

On Luxury

by
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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Indulgent and desirable, luxury both boasts and seduces. Luxury is an elaboration on the essential, manifest in forms of etiquette and exclusion.

Films index both reality and fantasy. They reflect, denounce, and exaggerate, making them invaluable cultural documents. Post-World War Two, the ease of air travel, mass production of goods, and foreign influence changed the face of luxury. By examining the films *To Catch a Thief* (1955), *La Dolce Vita* (1960), and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) – all three from the era of this shift in luxury – this essay excavates this change, by examining the narrative, objects, and architecture of selected scenes.

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Photographer Peter Lippmann, creative director Nicolas Menu, and stylist Amandine Moine designed Christian Louboutin's 2009 ad campaign. The parody of 17th century Dutch still life speaks to the *vanitas* that originally inspired Northern European painters like Claesz. *Vanitas* is Latin, meaning "emptiness" -- a type of *memento mori* that loosely invokes the meaningless, transience, and futility of life given the certainty of death. The common symbols of *vanitas* are skulls (fatality), rotten fruit and animals (age and decay), and music and smoke (brevity).

In light of this, Louboutin is right on the money.



fig 0.1 Christian Louboutin 2009 Advertising Campaign. Robot 120 Ankle Boots in patent gold.

“Luxury is a necessity that begins where necessity ends.”

-Coco Chanel

Prologue

Since writers are by nature outsiders, standing at the edges looking in, then writing about luxury makes me an outsider squared. Still, the dog-eared but dependable credo of writing came to me: write about what you know. My exposure to luxury, in terms of travel, goods, and services is, by global standards, a healthy average. I am not immune to the marketing that infiltrates modern lives. Yet, I do not (too easily) buy into the hallow promises of “the brand”, promises of its status and respectability. Nevertheless, I occasionally fall prey.

On more than one occasion, I have stalked the fashionable milieu. Visits to the south of France, Rome, and New York have always included specially planned outings to the boutique of the moment, the restaurant *du jour*, and the illustrious hotel. But today, when it hardly makes any difference whether you walk into a Louis Vuitton store in Xiamen, Stuttgart, or Denver, the face of true luxury is elusive. I recall Santee Alley in Los Angeles, looking at an array of counterfeit merchandise, the crooked and weathered wooden table it was placed upon, the dirty tarp that covered the niche storing more of the same, the smell of cheap leather and too much glue, the sound of the dull clack of shoddy metal clasps shaped as highly recognizable logos, and ignoring, all the while, the alarming probability that the untaxed profits from all these black market counterfeits will go fund the purchase of illegal firearms and the traffic in drugs. Finally, completing the circle, I saw it in the documentary of *Medecins Sans Frontières* called *Living in Emergency*, watching an MSF volunteer from Liberia who wore an LV scarf wrapped around his head as he ushered a gun-shot victim wearing a DKNY shirt into a free hospital. I saw what our general sense of self-presentation of wealth had become – a rootless, thoughtless, fully compromised mirage.

With the ambition to find something solid in this mirage, I wanted to ferret out the mechanisms. I did not want to reverse the evolution of this process, nor did I want to shut the gates against luxury. But if everything boiled down to false authenticity and fabricated homages, I needed at least to find the source, perhaps even find a cure to undo the spell. By looking at movies, in order to plumb to authenticity with a medium that is inherently fictional, I might unveil the evolving nature of luxury and find self-awareness in a distorted mirror.

On Luxury

"Take care of the luxuries and the necessities will take care of themselves."

-Frank Lloyd Wright

On Luxury

On Luxury

Consider the three films. Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* is a stylish, camp tour of the French Riviera. Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* is the neo-realistic study of the decline of old aristocracy. Blake Edward's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* is the topical and controversial vignette of the appetite for luxury. The movies of the Golden Age of Hollywood portrayed the playgrounds of the *nouveau riche*: with injections of Hollywood glamour, the Cote d'Azur, Rome, and New York acquired unprecedented respectability and esteem. These films fuel dreams of escape, self-transformation, and desire. The aura of desirability comes from a unique balance between exclusivity and accessibility. The discrimination between those who qualify and those who do not can only extend so far before all outsiders lose interest. So the metaphorical door to this world must stay slightly ajar at all times. Institutions of consumption, display, and entertainment – hotels, nightclubs, boutiques – disseminate and reinforce this aura. The associations of space and luxury consolidate as myths when located at the centre of the popular consciousness of a city. From the 1950's to the 1960's, luxury divorced itself from etiquette and became a system of appearance, manifest in goods. A transformation of luxury from a space of manners to a system of possessions had taken place. The tangible elements of film gave luxury a recognizable form, bounded in space and time. The role of film, in turn, influenced the production of luxury in architecture.

Cary Grant plays ex-jewel thief John Robie in Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* (1955). Framed for a string of new robberies in the south of France, he nevertheless remains a very static character, never surprising the audience with his motives. Grace Kelly's Frances Stevens is a flat portrait of a daughter of the *nouveau riche*, drawn to the excitement and danger that Robie's thievery entails. The attraction of this film lies in its lush scenery and beautiful costumes. Shot on location in various towns throughout the French Riviera, with the bulk of the scenes at the Carlton Hotel in Cannes, architecture becomes a central motif of the film. As typified by the classic genre films of the 1950's from Paramount Studios, the plot embraces close observation of the mannerisms and

customs of the rich. It captures the playgrounds of the jet set in colourful, almost cartoonish detail.

Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960) is a more sombre affair. Its stark black and white scenes frame Marcello Mastroianni's episodic encounters with European aristocracy, intellectuals, and celebrities – among them, characters played by Anouk Aimee, Anita Ekberg, and Alain Cuny. Filled with the pauses and nuanced conversations more true of real life, the film depends on Fellini's personal impressions of the Via Veneto in Rome – the quintessential habitat for the rich and famous in 1960. Characters rely on gossip for sustenance, and live in a world where physical objects have usurped spirit.¹ Fellini chose buildings that invoke the once-opulent, now degenerate history of the city; among them the Baths of Caracalla and the 16th century villa of Bassano di Sutri.

Blake Edward's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) focuses on one young woman, Holly Golightly (played by Audrey Hepburn) and her quest to attain distinction – by marrying a millionaire. The 1950's was the decade of "Juno culture" – of family and responsibility – named after the queen of the Ancient Roman gods who protected tradition and stability. The 1960's, however, was the "Venus culture" of free love, named after the Ancient Roman goddess of passion and beauty. A film that features adultery, kept men, and gold-diggers, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* is a far cry from the 1950's "Juno culture", but rather speaks to the 1960's "Venus culture". Settings often contradict each other in the portrayal of luxury, with major portions of the movie playing uptown Manhattan's tension against youth's innocence.² Golightly's bleak apartment transforms itself into the hippest party in town. The East 60's Street townhouse block she lives in was dubbed "Capote land" during that time. The shabby fire escape stairwell is an emotional, rather than physical, outlet. The scene where she strums her guitar to the tune of "Moon River" reveals her most vulnerable moment in the entire film. The Tiffany & Co.'s flagship is not a frivolous destination, but rather a haven, the sparkling jewel displays somehow protecting her from the "mean reds" that she fears most.

Beyond Necessity

We elevate the most fundamental human needs – shelter, modesty, and sustenance – by attending to their detail, by making them beautiful, and by crafting them to refine intellectual and aesthetic intentions, intentions that flirt with both luxury and art. But, while art enriches the soul, luxury only enriches status. An appetite for status stimulates our discontent, leads to envy and motivates heedless acquisition. It also institutionalizes the fashionable *milieu* – the hotel, the boutique, the restaurant – and its products: architecture, fashion, and cuisine.

Notions of glamour and privilege envelop luxury.

Today, we use “luxury” and “glamour” in the same breath – or in many cases, even interchangeably. To be sure, glamour and luxury cannot survive without one another. The former is the appeal, while the latter is its justification. Luxury is pleasure and comfort beyond necessity; glamour is the cachet that surrounds luxury; privilege is the revocable advantage enjoyed by those who live in luxury. Each bolsters the other.

Luxury: from the mid-14th century French *luxurie* (“lasciviousness, sinful self-indulgence”), originating from the Latin *luxus* (“excess, extravagance, magnificence”). The word lost its negative connotations by the 17th century when it became a “habit of indulgence in what is choice or costly” (1630), “sumptuous surroundings” (1704), and “something enjoyable or comfortable beyond life’s necessities” (1780).³ Its initial use as an adjective, in 1930, marked a very interesting change of times. By then, any noun could be preceded by the adjective “luxury”, to give it additional status. Today, the adjective “luxury” is routinely used to segment markets and position products in ways both the manufacturer and the consumer can clearly identify. No one can deny a Rolls Royce or a Maserati is anything other than a luxury vehicle.

Glamour, on the other hand, depends more on manipulation and bluff. It is an anglicized version of *glamer* (in use in Low Scotch since the 1800’s), the “supposed influence of a charm on the eye, causing it to see objects differently from what they really are.”⁴ According to the Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language,

published in 1879, some possible origins are *glimbr* (splendour) and *glamskygn* (squint-eyed). “Glamour” speaks of the transformation of original things into something else, something more desirable. It is no coincidence that glamour is one of the only words where the American spelling adopts the “-our” ending instead of the regular “-or”. Even the Condé Nast magazine *Glamour*, founded in 1939, spells “glamour” like the British – reinforcing the foreign characterization of style. Ralph Lauren released a perfume in 2000 called “Glamorous”, a misspelling to emphasize the “-our”.⁵ Glamour is where pop culture and luxury coincide. Movie stars amplify the cachet. The Hermès *Kelly* bag could not have reached its cult status – despite its quality – if it wasn’t named for Grace Kelly, the pop culture icon of the 1950’s.

Luxury is a privilege, not a right. While a “right” is an inherent and indelible prerogative by birth⁶, a “privilege” is a conditional benefit enjoyed beyond the advantages of most others.⁷ Historically, privilege was linked to social rank; royalty and aristocracy upheld the social hierarchies. But by the early 1900’s, – with the very public decline of the Vanderbilt fortune – the American public was conscious of how quickly this privilege could disappear. When he died in 1877, Cornelius Vanderbilt, who amassed his wealth through railroads and shipping, left a fortune to his family greater than the entirety of the United States Treasury. Within 60 years, with extravagant buildings and poor management, that wealth had completely evaporated.⁸ Privilege was clearly revocable. Everything could be lost, with the corollary knowledge that anything could be earned. Since then, the doors of privilege have opened wider – at least vicariously, through film – with the greatest changes occurring in the 1950’s and 1960’s.

This Will Kill That

Self-awareness arises in the reflection of pictorial conventions. Where the human body is depicted, ideas of beauty, class, and power are represented – in clothing, in physique, and in surrounding objects. In *Seeing Through Clothes*, Anne Hollander describes the relationship between pictorial conventions and our own self-awareness: “Only when

they are safe inside this visual matrix do they measure themselves against others in the same frame and feel they look different or similar.”⁹ Film is now the most prevalent medium for projecting that image.

