous designers of the decade was Italian-born Elsa Schiaparelli.

She was linked with the Surrealists, a group of artists who produced fantastical images, often putting ordinary objects in surprising places. Schiaparelli used Surrealist ideas in fashion. She collaborated with Spanish artist Salvador Dali on her unusual hat designs, which were shaped to look like an upturned shoe, a lamb chop, an ice-cream cone, and a bird!

Masculine Style

Not all women chose feminine dresses and skirts. Swedish actress Greta Garbo wore masculine tailored trousers with a belted trenchcoat and a beret. She also popularized the "slouch hat," after wearing it in *A Woman of Affairs* (1928).

Created by the Hollywood dresser Adrian, this outside cloche was pulled down over the forehead. It influenced hat design throughout the thirties.

LIST A- GLOSSARY-2024-25

- Bead**= perla, perlina.
Blouse= camicetta.
Bodice= corsetto, corpino.
Bosom= petto, parte superiore dell'abito, corsetto.
Bow = fiocco.
Brogue= mocassino scozzese.
Checked= agg. a quadretti, a quadri.
Cloche hat= cappello a campana.
Daring= agg. audace, coraggioso.
Derby= bombetta.
Drop waist= vita bassa.
Embroidered= ricamato.
Flowing= (agg.) largo.
Fringing= frangia.
Frock coat= redingote.
Hand-me-down= capo di seconda mano.
Hard-wearing= resistente, robusto.
Hips= anche, fianchi.
Hourglass= agg. *curvy*, donna formosa.
Lace= pizzo, merletto.
Lounge suit= abito maschile da giorno.
Neckline= scollatura.
Noughties (pl. only)= the first decade of a century (from 1900 to 1900).
Paste= strass.
Petticoat= sottogonna.
Pin-tuck= nervatura.
Pinstriped= gessato, a righe.
Pleat= piega.
Puff-out= *swell*, gonfiare.
Purse= borsetta, borsellino.
Rhinestone= diamante sintetico.
Ribbon= nastro, fettuccia.
Roomy= spazioso, ampio.
Rustling= agg. Frusciante.
Satin= raso.
Sequin= lustrino.
Sewn= (*sew, (sewn) sewed, sewed*) cucito, attaccato.
Sheer= trasparente, velato (fabric).
Slouch hat= cappello a tesa larga (slouch: sciatto, cadente).
Starched= inamidato.
Stiff= rigido.

Straw boater= paglietta.

Subdued colour= colore tenue.

Tailor-made= agg. su misura.

Tassels= fiocchetti.

Teamed= abbinato.

To clung to= avvinghiarsi a, stringersi a.

To drape= decorare.

To master= diventare esperto, padroneggiare.

To plunge= gettarsi, tuffarsi, sporgere.

To sway= ondeggiare, oscillare.

Train= strascico.

Trilby= cappello floscio di feltro, fedora, lobbia.

Vent= spacco.

Vest= (*waistcoat*), gilet.

Waist= vita, girovita.