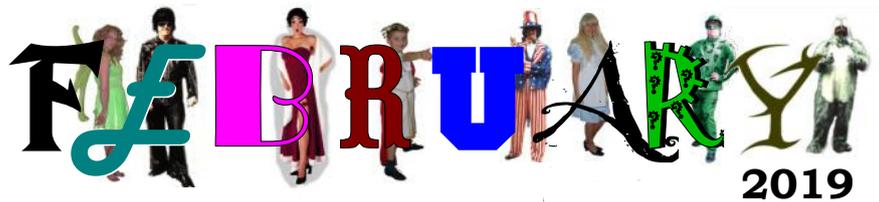


# Antrix Costumes



# & Themes Newsletter

## What's New at Antrix? Awards Season goes Populist

Recently, we have mentioned to several people that we are gradually aiming to reduce our costume stock, due to a lack of space. However, since the start of the year, true to form, we actually spent some time increasing, rather than decreasing, the number of outfits we hold. (One of those too good to miss opportunities - more about this in the next issue!)

This month in preparation for World Book Day on Thursday 7th March, we have mainly been concentrating on our children's costume range, particularly those relating to storybook characters. Most of the costumes we hold, are in the 3-11 year age group.

The relevant children's costume pages (both hire and sale) have been updated on our website and although we endeavour to have pictures of most costumes, we still need pictures of some children's outfits.

If you, or anyone else you know, has a child who likes dressing up, and (very importantly) is happy to have their photo taken, please contact us, or download a 'model application' form, from our website.

We are also looking for Adults who enjoy dressing up to add to our list of models. If you are interested, please get in touch.

**Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to keep up-to-date.**

**Coming up in the  
March issue**

**Milestone  
Birthdays &  
Anniversaries**

The end of February sees the finish of the Awards Season, and it is fair to say that things have not gone quite as many predicted: For us Brits, the highlight of the major awards was Olivia Colman's entertaining and engagingly chaotic acceptance speeches. However, her film, *The Favourite*, did not do much in other categories at the Academy Awards: For instance, after some success at the BAFTAs, when it came the Oscars, where the Americans usually love a good historical costume film, both *The Favourite* and *Mary Queen of Scots*, lost out to *Black Panther* for Best Costuming.

Aside from this ground-breaking recognition of the popularity of superhero blockbuster films (the populist trend also being seen with the honouring of *Bohemian Rhapsody*, in several categories), it makes a change to have a sample of Oscar-winning costuming available on the mass market. Well, in theory: At time of writing (25<sup>th</sup> Feb.) a quick search of the Internet reveals very few results for 'Black Panther Fancy Dress' on Amazon (except for a Chinese site offering an outfit for around £105 and a two week delivery time). On sites relating to the licensed manufacturer, only children's outfits were available. Stock levels may change in the light of the renewed interest, but experience teaches us not to hold our breath.

As mentioned previously, manufacturers pay a price for the exclusive right to make the licensed costumes, but tend to produce budget sell-through outfits, in order to recoup their outlay. The build-quality of the costumes may therefore not always meet up to expectations, and in most cases, are not of a standard to be hireable multiple times (unlike most of our costumes). This means that they become part of the fast fashion/cheap clothing disposal problem, which has recently received so much publicity.

Another problem is that for these licensed character costumes you are lucky if you get more than one costume per film: The Avengers series has allowed a group of ensemble costume characters, but for Black Panther, there is just the one. Of course in theory, the outfit is not gender-specific but it still limits choice. There are dedicated cosplayers who make detailed copies of costumes to channel their heroes, but commercial concerns like ourselves, cannot do the same because of the restrictions of the licensing and copyright rules.

We mentioned *Bohemian Rhapsody* earlier in this article. One of our most popular male hire costumes for last year was *Freddie Mercury*. The yellow jacket and white trousers is probably one of his most iconic images. Over the past few years we have noticed a trend amongst the music industry not to stand out from the crowd. The start of the noughties saw a number of individual stars (primarily females) who had a distinctive look, think Shania Twain, Cheryl (aka Cheryl 'Cole', 'Tweedie', etc), Christina Aguilera, Katy Perry, Lady Gaga, etc.. Nowadays, it tends to be more about the music, rather than the stars themselves, even Lady Gaga has toned down her act.