“This Will Kill That” is the title of the second chapter of Victor Hugo’s *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1831). “This” refers to the book, or more generally, the power of the printing press, “that” refers to the edifice and its power to communicate to the people. Hugo argues that architecture was the original “great book of humanity, the principal expression of man in his different stages of development, either as a force or as an intelligence”¹⁰ and the most ambitious way humankind had ever expressed itself. Buildings communicated to the illiterate masses and impressed foreign travellers who took the tales of these buildings home. The edifice transmitted messages as an embellished and imposing surface, open to interpretation. However, with the invention of the Gutenberg printing press in 1450, the transmission of ideas became quicker, easier, and more pervasive with text. For Hugo, the power to impress was now in the hands of individuals, instead of in the hands of the collective:

Let the reader make no mistake; architecture is dead; irretrievably slain by the printed book – slain because it endures for a shorter time – slain because it costs more. Every cathedral represents millions. Let the reader now imagine what an investment of funds it would require to rewrite the architectural book.¹¹

In the same way the book would kill the edifice, the *film* will kill the *book*, the image will trump the text. Film excels at projecting not only narratives of luxury but also images of it in action, in ways that radio, newspaper, or comics never could. In any index of culture, film is most effective at reflecting multiple facets of life.

Film endures in the popular consciousness because of its format and because of the way we see it. The film still is an icon – something that stands for, or suggests, something else, by association, convention, or resemblance¹² – and it is easily propagated. Temporally, the actual moment of the viewing and the moment presented in film merge time past and time present.¹³ With the narrative, film induces the vicarious adoption of characters on screen; in a cinema, the protagonists are avatars for all of

us. So pervasive is this effect that it may even begin to influence how you act, feel, or think in these places.¹⁴ The sumptuous yet casual south of France of Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief*, the chic and poetic Rome of Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*, and Edward's smart and savvy Manhattan, in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, each make an impact before you have the chance to judge for yourself. The set of each film's architecture establishes relationships between the environment, the actor, and the audience. This space gives the film believability, sets the tone, and provides clues to the film's substance.¹⁵ Through the lens, the patterns of luxury begin to establish themselves for the general audience. Repeated motifs, parallel mannerisms, and common spaces and objects start to assemble a mental curated collection of what makes luxury. Selected scenes within the films – sample slices considered under the microscope – mark the apparent luxuries of the era. When luxury – manifest etiquette and rarity – finally gave way to a more egalitarian form of consumerism in the 1950's and 1960's, architecture bore the signs. In some instances, the buildings or the cities of a film become as significant as the characters, as is the Carlton Hotel of Cannes in Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief*. Annotating the gossip that surrounds them, the history that made them, and their impact within the film and beyond, the disparate architectural works of several movies chronicle an overarching trend. Annexed to the power of the celebrity, that influential by-product of the film industry, film insinuates itself into popular consciousness.

Shopping for Luxury

Fashionable shopping in the West is a site of architectural innovation. New spaces created environments suitable for the kind of shopping expensive merchandise entailed; it could make buying for the sake of buying commonplace. From the age of Louis XIV to the 19th century *flaneur* to today's designer-hungry consumers, the space of the shop generated glamorous narratives. The three films chosen could not have imparted such strong notions of luxury if not for the scenes with boutique-lined avenues, or particularly, the flagship store of Tiffany & Co.

In 1690 France, fashion was an escape; the world beyond the sheltered microcosm of couture was one of countryside famine, political uprising, national bankruptcy, and unforgiving winters.¹⁶ The neighbourhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés made the café scene chic. It also attracted a very different type of clientele. It became a place where elegant women went to show off the latest garments and hairstyles.¹⁷ Before the reign of Louis XIV, home visits by the merchant were customary. People rarely shopped in public; the conditions of the spaces were not designed for shoppers to linger; with no attention to décor, they were storehouses for merchandise. The bottom half of the shop's shutters folded down to make a table where merchants displayed their products, and the top half folded upwards to form an awning, a space for the transaction. Customers remained on the street, never actually entering the premises.¹⁸ This changed when displays inside the space became commonplace. In addition, the shopkeeper no longer waited on shoppers; instead, stores employed attractive shopgirls dressed in the latest fashions. Luxury goods were exhibited in surroundings that were worthy of the purchasers. Consumers were enticed into the store with designated window displays,¹⁹ the modern iteration of shopping. By the century's end, shops clustered on the still-famed rue Saint-Honoré. Shopping became a desirable experience, instead of another chore. The market became a shopping theatre, where consumers spent money to transform their lives. Value was no longer simply a factor of price and performance. It was determined by intangibles: by aesthetics, by elegant style, and by atmosphere. Status was signified by indulgence of the self, by way of a particular purchase. This enraptures many of the characters in these films. Holly Golightly of *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Maddalena and Sylvia of *La Dolce Vita*, and Jessie Stevens of *To Catch a Thief* certainly knew the power of these intangibles and indulged themselves.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the earliest appearance of *tourism* was in 1872: "born in the 17th c. Englishmen were first to practice it". The first modern guidebook, published in 1690, introduced foreign visitors to Paris.²⁰ The guide recommended what to eat, where to stay, and more importantly, where to shop. When Paris became the first city anywhere to regularly illuminate its streets after dark, shopping hours were extended, nights were longer, more sociable, and more entertaining. With

the appropriate infrastructure, the city of lights became the city of luxurious seduction.

In the 1700's, the global trade in eastern luxuries fueled British consumption. There appeared a new class of goods called "semi-luxury" – copies of original luxury goods but without their unique qualities, and made with modern materials and by modern methods.²¹ At the same time, shop presentation became more elaborate, with painted shop exteriors, furnished interiors, glass display cases, and all-glass storefronts. The historian Maxine Berg posits that "the 18th century is the defining moment in history of consumer culture of the west." The emergence of the Parisian arcades, like *Passage du Grand-Cerf* in 1835, created an artificial interior sidewalk perfect for idling and window-shopping. The arcade linked previously disconnected areas of the city by amalgamating passage and shopping and transformed public life. Baudelaire was one of the first to write about the *flâneur* in 1850's Paris as "a person who walks the city in order to experience it", enraptured by the dazzling displays, shop windows, and finery.²² The commercial sector replicated these qualities *en masse* at the beginning of the 20th century. Merchants developed strategies of enticement based on showmanship, magic, and even religion.

