LEGENDARY AUTHORS
And the Clothes They Wore
Terry Newman

There is only one thing more interesting than a writer, and that’s a stylish writer. The shape and twist of their hair, how they hold a cigarette, or penchant for wearing a particular item is their creative DNA on display, whether it’s an exotic turban like Zadie Smith’s signature head-piece, James Joyce’s wire-framed glasses, or Samuel Beckett’s Wallabees. Quite often a writers’ wardrobe is distinctly out of fashion and for that very reason stands out and alone. Likewise, curious fashion-hounds find writers a stimulating muse in today’s non-linear fashion climate.

LEGENDARY AUTHORS AND THE CLOTHES THEY WORE (Harper Design; 208 Pages; 100 photographs; $29.99; on sale: June 27, 2017) by Terry Newman examines icons of literature and the sartorial stories they tell. This innovative gift book presents 50 fully illustrated profiles of prominent men and women of letters, highlighting their key works, signature fashion moments from their wardrobe that express their persona, and how they influence the fashion world today. This segues into an examination of how this particular item of clothing or style makes up part of fashion’s lingua franca, getting under the skin of the fashion story and talking in more detail about its historical trajectory and distinctive impact on popular culture.
Entertaining features—revealing anecdotes about the authors and their work, archival photography, first-person quotations, little known facts, and clothing-oriented excerpts that exemplify their writing style—make this a lively look at the authors we love. Newman writes: “What you read is as important as what you wear. And what authors wear is source material for designers’ creativity. The literary and fashion worlds are therefore synchronized, and the geek chic of librarians is a look that is set to prevail.” She adds: “Fashion is a history book as well as a mirror, and the incidental assimilation of who is wearing what, where, why, and when adds density to a cultural read.”

On the book cover and featured within is the remarkable Joan Didion. In 2015, she was the face of Céline. Everything Didion writes is distinctly Didion; she is an original and that’s something designers can connect with. Her personalized journalism where innermost emotions and ideas are transparently communicated or experimental fiction such as her novel Democracy where she, as the author, takes center stage as narrator are bodies of work that reflect the soul. Her style does the same.

For some writers, their style does not mirror, but rather, deflects. Take Sylvia Plath, her Bell Jar wardrobe was prim and proper, and a foil for her tormented psyche. The pearls and twinsets, and later, her less formal but still sensible choices, all projected assimilation and a non-confrontational, even somewhat bland persona, yet her work was dark, confessional. For Plath, fashion was aspirational: she dressed in the way she wanted to be seen, rather than exhibit her interior turmoil.

Delving into the wardrobes of literary icons—past and present—and the way they write about clothes provides a glimpse into the world they each inhabited and their moment in time. A testament to the notion that reading and writing never go out of style, this beautifully designed book is sure to captivate lovers of fine literature and dedicated followers of fashion.
Featuring:
Maya Angelou     Allen Ginsberg     Edith Sitwell
Djuna Barnes     Malcolm Gladwell     Patti Smith
Samuel Beckett   Ernest Hemingway    Zadie Smith
Saul Bellow      James Joyce         Gertrude Stein
William Burroughs Karl Ove Knausgaard Jacqueline Susann
Truman Capote    Fran Lebowitz        Gay Talese
Michael Chabon   Nancy Mitford       Donna Tartt
Colette          Toni Morrison        Hunter S. Thompson
Quentin Crisp    Joyce Carol Oates    Mark Twain
Robert R. Crumb  Joe Orton           John Updike
Simone de Beauvoir Dorothy Parker     David Foster Wallace
Joan Didion      Sylvia Plath         Cornel West
T. S. Eliot      Edgar Allan Poe      Edith Wharton
Bret Easton Ellis Marcel Proust       Oscar Wilde
F. Scott Fitzgerald Arthur Rimbaud    Tom Wolfe
Zelda Fitzgerald  George Sand         Virginia Woolf

About the Author

Terry Newman has worked in the fashion industry for more than twenty-five years, both as an editor (i-D, Attitude, and Self Service) and a writer, contributing to newspapers such as the Guardian, Independent, and the Saturday and Sunday Times. She has also written and presented fashion programs in the United Kingdom for Channel Four (She’s Gotta Have It and Slave). A contributor to books such as i-D’s Fashion Now, Fashion Now 2, and Soul i-D, she currently lectures at the University for the Creative Arts in Epsom, England. She lives in London with her husband and two children.

###

Legendary Authors and the Clothes They Wore
By Terry Newman
Harper Design
208 Pages / 100 Photographs / $29.99 / Hardcover
On Sale: June 27, 2017
ISBN: 9780062428301