



Weavers of bespoke silk since 1830

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PRESS RELEASE

Fortuny, Past and Present

Whitchurch Silk Mill brings to Hampshire an exclusive opportunity to see some original garments made by the entrepreneur, Mariano Fortuny.

An iconic Delphos dress, velvet jacket and scarf are displayed dating from the beginning of the twentieth century. Only film stars and aristocrats could afford them. He made his name with the secret process of pleating silk to create gowns which were inspired by Grecian statues and printing velvet with metal particles such as silver. These were made in his Venetian factory.

Modern pieces made by the Fortuny factory are on display alongside the historic pieces.

Additionally Claremont, agent for Fortuny's interior fabrics since the 1970s, has contributed some interior fabrics.

Mariano Fortuny was born into an artistic Spanish family in 1871 and died in 1949. He was inventive making his own photographic paper, binding books, designing lamps and furniture, inventing a boat propeller.

Quote from the collector: 'The pioneering work of Fortuny came to my notice many years ago when an Italian friend explained what he was able to achieve, which was then considered impossible i.e. to heat silk to high temperatures without melting and told me the history. Fortuny experimented, keeping his secret, and went on creating designs using this process. After over twenty years I had the opportunity to acquire some of his work. I believe his work will grow in esteem. It exhibits incredible technical achievement. I am very pleased to have worked with the Silk Mill which also has a long history of working with silk; if, like me, you had not heard of Fortuny I hope you will be impressed and enjoy the exhibition.'

Continues over

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Dame Mary Fagan DCVO JP, Mr. D. Paravicini OBE, Prof. P. Pilgrim, Ms. A. Smith



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Editor's notes

The Exhibition opened on 4 July and closes on 2 October 2011 and may be seen during the Mill's normal opening times.

We are grateful to: the collector who loaned us the original Fortuny items; to Fortuny (UK) Ltd for the modern garments and the lamp and to Claremont for the Fortuny interior fabrics.

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