Luxury was outgrowing its aristocratic roots. Though by the early 1900's, the aristocracy no longer dominated consumption, it still played a strong role as tastemaker. It was not until the "Youthquake" of the 1960's that there was enough disturbance to shift the realm of luxury. Christened by Diana Vreeland, *Vogue's* editor-in-chief from 1963 to 1971, she used the term "Youthquake" to describe a movement that originated in London, when young models in clothing by young designers replaced prim society figures in established couture. Vreeland wrote in *Vogue* (January 1965):

There is a marvelous moment that starts at thirteen and wastes no time. No longer waits to grow up, but makes its own way, its own look by the end of the week... Youth, warm and gay as a kitten yet self-sufficient as James Bond, is surprising countries east and west with a sense of assurance serene beyond all years. First hit by the surprise-wave, England and France already accept the new jump-off age as one of the exhilarating realities of life today. The same exuberant tremor is now coursing through America – which practically

invented this century's youth in the first place...Here. Now. Youthquake 1965.²³

Broad changes in education, income, and media throughout the Western world broke down social barriers, especially the ones that separated the young and the old, the rich and the poor.²⁴ From that decade onwards, formal social etiquette and manners became antiquated. Beginning in the 1960's, the second-wave feminist movement made debutante balls and finishing schools passé. With these outlets for training and performing social niceties now defunct, the *object* was what mattered. It is in this moment of cultural history that we encounter our three chosen films.

By the 1980s, statistics reflected higher household incomes than ever before.²⁵ The new average consumer was well-educated, well-traveled, and well-heeled. This financially powerful demographic with disposable incomes changed the face of luxury once again. As Daniel Piette, an executive from the major luxury conglomerate Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton, declared: "Luxury is crossing all age, racial, geographic, and economic brackets."²⁶ As financiers bought up luxury companies from their elderly founders or incompetent heirs, they turned their houses into brands, homogenizing all the stores, uniforms, and products. Their aim was to democratize luxury. Everyone could have a piece of it, loyal to the same brand.

The Decade of Change

From 1947 to 1957, American film audiences shrunk by 75%: families moved to the suburbs, fell in love with their television sets, and had children – the "Baby Boom".²⁷ The movie industry needed something extra to compete. Four things helped the industry stay afloat in the next decade: realism and avant-garde themes, exotic travel, technical innovations, and foreign films. Post-World War II, Americans could savour overseas stories; the ease of air travel expanded their horizons. Innovations in film technology gave us images of higher resolution, richer saturation. With the Paramount Consent Decree of 1948, the monopoly Hollywood studios once had over theatres came to an end. Foreign films had the chance to reach a broader American audience and the public

embraced them for their novelty and their charm. And when, finally, the “Motion Picture Production Code” that limited film content was abandoned by 1968 – with the enforcement failure by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) – new doors opened for once-forbidden topics. With these changes, film no longer enforced normative social values. With a new audience, new writers, producers, and directors, film was an agent of defiance, transformation, and the exploration of taboos.²⁸ The three films discussed here are at the cusp of this transformation: *To Catch a Thief* nestles neatly in the tail-end of ethicized epic films, while *La Dolce Vita* and *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* are among the earliest films with controversial plot developments. By the 1950’s and 1960’s, films could reflect changes in the face of luxury. In this relatively short time, the notions of luxury were re-established for contemporary culture.

Realism was not a consideration before “talkies” and colour films. The film studio system was set up so that only non-controversial narratives could be produced. First, in the early Studio Age of the 1920’s, movies were static, black and white, and silent. Then, at the height of the Studio Age, from the 1930’s until the early 1950’s, films became expensive and expansive. These epic films were so impressive they inevitably turned their actors and actresses into idealized pop culture icons. *Continuous viewing*, practiced up until the 1950’s, also did little to develop film’s realism. The projection was a single bundle – the commercials, shorts, and main feature spliced into one continuous loop²⁹ – while audience members entered the cinema at varying times. The plots of these films were straightforward and appropriate for all audiences, not only for clarity but also in compliance with an overarching standard of film content at the time. The films had to conform to the “Motion Picture Production Code” that was in effect from 1930 to 1968.³⁰ Popularly known as the “Hays Code,” after its creator William H. Hays, it limited what a film could portray: “No picture shall be produced that will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrongdoing, evil or sin.”³¹ However, the Hays Code was quickly outdated, with films like *The Pawnbroker* (1965) and *BlowUp* (1966), both of which were released without the initial Production Code approval by appealing their

rejections with the MPAA; it was clear that the Code grew irrelevant. Consequently, on November 1, 1968, the MPAA adopted a new film-rating system.³² The original movie ratings were “G” (general audiences), “M” (mature audiences), “R” (restricted), and “X” (adults only). From this labelling of film content arose the concept of *multiple audiences*, so that films could cater to specific audience groups.³³ This was concurrent with the introduction of scheduled movie times, cancelling the practice of continuous viewing and finally allowing films to portray more realistic and taboo subjects. The chance arrived for all facets in matters of luxury – ugly or beautiful – to make an appearance.

