

## **Dress the Author...**

Every woman can empathise with the 'what to wear' syndrome....even when faced with a vast wardrobe of clothing.. Worse still, you have an important event coming up, the pressure is on to look good and yet you simply have 'nothing to wear'. Put yourself in the shoes then (or slippers which she admits are her usual daytime garb) of author, Sian Preece with the prospect of being in the public eye from Thursday to Sunday as part of Aberdeen's Word festival.

Well known as a columnist and reviewer for a variety of Scottish media as well as a prolific writer of stories and drama, Sian's latest offering appears in Susie Maguire's Little Black Dress anthology, a collection of short stories by woman of varied backgrounds. Sian is due to appear at a reading of the book on Saturday May 13<sup>th</sup> at 1.30 pm.

"I live in black", Sian admits. "I have a black cat so the hairs don't show so much plus I work in pencil and am forever getting pencil marks all over me if I wear anything lighter but I don't have a glamorous little black dress or, in fact, much that is going to be suitable for the Word weekend – help!"

Help showed itself in the form of Danit Levi, founder of style consultancy, DressYourWay and sponsor of the Little Black Dress event who was only too happy to show Sian how to dress to impress in an imaginative way by creating a 'capsule wardrobe' for her.

"Sian does not need a completely new outfit for every event she will be attending over the Word weekend" Danit explained, "she simply needs to learn how to team new with existing garments and how to use accessories to create several different looks. I'm more than happy to dress Sian as I am combining my two biggest passions – books and fashion!"

With more than a degree of nervousness, Sian agreed to meet Danit at one of Aberdeen's chicest West End stores, Esslemont 2, for a spot of clothes shopping – not one of her favourite pastimes: "I am a shopaphobic rather than a shopaholic", she admits "I am not very adventurous and usually come out with something in black which is similar to something I already own!"

There was no time for second thoughts however. No sooner had Sian set foot in the boutique when Danit guided her to the changing rooms and she was faced with a veritable onslaught of colour. Cajoled out of her comfort zone, Sian began to enjoy the experience of mixing and matching without a black garment in sight: “I would never have dreamt that I could have been coaxed into colour and that Danit would be right! This is a revelation, her artistic eye is astonishingly good and she made the whole process so warm and easy and fun, I may never wear black again! Well, not always anyway. Another eye opener for me was her use of costume jewellery. I had always worn scarves but that can make me look chunky – a well deployed necklace adds interest without adding bulk. It has been an exhilarating experience but one that I feel very comfortable with.”

With outfits selected for the opening party amongst Aberdeen’s literary ‘glitterati’ at King’s College, various readings and presiding over a children’s event, there was only one event to select the perfect outfit for...the Little Black Dress reading. An ‘LBD’ was the only option and Danit found the perfect ‘capsule’ dress; a sexy, strappy number by Turnover teamed with a chiffon shrug and ‘killer’ black heels. Despite living in slippers and bare feet usually, Sian thought the pain of stilettos worth it to achieve the ultimate in glam. She was even more astounded to find that the dress retailed at a very reasonable £95. And when Danit showed her ways to ‘dress down’ the look by combining it with a colourful, fitted jumper a black belt and boots, she was smitten.

“I’m really getting a taste for this” said Sian. “I spend so much time writing and in my ‘comfort wear’ that it is refreshing to get a new pair of eyes to help me sort out my wardrobe.”

“Working with Sian was a gift”, Danit concluded, “She has a fantastic shape, all she needed was a little confidence to push her own style barriers a little further. She is going to look stunning throughout the Word festival - she uses her imagination every day in her writing so all she has to do is apply it to her look.”

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