Dress - Delphos

Textile and Costume Collection

Accession Nr.:	2001.213.1
Artist/Maker:	Fortuny, Mariano
Date of production:	(presumably)
Place of production:	Venice
Materials:	silk
Techniques:	pleated
Dimensions:	length: 118 cm length: 127 cm chest: 72 cm súlya: 130 g

An example of the renowned Delphos gown of the multifaceted artist Mariano Fortuny (1871–1949) came into the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts in 2001. The original owner of this casual dress made in the 1910s was Klára Zichy (1875–1946), the wife of Endre Hadik-Barkóczy and considered one of Hungary's most beautiful women. This dress was considered a luxury item and was made fashionable by the famous celebrities of the day, the dancer Isadora Duncan and the actress Sarah Bernhardt. The person who dreamt up the Delphos gown was Fortuny's wife, Henriette Negrin (1877–1965), and so the patent was registered under her name.

This pleated dress created in 1907 and called the Delphos was probably inspired by the statue "The Charioteer of Delphi," which was discovered in 1896 in three parts. The original purpose of this richly pleated dress was to show off the natural beauty of the female body without a corset. A genuine movement had begun in several areas of Europe to free women from this unhealthy piece of attire, however it remained in style despite this.

This Greek-inspired dress was at first only worn as a housedress, but it proved to be too long for this. It was possible to adjust the length and width of the gown by pulling a cord adorned with glass Murano beads running along the side seams and the arm holes. The dense, vertical pleating, which may have contained as many as 450 folds, was first made by hand, and then by using heated copper or ceramic rods. Fortuny also designed dress materials himself. Besides black, the Delphos gown was also available in coral red or ultramarine blue. It was worn with a belt or some other Fortuny creation, such as a Knossos scarf or a tunic inspired by the Greek Peplos.

Literature

- Szerk.: Szilágyi András: Department of Textiles. "Delphos" ladies' dress and tunic *Ars Decorativa 21*, 21.. Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 2002. - 147-148.old. (Pásztor Emese)

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