Commercial air travel was new, rare, and tantalizing, and people were curious to see the milieu of the untouchably wealthy. A modern type of jet-set luxury was born. Instead of faceless names on a map, film footage from this air travel made that milieu real. World War Two brought news of distant nations that were enemies or allies.³⁴ After the war, returning veterans brought back stories of exotic lands and expanded the imagination of the people at home. This fostered a newfound interest in other cultures and other places. By the early 1950’s, the British Overseas Aircraft Corporation (BOAC) had converted all its military services into civilian operations for private passenger flights.³⁵ This was the early period of popular air travel, before there were any serious threats of aircraft hijackings in civil aviation (hijackings became common by 1969, peaking at 82 hijackings in that year alone, according to the Federal Aviation Administration).³⁶ There was the issue of finance: with costs like \$1,570 (inflation adjusted) for a round-trip coach ticket from New York to Los Angeles in 1958³⁷, flying was still only readily available to the very wealthy, but the void left by the withdrawal of troops in Europe made a fertile ground for tourism. Filming on the actual location was inefficient, but the set was essentially already there, and gave the story additional validity. Certainly, each of the chosen films would have failed to make any significant impression of luxury had they not been filmed on location; luxury would have lacked a global perspective if the chosen films were set and made solely in America. The movie industry capitalized on the locations in cities seeking economic advantage, with films like *Roman Holiday* (1953), *Three Coins in the Fountain* (1954), and *Summertime* (1955). Paris, the original city of lights, was no longer the only “luxurious” city. This cachet reached to the Mediterranean,

when most of the Cote d'Azur – originally populated by quiet fishing towns – gained unprecedented status with Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* (1955) and Roger Vadim's *Et Dieu... créa la femme* (1956), starring Brigitte Bardot. Rome, particularly around Via Veneto, gained prestige, starting with Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960) and peaking with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton's *Cleopatra* (1963) – as their notorious tabloid-headlining affair unfolded on the film sets and in the streets of Rome. Finally, although Hollywood was headquarters for American film studios, New York City was the cultural apex of North America at the time, and the obvious setting of Edward's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961).

In 1959, Mies van der Rohe said: "God is in the details." There is no better way to capture luxury than with piercing accuracy. Each studio developed its own version of higher-quality filming techniques now that filming on location was standard practice. Twentieth Century Fox patented *CinemaScope* (1953), which has an aspect ratio of 2.66:1. Paramount Pictures invented *VistaVision* (1954), a variation of the 35mm film format with higher resolution.³⁸ *Todd-AO* (1953), developed by Mike Todd, with the American Optical Company, was an extremely high definition, widescreen film format that required a single camera and lens.³⁹ *Cinerama* (1952) another widescreen process, involved synchronizing three 35mm projectors onto screens curved at an arc of 146°. ⁴⁰ *Technicolor* (1932), a three-colour process rendering more vibrant hues, was already several decades into use.⁴¹ Film equipment was becoming lighter, smaller, and more sophisticated; filming on site was easier. Vivid colours and details enticed audiences back to cinemas.

Up until the early 1950's, Hollywood imposed its ethos on bravery, beauty, and notions of class. Warner Brothers seemed to denounce luxury, while MGM Studios quietly approved of it, and Paramount relished it.⁴² That is why, to uncover notions of luxury, two of the three films chosen are from Paramount Studios. However, chosen as the obligatory representation of luxury through foreign films, the other is from Cinecittà Studios of Rome, Italy. Very few foreign films made it to North American audiences during this time. Instead, Hollywood studios dominated distribution; a Federal Trade

Commission (FTC) investigation in 1921 found studios guilty of monopolization.⁴³ By 1948, however, the “Paramount Consent Decree” began to shift the power from studio moguls to more independent studio producers and distributors, giving foreign films a foothold in the market. The U.S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against the “Big Five” studios (Fox Film Corporation, Loew’s, Paramount, RKO, and Warner Bros.) so that they could no longer exclusively control which theatres could show their movies.⁴⁴ Also known as the “Hollywood Antitrust Case of 1948”, this suit ruled a reduction in “block-booking” – the studio practice that compelled a theatre to play an entire list of the studio’s films.⁴⁵ The Supreme Court also ruled a ban on “blind buying” (where films were bought by theatres without first being seen) enabling theatres to decide through “trade showing” (special screenings to theatre representatives) what films they would exhibit. As the ruling stipulated, an administration board had to be set up in each theatre district to govern these new rules.⁴⁶ So effective was this strategy in opening the market for foreign filmmakers that, by 1956, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences established a permanent annual award for Best Foreign Language Film.⁴⁷ The foreign films distributed in North America were novel, with a different style of storytelling, and with a cachet of Old World charm – the epitome being Fellini’s *La Dolce Vita*, for its critical acclaim as an Italian neorealist film. For the individual viewer, the world grew larger. In matters of luxury and prestige, horizons expanded.

The Gatsby Posture

F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* (1925) is the quintessential story of the charm and curse of luxury. To establish common ground, *Gatsby* is a motif by which to look at several different stances on luxury in relation to the protagonists of the chosen films. Fitzgerald himself was enamoured with the incredibly wealthy and his novels often dealt with the world of unrestrained materialism and the moral emptiness that accompanied it – he himself being no stranger to this spectacle.

John Robie of *To Catch a Thief* is akin to Jay Gatsby. Both are passionate in

creating a luxurious life beyond their poor origins. Neither is content with what life has given him, and each can be unscrupulous in attaining his fortune – for Gatsby, by bootlegging, for Robie, by stealing. Their notorious reputations precede them, and they are often the subjects of malicious gossip. Yet each is unyielding in his principles – Gatsby unable to see past the pointlessness of the pure frivolity of his ideals, whereas Robie risks his life to restore his reputation amongst high society. Both good men at heart, Robie earns the respect and love of Francie Stevens while Gatsby gains the admiration of Nick Carraway: “They’re a rotten crowd. You’re worth the whole damn bunch put together.”⁴⁸

Marcello Rubini is the Nick Carraway of *La Dolce Vita*, sensitive, and susceptible to vice. They are the only characters that transform in their respective narratives, their initial idealism completely corrupted by material possessions and wealth. More reflective than active, they do not add to the evil and hurt that surround them but rather accept the immoralities of living the lavish life. Because of their passive nature, they function well as confidantes for keeping secrets of those who have troubles to share. They function as the sobering voice of reason when lavish spoils escalate to decadent proportions. Nick Carraway confesses this at the start of the novel: “I’m inclined to reserve all judgements, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran bores.”⁴⁹ But this statement also implies judgement will be passed, just at a later time. The inner turmoil of returning to stability from the pleasurable but grotesquely luxurious lifestyle is resolved in the end – both Carraway and Rubini fully recognize the moral emptiness of their present conditions.

