The Romance of SCOTLAND

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The gracious ritual of taking afternoon tea

Behind the Scenes: Costuming THE CROWN
Behind the SEAMS

The historical television series The Crown has enamored audiences not only for its peek into the private side of the British monarchy but also for impeccable costuming that helps bring the characters to life.

As the longest-reigning sovereign in British history, Queen Elizabeth II has presided over nearly seven decades of royal affairs, whether of high pageantry or of a more informal nature. In this acclaimed Netflix series, which filmed its third season this year, viewers are treated to a panoply of royal attire, ranging from ceremonial regalia to casual clothing, in addition to the in-depth account of events occurring during Elizabeth's tenure.

While few people have been privy to a behind-the-camera view of The Crown, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library in Delaware has made it possible for visitors to feast their eyes on the fabulous wardrobe worn by the cast, which in the first two seasons starred Claire Foy as Elizabeth with Vanessa Kirby portraying her sister, Margaret. Though the initial intention was only to spotlight a single costume during
The gleaming gold Imperial Mantle, adorned with symbols significant to both the monarchy and the United Kingdom, such as the rose representing England, is layered over a second robe, known as the supernumerary, and a pleated white dress. These exquisite pieces by British costume designer Michele Clapton replicate the majestic finery worn by Queen Elizabeth II at her coronation in 1953.
the museum's Christmastime offerings, further discussions resulted in the venue developing a larger display titled *Costuming THE CROWN*, which features forty ensembles and will run through January 5, 2020.

“The exhibition examines costumes from public and private moments depicted in the show, so it includes costumes that are replicas of ones documented in historic photographs and film footage—like the wedding dresses—as well as costumes that were imagined to depict private occasions of the fictional royal family,” explains exhibitions manager Kim Collison, who works alongside estate historian Jeff Groff and curatorial department head Linda Eaton to bring a bit of the Windsor mystique stateside.

Divided into four sections, the exposition leads guests through displays illustrating how designers Michele Clapton and Jane Petrie created garments that aided in the development of the characters. From the shimmering gowns and medal-adorned military uniforms to the padded body suit that helped transform John Lithgow into statesman Winston Churchill, the meticulous attention to detail is a costume-design coup.

“People are clearly captivated by the coronation robes and regalia, and they have enjoyed the wedding dresses—replicas of both Princess Elizabeth's and Princess Margaret’s,” says Kim. “But our visitor's survey indicates that Princess Margaret's hand-painted and beaded gown with the pockets is a strong favorite.”
Opposite: Among the costumes on display at Winterthur are a Champagne-hued gown with exquisite hand-embroidered and beaded-floral appliqués, above left, and a pretty filac strapless dress, below left. This page, clockwise from above: Prince Philip portrayed Matt Smith wore this naval uniform commonly seen in the British colonies. Claire Foy sported the brown polka-dot suit as Elizabeth during a 1952 visit to Kenya, while she donned this blue gown to portray meeting Jacqueline and John F. Kennedy. A swing coat with pencil skirt illustrates Princess Margaret's fashion sense.