

ANTRIX Costumes & Themes Newsletter



What's New at Antrix?

The Chinese may have sent a probe to the far (dark) side of the moon earlier this month (and the moon itself turned blood red on 21 January), but here at Antrix we have been working much closer to home.

Over the past few months, we have gradually re-launched various items, which apparently have been much missed.

Aside from this revamped newsletter (last seen in 2012), the following can also be found/downloaded from our website.

Please note If you require hard copies, or regular updates, we can also post or email you anything of interest:-

Antrix Costume Hire Pricelist (Autumn/Winter 2018).

Antrix Calendar for 2019 (doublesided A4 calendar) – download a PDF or laminated copies available on request.

Ad-hoc blogs throughout the year.

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

**Coming up in the
February issue
Costumes for
School Events,
including
World Book Day
(7 March)
Red Nose Day
(15 March)
& other
Spring Events**

Films, Costumes & Awards

At the start of the year, the media are full of details of forthcoming films, many of which may inspire people's future costume choices. We are also currently in Awards Season (Golden Globes, BAFTA, Oscars, etc.), looking back on films made in 2018, though some have still to be seen.

In the past, with the exception of recognition for outstanding effects and tech wizardry, superhero blockbusters (*see overleaf*) did not often get a look in when it came to 'the major prizes'. This year, several 'populist' films made it to the shortlist and *'Black Panther'* is a 'finalist' at the Oscars - up for Best Film and several other categories. Previously, Awards have tended to go to 'worthy' films, and/or actors who have suffered for their art (usually 'going ugly' or gaining/losing weight), so the big winners are not normally of great concern to us as costumiers: *'The Oscars'* and *'Titanic'* often turn up as party themes. The Academy Awards have been running since 1929 (1st one held on 16 May), so in theory there is plenty of film choice, whilst *'Titanic'* is a rather classier variation on the *'What You Were Wearing When the Boat Went Down'* theme.

This year, things may be more interesting, with the *'A Star is Born'* re-remake, *'Bohemian Rhapsody'* (hated by critics, loved by the masses) and a historical period piece in the running. The 'Star' is Lady Gaga making a great job of not being Lady Gaga, and the historical contribution is *'The Favourite'* (already emerging as the real award favourite, although the diversity of nominations and films may create an open field, at both the BAFTAs and the Oscars).

'The Favourite' is 18th century, but not the type of costume that we at Antrix usually provide: Most tend to be later ones from the Georgian era, around the time of the French Revolution (*Les Misérables* and *Marie Antoinette*). That is not to say we do not have any Stuart costumes (Queen Anne was the last of the Stuart dynasty – the second daughter of James, Duke of York, brother of Charles II). The costumes we stock tend to be Royalist & Cavalier style, as seen in the heading above.

Director of *'The Favourite'*, Yorgos Lanthimos, has an interesting film back-catalogue, including *'The Lobster'* (also featuring Olivia Colman), in which people who were unable to find a love soulmate within a deadline, were turned into animals. Some of those who have seen this new work, whilst noting the elegant costumes, and admiring the work of the stars – 'good to see a film with three strong female leading characters', have been taken aback by the squalor, language and lewdness portrayed. So perhaps we are not expecting a surge of interest in costumes of this period.

Meanwhile, another much publicised period piece, *'Mary Queen of Scots'*, has not done as well on nominations: It has two strong female leads, but the 'look' helps set the tone, and hence the film is up for Costume/Make-up and Styling Oscars (albeit against *'The Favourite'*).

The BAFTA's are on Sunday, 10 February and the Academy Awards, two weeks later on Sunday, 24 February 2019.



www.antrixonline.co.uk

8 Waldron Drive Loose Maidstone Kent ME15 9TG

Tel: 01622 744711

Email: antrix@btconnect.com

Facebook: Antrix Costume Hire Twitter: @antrixonline

Character Costumes

In general, nowadays it would be fair to say that costume requests for film-related themes tend to come from three main sources:-

a) **Disney characters** – aside from the ‘classic’ characters, Disney is currently remaking several of its back catalogue as live-action/CGI animation mixes: Aladdin is imminent and Dumbo will be out later this year. There is also a follow-up to the highly popular Frozen film – they just could not let it go.

b) **Characters from the Marvel Universe:** Used to be just Spiderman, now a wide range of costumed heroes fight evil in a multitude of forms. These films also see some ‘character cross-over’ to show the interconnection of the Universe. High-spot of this year should be Captain Marvel, a female protagonist going some way to counter the argument that there is a lack of female superheroes (with the honourable exception of Wonder Woman).....

c)who is, of course, part of the ‘rival’ **DC Comics pantheon.** Again, with exception of WW, arguably, DC have not had quite the same success with the exploits of members of the Justice League as Marvel has with The Avengers and Co. Deaths, ‘dark-sides’ and alternative universes have not worked quite so well, and it seems that the classic DC villains reimagined have been more successful: Suicide Squad revitalised the Joker and brought Harley Quinn to prominence, and the Joker is set to return yet again (and again) in two different films. Meanwhile, the classic/original *Batman* and *Superman* suits continue to be a popular request.

About that... The licensed character costume thing can be a problem. Costumes for Marvel/DC characters are part of the merchandising that goes with the films: Large companies bid for the right to make the ‘official’ costumes (to the exclusion of others), they select some of the major characters and produce their versions. Because of the ‘exclusivity fee’ and the manufacturing costs, these versions are ‘sell-through’ mass-produced outfits which can offer better returns. The gamble is that the film is a success and the costume take-up is good.

The downside to this is that the ‘look’ might not be all you expect – recently a Wasp costume was on offer, but did not come with any wings! To be fair, this can also happen with non-licensed costumes – what you see in the picture is not always what you get in the packet – most good websites will tell you what you actually get for your money, so it is always a good idea to check.

From our point of view, because there are so many sites offering these sell-through outfits, we tend not to play the licensed character game: A character can be popular, but enthusiasm for it can be here today and gone tomorrow. Even with enduring characters featuring in several film franchise episodes, outfits can be redesigned for merchandising purposes for each new film – we have several different versions of Batman thanks to TV, films and cartoons. Where we do think a character is worth the investment, we tend to try to upgrade the basic costume model to give it the edge over others who have bought the same outfit. Alternatively, we may turn our minds to creating something which works within the theme, but this option can require a little more time and effort for both our clients and ourselves.

About Antrix

We set up Antrix in December 1990, as a Costume Hire and Desktop Publishing business. At that time we had a stock of around 400 costumes.

Since then our costume stock has quadrupled in size and we now have over 1700 hire costumes and 200 costumes for sale. In addition to our allocated costume stock we also have hundreds of costume accessories, allowing us to create bespoke individual costumes for our customers.

The Desktop Publishing side of the business has meant that we produce all our own literature, including business cards, headed paper, flyers, posters, calendars, newsletters and other marketing materials.

We also offer an in-house design service to other individuals and businesses, which includes small print-runs, laminating & comb binding services, plus we have an A3 copy/printing facility.

If you have a special birthday or anniversary coming up and would like a name and/or age badge manufactured, we also produce 58mm round badges. at very reasonable rates We also have over 1000 slogan and picture badges available.

More information on our services can be found on our website,

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 Antrix your contact details, to receive future copies in your inbox

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