

Takeaways from Actors' Think Tank, February 16, 2023

Maria Hooper - Costume Designer

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Shelby Hightower

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I learned so much, but something that stuck was to have the 'problem' conversation early. It helps no one to stay quiet about an issue, thinking that maybe you can handle it, because then it has the potential to become an even bigger issue. Just be open!

Sandra Bulk

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Maria, I learned so much from you today. Thank you! I think the biggest thing that I didn't understand before is that costume design and wardrobe are completely separate and each has its own union. That really opened my eyes to the distinct, yet symbiotic, roles and responsibilities of each department.

Rich Henkels

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Game of Thrones took several years to get their costume designs and their process down. That sticks out for me, as I tended to think that while somethings evolve, I wouldn't expect costume design for a period piece to take time. The beauty? You never would have known as a viewer.

Thomas Michael Harding

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So many great takeaways that I'll save for other's replies. Mine is a confession. "Costume and Wardrobe are two different departments." After much time on many sets both large and small I'm embarrassed to say I didn't know that. My bad and thanks for the learning.

Lindsay Michelle Reed

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Give accurate measurements to the wardrobe department ASAP when they ask for them!

Shauna Hurley-Hansen

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My biggest takeaway from Maria was her own definition of her creative and imaginative job. Maria said that at the end of the day her job is to help the Actor's character come through. She is part of the creation. Her love of what she does was present from beginning to end today.

Gabi Faye

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Save your damn measurements on a PDF on your phone and make it easily accessible! Do not be the person to hold up the production because you don't have this info on hand. Every department is working hard and on a deadline, so help others help you by being prepared!

Shelley Brietling

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I did not realize how important it is to have a "measurement sheet". Now I know how to take the measurements and what is needed to make it a very valuable tool for myself, the Costume Designer and Wardrobe Dept.

Thank you Maria for your expertise!

Tyler McKenzie

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Be confident in who YOU are and YOUR body. Never apologize for that. It was also nice to know that even though I'm not Harrison Ford, I can still suggest costume pieces!

Mariel McIntosh

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Maria's session with us was great! I loved when she spoke about the collaborative process that sometimes happens behind the scenes. Costume designers play an integral part in creating the mood and capturing the essence of characters.

Paul Blumenthal

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Maria gave us a snapshot of the day in the life for the costuming department. Mornings are the toughest for the wardrobe team and they hardly ever get breakfast. She stressed that costumes take longer and cost more to acquire regardless how simple they seem. There are always continuity issues when doing procedural/episodics since you do not know when the film shoot may be used, and the costuming work must be available for the entire shoot. It's the responsibility for the actors to bring back the clothing on a hanger since wardrobe, who does the laundry, can't go home until the clothing is finished for the day.

Victoria Stevens

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I am so happy that I got to listen into this zoom call with Maria. I learned so much about costuming that I really didn't know. I loved how Maria explained what costume designers focus on when it comes to what the camera sees. When she was pointing out the outfits on Game of Thrones and how the most important part of the dress was shoulders up, I was just

amazed. I went back to the show and looked and saw exactly what she explained. I really enjoyed hearing what her day was like on set. I will definitely keep in mind that when asked to send your sizes, send right away.

Luca Cundo

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"The first fitting is the right time to bring up your concerns"

Justine Reiss

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Come to a fitting like the meeting that it is, not on your phone, with an open heart and BE KIND. This is the time to bring any issues up with your costuming, so there is no backtracking. Going back to producers to get things approved later is a nightmare for the wardrobe staff and makes our job difficult.

Roz Jamal

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My takeaway from this very informative session is that Costume and Wardrobe are distinctly different and that talent's prompt reply to size requests is desired and appreciated. An immediate reply is seen as professional.

Jeannette Nina

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You really opened my eyes to how much the Costume Designer collaborates with the writer to tell the story and also help the actor get into character through wardrobe. Thank you for the fantastic tips!

Dina Laura

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"If it's in the room, it's already in the scope of my vision." If you see a costume piece you like, Maria wants you to be comfortable, because costuming is a collaboration.