

Tinsel and tatters

WHO NEEDS NEW GOWNS AND FAIRY GODMOTHERS? INDEPENDENT CINDERELLAS SHOULD HEAD TO THE BALL IN VINTAGE FINERY

Photography by Victor Yuan
Fashion styling by Joan Campbell

01 Softly faded chiffon gown with pleated chiffon bodice.

02 Late 40s pastel coloured gown with a sequin embroidered bodice and frothy skirt made of many layers of soft tulle. Both from a selection at RetroStuff-etc. Ribbon belt, model's own.

Delicate, ethereal and prettily imperfect, vintage dresses make a statement. Softly faded, even slightly damaged they speak of higher aims than simply grabbing the spotlight. They demonstrate an ability to appreciate the feel of an old piece of fabric whether it be silk, rayon, georgette, satin, lame, crepe or even artificial silk... they all drape beautifully and move with the body.

The vintage dress aficionado would never be eclipsed at the Christmas Party by colleagues bedecked in high street sequins and spangles; she shines in a truly unique way. She is also wise to the transitory charms of the cheap copy. Well-known high street brands have all tried to emulate the vintage look but the concept is diluted when you see the same garment hanging on a rail ▶



02



03 Headdress and corsage accessorise a 1930s pale lemon lace slip dress.

04 Crinkled chiffon chemise worn over silk slip gown trimmed with little rosebuds. Feather corsage, RetroStuff-etc. Belt, model's own.

05 Softly faded chiffon gown with pleated chiffon bodice.

in any size and every colour. The prints can be copied but the fabrics do not feel or hang in the same way and the lack of detailing spoils the whole effect.

These stunning original gowns belong to Flick Ekins, whose collection of dresses runs into hundreds. She chooses them for the detail and loves translucent fabrics that photograph so well: "If I see a piece which I know will give me an image such as those featured here, I snap it up." Some of her clothes are too fragile to be worn but Flick goes to great trouble to ensure their beauty is recorded. ●●● **Beth Smith**

Gowns from a selection at Flick's Image Collection and RetroStuff-etc.

T: 0845 009 2035



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