This means that some of the traditional music award ceremonies such as the Brits, can be rather bland when it comes to definitive looks. It could also explain why many of the recent costume 'pop' music parties, have people dressing up as musical 'heroes' from the 20th, rather than the 21st Century.



[www.antrixonline.co.uk](http://www.antrixonline.co.uk)

8 Waldron Drive Loose Maidstone Kent ME15 9TG

Tel: 01622 744711

Email: [antrix@btconnect.com](mailto:antrix@btconnect.com)

Facebook: Antrix Costume Hire Twitter: @antrixonline

## Children's Costumes

World Book Day, which is always held on the first Thursday of March (although some schools change the day, to suit the timetable/teaching schedule) is probably one of our most popular reasons for children requiring outfits.



Here at Antrix, World Book Day, can sometimes be a bit hit and miss. Some of this can be down to the weather, snow in early March is never a good prospect and last year, the 'Beast from the East' definitely put the dampers on children dressing up. Other factors that affect demand include how enterprising parents (and grandparents) can be in rustling up costumes. These days this quite often means hitting the internet for ideas/costumes, or picking up outfits with the weekly shop. Another factor is what the child is actually prepared to wear.



From a costuming point of view, stocking children's costumes can be a logistical nightmare. It is one of the few areas in our business, where we probably have as many costumes for sale as we do for hire. We are not allowed to manufacture children's outfits ourselves, as these come under the Toy Safety Regulations. This means children's fancy dress/dressing up clothes should be vigorously tested, prior to being allowed on the market. It is important to note that not all costumes which can be obtained off the internet necessarily conform with these rules.



We are often asked "what are our most popular costumes?" When it comes to children's outfits it really depends upon what's in vogue. Reviewing our costume inventory, the most popular boys' storybook outfits for hire are Harry Potter and Willie Wonka. For girls, it is Dorothy and Alice.



## Dressing up for Easter and other Spring Events

### Costumes for Mardi Gras

In most years, Mardi Gras festivities usually take place in February, but with Easter being so late in 2019, on 5th March, two days before Shrove Tuesday or Mardi Gras.



This country normally sees Pancake races, but not much else to mark the day. However, in other parts of the world people really celebrate. The three main places that focus on Mardi Gras, each in different ways are: Venice, Rio De Janeiro & New Orleans.

Aside from the areas of activity already listed, most of the other requests for costumes/fancy dress we get during Spring tend to be general and themed fancy dress parties; Murder Mystery evenings; milestone birthdays, anniversaries etc.; and of course Easter.



## Are you Coming Together for Comic Relief's Red Nose Day on 15th March 2019?



Creating your own outfits for 'The Day' is part of the fun, and maximises your fundraising potential. However, if you are stuck for ideas, we have a page of odd pairings in the Couples Costumes section of our website at [http://www.antrixonline.co.uk/antrixcostumesmaidstone/antrix\\_costumes\\_for\\_couples.html](http://www.antrixonline.co.uk/antrixcostumesmaidstone/antrix_costumes_for_couples.html)



Not surprisingly, the most requested Easter outfit tends to be that of the Bunny or Chick. We do have several of each (particularly rabbits). The other option for Easter is the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. Alice once more is a featured outfit, as well as the obvious Mad Hatter, Dormouse, March Hare and White Rabbit.

More information on our services can be found on our website, [www.antrixonline.co.uk](http://www.antrixonline.co.uk)

If you have found this newsletter of interest and would like to receive future issues (and have not already registered with us) you can do so by the following methods:-

**Follow Antrix Costumes** on Facebook or Twitter, where a link will be posted, when the next issue becomes available

**Follow the link on our website, or email your contact details to Antrix,** to receive future copies in your inbox

**Alternatively, you can write to Antrix at 8 Waldron Drive Loose Maidstone Kent ME15 9TG** to receive copies by post.

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

**Peter & Anne Rigby,  
Antrix Costumes & Themes  
Tel: 01622 744711 e:antrix@btconnect.com**