



THE GOLDEN AGE OF FASHION ILLUSTRATION CONNIE GRAY

The Arts Society Fylde
Lowther Pavilion Theatre
4 September 2024 at 2.00pm

Back in July we ended the last season of lectures with hopes for a good summer - with rather mixed results, frankly. Now, as summer starts perhaps to fade, it's time for a warm welcome back to The Arts Society Fylde as we start our 16th Season of lectures.

The welcome this month includes Connie Gray on her first visit to our Society; she will remind us that clothing and fashion have been depicted in art since the earliest civilisations. And yet, it was not until the early 20th century that fashion in art became a defined genre recognised as an essential artistic medium in publicising fashion and lifestyle to a wider audience away from the inner court circles and high society journals.

Ms Gray will help us discover fashion artists such as Georges Le Pape (1887-1971) who was to be instrumental in the establishment of the Art Nouveau movement in France in the early 1900s, Erté (1892-1990) the 'Godfather of Deco' who created, to great acclaim, some of the most recognisable images of the 1920s and 30s and the distinguished American artist Carl Erickson (1891 - 1958) who elevated fashion through his social realism to a new level of sophistication on both sides of the Atlantic. We will explore the role fashion illustration played in democratising fashion and why this period in the history of fashion is known as the 'golden era'.

CONNIE GRAY

With a background in fashion and broadcasting, Connie Gray is the leading specialist in 20th century fashion illustration with a special interest in the history of French haute couture. She sits on advisory boards at The Courtauld Institute of Art, London and Special Collections at FIT, New York. As a curator, lecturer and archivist, she works closely with institutions and foundations on acquisitions, conservation and exhibition projects, including most recently: *Pioneers of Fashion* in partnership with The Lee Miller Archives, *Crown to Couture* at Kensington Palace and *100 Years of Fashion Illustration* at The Society of Illustrators, New York. As the lead curator for the art gallery Gray M.C.A, she curates the critically acclaimed exhibition *Drawing on Style* that celebrates the masters of fashion illustration. She hosts a series of 'Fashion Talks' for leading luxury clients in the UK and has presented a series of masterclasses, talks and short films on French haute couture between the wars: required viewing and reading for students of fashion.



SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

100 Years of Fashion Illustration, Cally Blackman, Laurence King Publishing, 2017

Fashion & The Art of Pochoir, April Callahan & Cassidy Zachary, Thames & Hudson, 2015

Image: Carl Erickson (1891 - 1958) © Special Collections Fashion Institute of Technology, New York