And Holly Golightly is *Tiffany’s* Daisy Buchanan —both being terribly clever and beautiful, yet foolish, shallow, careless with others, and motivated by superficial luxury. They are infatuated with the ease of wealth and material sumptuousness. Though Holly Golightly had to cultivate her sophistication and simulate her status whereas Daisy Buchanan has the actual wealth to maintain her reckless behaviour, they are both unable to demonstrate actual loyalty or care. But Holly recognizes genuine integrity at the very end, something that Daisy is ultimately incapable of doing.

These three characters are archetypes rather than originals. John Robie of *To*

Catch a Thief, Marcello Rubini of *La Dolce Vita*, and Holly Golightly of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* all work to acquire the luxury object because the objets trump decorum.

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Narrative

Screenplay Excerpts

A film builds a specific point of view through the accumulation of scenes. These sequences unfold over time but it is useful to look at them individually; these fragments are rich with information about how the whole is composed.¹ However, a film has no obligations to be encyclopaedic so the selection of scenes to analyze is critical. The scenes examined here are based on the location, dialogue, costumes, and etiquette portrayed.

The Screenplay

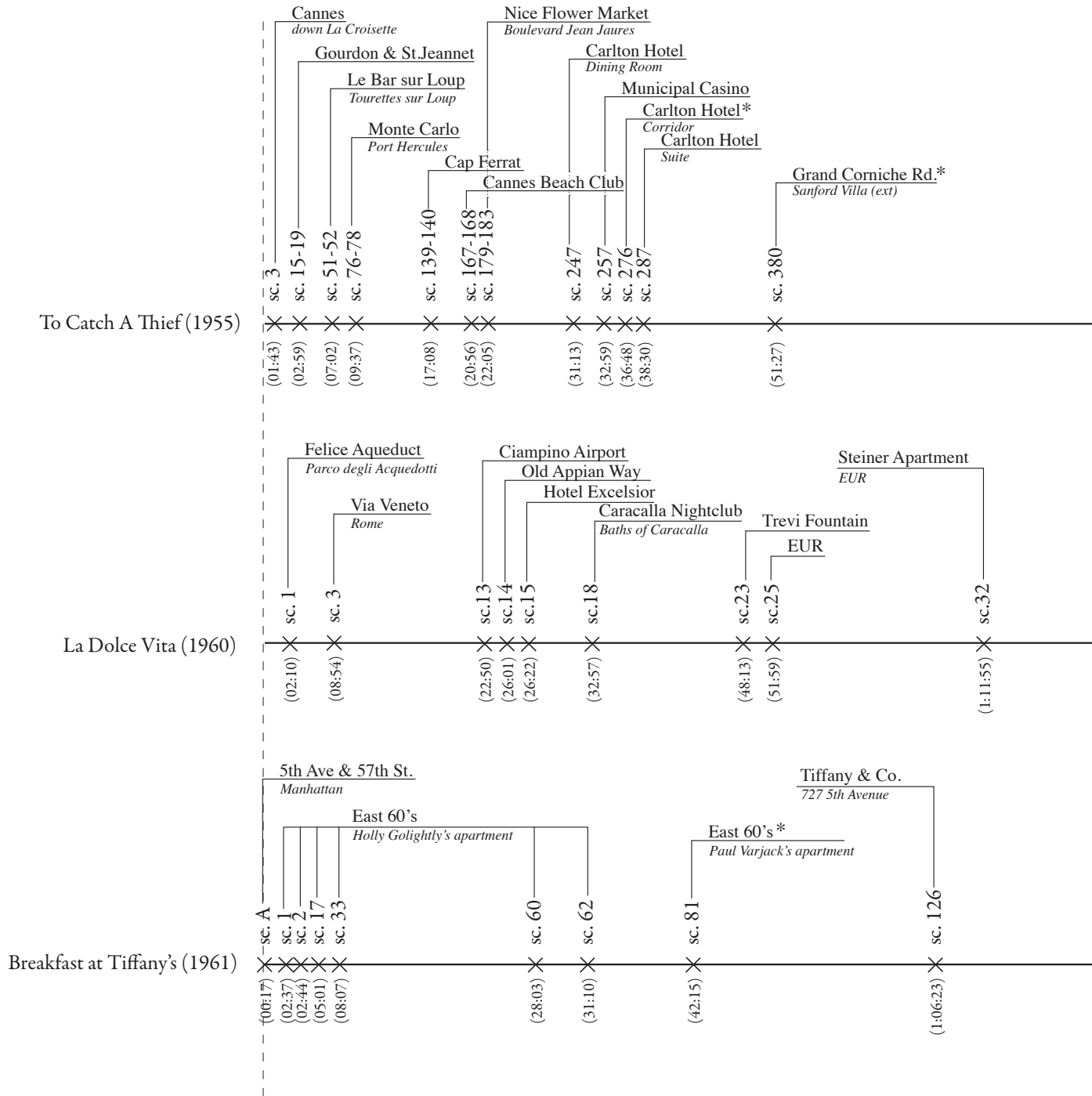
The screenplay is a very strictly formatted document. It contains the dialogue, descriptions of action, camera angles, and setting, in a format standard enough to assume that one page equates to one minute of film. It is written in present tense set in 12 point Courier. The scene is first set up by location and time, followed by prose describing the audible and the visible without any editorial interpretation. Sometimes notes on technical and/or dramatic elements are included.²

