

## Careers in Costume

There are 3 distinct career paths within the TV, Theatre and Film industries.

- Design
- Wardrobe
- Making

Angels offers employment in two of these sectors

- Wardrobe
- Making

## Work Placements at Angels

Angels offers work experience placements of one to two weeks throughout the year and we are always delighted to hear from enthusiastic students and graduates. Applicants must be at least 16 years old and in year 11 before we can consider your application. If you would like to be considered for the Angels Work Experience Programme, you should write to Shelley Thompson at Angels The Costumiers, 1 Garrick Road, London NW9 6AA enclosing a C.V. and a covering letter. Or you can email your application to: [workexperience@angels.uk.com](mailto:workexperience@angels.uk.com)

## Vacancies at Angels

Angels have vacancies throughout the year and we offer a training programme to all new members of staff.

- Posts as **Junior or Trainee Costumiers** – applicants have sometimes completed a costume or fashion course (which is not essential). What is more important is to be able to demonstrate a passion for costume and history and the desire to progress in the industry.
- Posts in our **Alterations** Workroom require a minimum of 2 years formal training in the construction and interpretation of costumes. College leavers and graduates usually start in the Alterations Workroom.
- Posts in **Dressmaking** require at least 2 years formal training in the construction and interpretation of costumes.
- Posts in **Tailoring** require at least 2 years formal training in the construction of menswear.



## **The Costumiers**

### **Costume & Wardrobe at Angels**

Angels wardrobe staff are known as costumiers. However, this role in the outside marketplace is known as a Wardrobe assistant. A strict training programme is implemented for everyone starting at Angels as a costumier.

#### **Aims**

The aims of the programme are to:

- Improve historical costume knowledge
- Introduce the basic techniques and methods of costuming
- Show how a costume department works and runs
- Provide regular review and assessment and support
- Provide general information on the infrastructure at Angels
- Provide the skills that are necessary to work in Film TV and Theatre

Over a 3 to 5 year period you will develop skills essential to pursuing a career in Costume

#### **Costumier at Angels**

A costumier interprets the ideas of the Costume Designer and translates them into a costume to give a particular character life. Although a degree or other course in fashion or costume gives a solid base of historical and technical knowledge, this is not all that is required. Knowledge of different costume periods is important in order to achieve historical accuracy, whereas initiative and flexibility are equally invaluable.

Even with some prior knowledge, it takes at least 6 months for a new member of staff to become a junior costumier and virtually all of that time is spent in getting to know what stock is available and learning to use it effectively. This knowledge is invaluable – staff must be able to locate individual pieces and adapt them to their own needs under what are often extremely tight time-scales and budgets.

We operate an extensive training programme which includes a practical series of lessons in historical and contemporary costume. The programme prepares you for a career at Angels or eventually as a Wardrobe Assistant with the prospects of going on to become a Wardrobe Master/Mistress and then Supervisor. Most members of staff stay at least 4 years before pursuing a career in the outside world.



## **The Costumiers**

### **Making at Angels**

Most makers who come to Angels will have completed a degree course. Good hand sewing skills and use of a machine are vital. The timescales imposed on the workrooms by our customers are often tight and our makers have to work quickly whilst maintaining high standards. Members of our workrooms also attend costume training sessions.

### **Aims**

The aims of the Programme are to:

- Introduce basic techniques and methods of costume making
- Show how a workroom works and runs
- Train to perform skills to a high standard
- Provide regular review and assessment and support
- Provide general information on the infrastructure at Angels
- Provide the skills that are necessary to work in the Film TV and Theatre
- Produce to the highest standards of workmanship

### **Costume Maker**

A Costume Maker is required to make period and modern costumes to specific production requirements, for actresses involved in a production. You will work closely with our cutters to create a particular costume and put into practice and improve your skills from college. All Makers have a thorough knowledge of sewing techniques, excellent hand and machine sewing skills together with a BA degree in costume making or similar.

### **Mens Tailoring**

Tailors assistants are required to make costumes and suits to specific production requirements, for actors involved in a production. Assistants work closely with our cutters to establish the 'look' of a particular outfit. All Assistants have a high degree of hand sewing and machine skills together with a good knowledge of garment construction and the ability to put in all types of pockets. BA; City and guilds or HND degree or similar is a pre-requisite.

### **Alterations Assistant**

An alteration assistant is required to alter and or trim men's and ladies costumes under the supervision of the Head of the Workroom. This work is very important and requires excellent hand sewing skills and the ability to use a sewing machine. All Assistants have City and guilds or an HND degree.



## The Costumiers

### The World Outside

#### **‘WHO DOES WHAT’ IN THE COSTUME DEPARTMENT**

In order to understand the career opportunities available in the wider TV Film Theatre market place for a career in Costume, it is important to demonstrate the considerable differences between a Costume Designer / Costume Design Assistant and a Wardrobe Supervisor / Wardrobe Assistant, all of whom are employed on a freelance basis.

**A Costume Designer** is usually employed by a film/TV/theatre company. They are responsible for the ‘look’ of the production and in turn, (depending on the size of the piece) a large team of people. However, on major feature films, the Wardrobe Supervisor is often a head of department in their own right and is solely responsible for the wardrobe team. A Costume Designer will sometimes employ a costume design assistant.

**A Wardrobe Supervisor** is employed by the Costume Designer. They are responsible for setting up the wardrobe department. They organise the schedule of the prep time, fittings with actors, liaising with the production office, doing costume breakdowns, finding makers for the manufacture of costumes and where a production is large, setting up and looking after the budget. They employ the wardrobe staff and set up the department.

**A Wardrobe Master/Mistress** has the same duties as the Assistant but has the added responsibility of making sure that the set runs smoothly and is the direct link between the set/director/producers and the supervisor. He/she is always there to answer any questions and solve problems and to report such things to the supervisor.

**A Wardrobe Assistant** works to the Supervisor’s instructions. During the prep time they help set up the wardrobe department, do basic shopping, set up the continuity bible and become familiar with the script. Once filming starts they are responsible for looking after the actor’s costumes, making sure they wear the right costume for the right scene, maintaining and cleaning the costume, keeping continuity notes up to date and generally running the set. At times they will also have to work with the supervisor doing crowd fittings, setting up for crowd days and dressing the crowd.