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## COSTUME DESIGNER – BEHIND THE SCENES

Modern society is used to hearing such job title as a costume designer. For most it sounds luxurious though, at the best, they have a vague idea of this person's responsibilities and job description. Only tiny minority is informed about real scope of work, starting with its historical background, necessity to make research for the costume to be properly made, budgeting, work on the site and other skills that remain behind the scenes.

The film industry gained popularity in the late nineteenth century. These were mostly films about folk heroes or cowboys dressed in bold and unusual costumes for the average person. The twenty-first century is flooded with a variety of film genres: from historical documentaries to futuristic and post-apocalyptic films. Each has its fans who are so impressed by the idea of a particular film that begin to imitate the main characters, their behavioral style and clothes. As a result, we form an opinion about a character through visual perception. And costume designers work to properly form this opinion throughout the movie. They work closely with directors and screenwriters to understand the idea and the spirit.

Costume designers get to know the characters long before the actors to play; they analyze the era, historical period, the human nature, lifestyle, habits, psycho-type and movements to be performed. After that, they interpret all in colors, shapes and sizes. This is how the character's featuring colors and shapes of clothing appear. For example, a positive, mobile character is likely to wear clothes with a warmer shade and a casual style.

However, it is not that simple, because filming a movie has a budget, not a big part of which is allocated for costumes. No wonder why costumers are not free in their expences when looking for fabrics and accessories for a costume. Sometimes, costumes can be made from ready-made clothes, mixing different brands and creating outfits for characters. However, the purchased clothes might either not fit the actor well, have unnecessary details, or unproperly fit the genre of the movie. So, here designers apply their sewing and cutting skills, which significantly reduces costume costs.

For most designer's work is finished at the stage of the approved costume design, though it is not true. The costume designer has to be on the site during entire period of filming, he/she has to see whether the lighting affects the visual perception of the outfit, monitor the position of the costume details, the condition of the costume and the picture that is created in the camera lens. Besides, emergency cases are not excluded, when the costumer has to immediately eliminate the defects or provide a copy of the costume. Moreover, the costume designer is responsible for storing and caring about the costumes after filming.

"The Last of Us" - a post-apocalyptic dynamic and touching novelty of the 2023 series, based on the video game of the same name is an example of impeccable work of a costume designer. Cynthia Summers was responsible for both 'ordinary' images of the characters living in the broken post-pandemic world, and the ones of the 'infected', who looked extraordinary, for 20 years. She shared stories from behind the scenes about the process of creating these images, noting that sometimes it took more than three days to find the main character's jacket alone, because it had to look post-apocalyptic, not having any signs of the civilized modern world, similarly to the rest of the costume. The look of the Infected was being created for a very long time, in collaboration with the makeup artists, paying attention to every tiny detail, every mushroom pore, sprout and plant. During filming, they had to manually make clothes dirty, bloody and wet to fit the events that were taking place with the characters.

People mainly praise directors, actors and scenarists and do not realize how much work had to be done by a designer to make the movie characters look authentic and natural. To conclude, to be a costume designer is not only to be able to draw, but also to be able to analyze, negotiate, instantly find solutions to various problems, do research, be a "psychologist", a tailor, and have basic skills in film lighting techniques. In major cases, all this unfortunately remains behind the scenes.