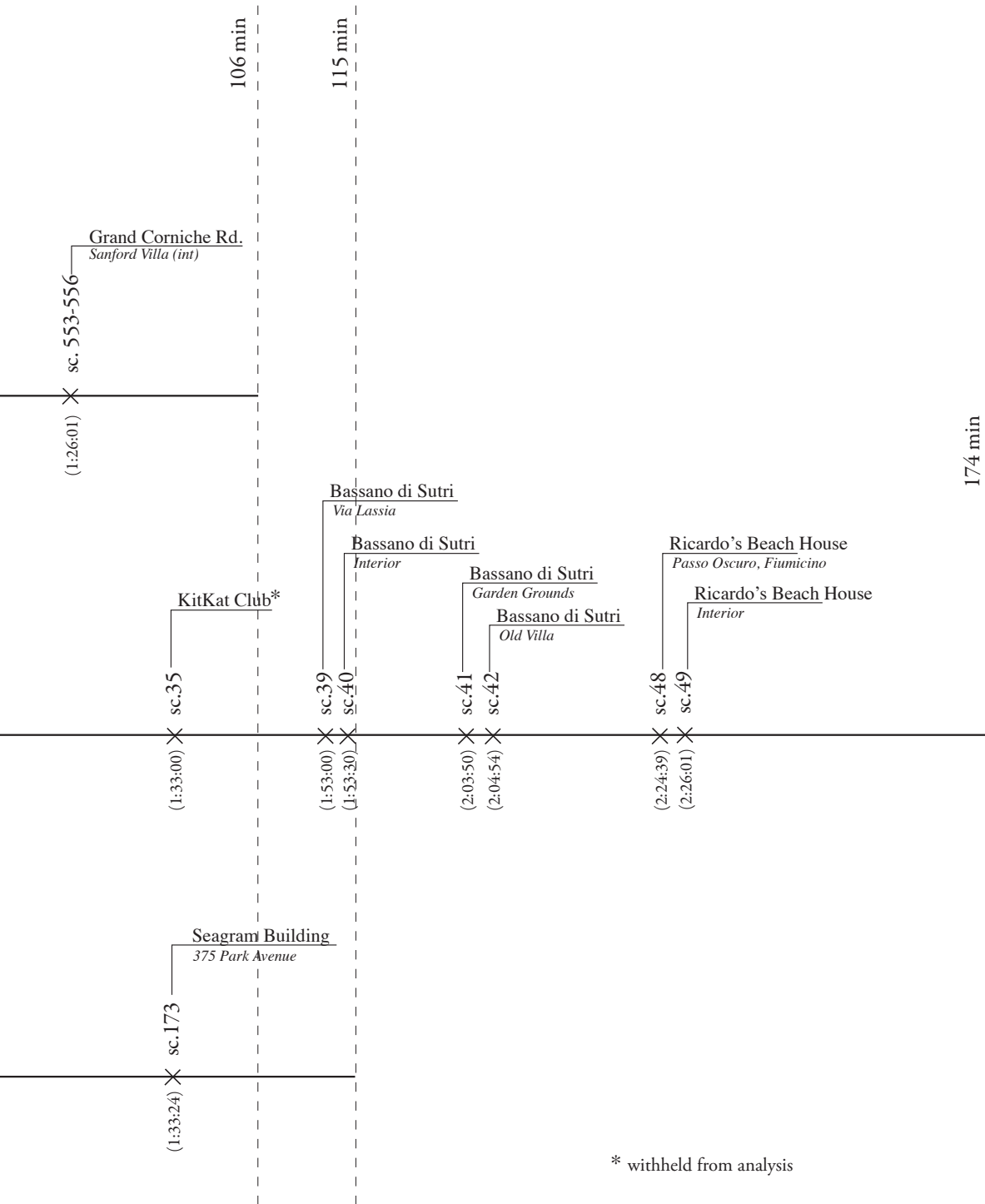
A collection of items that exemplify luxury demonstrate cultural literacy, a litmus of aesthetic sense, a pulse on the proverbial. Issues of quality, taste, and rarity all feed its formalization. While the importance of things in general seems to be rising exponentially in contemporary society, attention and care to the individual object is rapidly decreasing. Now is the time to rediscover the bona fide origins of the film's coveted places and objects in question.

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fig 1.1 The timeline relates the scene distribution against the duration of the entire film.





To Catch a Thief (1955)



fig 2.1 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(3) INT. HOTEL ROOM¹ - (DAY) - CLOSEUP

There is a sharp contrast in light. It is now broad day-light. The screen is completely filled with a big head of a middle-aged woman. Her face is covered with cold cream² and her grey hair is tied up in a chiffon scarf³. She has four gold teeth⁴, which are easily seen in her wide-open, screaming mouth. Still screaming, she looks down.

INSERT - THE EMPTY JEWEL CASE

WOMAN

My jewels! My jewels! I've been robbed! Someone stole my
jewels! Help! Help! Police!

- 1 The south of France has a rich history to draw upon. It is the playground of the interculturally glamorous. The Carlton Hotel in Cannes is the prominent nucleus of this condition. It is also the site of famous film industry negotiations and the most esteemed place to stay during the Cannes Film Festival. The hotel becomes a character onto itself, as it is where most of the film is set:

A hotel is a plot – a cybernetic universe with its own laws generating random but fortuitous collisions between human beings who would never have met elsewhere. It offers a fertile cross-section through the population, a richly textured interface between social castes, a field for the comedy of clashing manners, and a neutral background of routine operations to give every incident dramatic relief.

(Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*, 124)

All the critical moments of the film occur in the darker recesses of the hotel's chambers, the splendour of the dining hall, and the precarious tiled rooftops. The retired jewel thief, John Robie, struggles to prove his innocence when charged with a new string of robberies against the nouveau riche within this fashionable milieu.

- 2 Cold cream is quintessentially 1950's – the face cream of the stereotypical lady of that decade. It was used in all cosmetic circumstances, from removing makeup, to moisturizing, to smoothing and cooling skin (hence the name). It is an emulsion of water, scents, and fats. There have been iterations of this cosmetic for almost two thousand years (Sherrow, 238-39). The credit for its invention belongs to a physician from Pergamus named Galen. His mixture was composed of grease, olive oil, rose petals, and water. In pharmacy, it is called "Ceratum Galeni", while in perfumery, it is known as cold cream (Piesse, 206). In France, it is still called *cérat de Galien*, or "Galen's wax". The following is the formula for cold cream from an excerpt of the 1650 London Dispensatory publication:

Take of white wax four ounces, oyl of roses omphacine a pound; melt in a double vessel, then powr it out into another, by degrees putting in cold water, and often powring it out of one vessel into

another, stirring it till it be white ; last of all wash it in rose water, adding a little rose water and rose vineger (Moore, 63).

Other scents and oils were used throughout the decades for variations on the product, the most bizarre around 1780, including spermaceti from whales (Bennett).

This woman who just woke up with cold cream treatment still present on her face looks around to realize all her jewels were stolen overnight. A close-up of her blood-curdling scream and shiny face adds to the drama of being caught off guard and the slight irony of this irritation amongst wealth and leisure.

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- 3 Chiffon is a plain-woven, lightweight, sheer fabric, usually made of cotton, silk, or synthetic fibres. Composed of a fine mesh, it allows for a transparency in the fabric. Compared to a similar fabric, georgette, chiffon is much smoother and lustrous. With an inherent elasticity and texture, chiffon can be dyed, or printed. Its relative strength makes it useful for dresses, millinery, lampshades, or in this instance, a headscarf. In some cases, the word *chiffon* is used as an adjective, to describe a soft draping, as in *chiffon* taffeta or *chiffon* velvet.

Work Cited

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- "Chiffon." *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*. Web. 26 Apr. 2010.

4 Gold teeth are a slightly dated dental prosthesis. Gold has been used for filling in cavities since the 1950's. It was used for this purpose because gold is malleable, hardy against corrosion, and tough enough for biting. Originally, it was one of the most expensive of dental prosthetics, costing six to ten times more than other materials for filling in cavities. The treatment requires two or more visits to finish the filling, and more labour is required. Today, there are better materials: mercury amalgam or composite fillings. Gold has been used for "grills", false covers attached to the teeth for purely aesthetic purposes and to show off wealth, made mainstream by the hip hop community.

Work Cited

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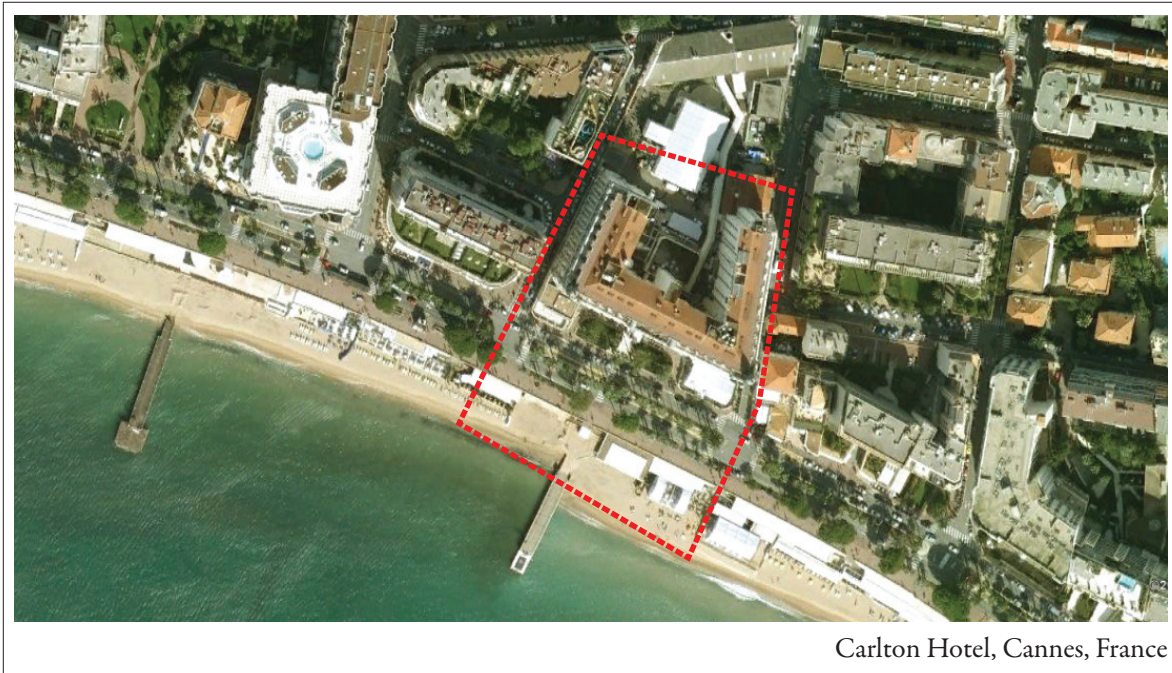
10. Flower Market Boulevard Jean Jaurès, Nice (A)
11. Saint Jean Cap Ferrat (A)
12. Place Saint-François, Grasse, Le Chateau, "gate of Sanford Villa" (C)
13. 145 Boulevard Leader, Cannes; La Croix des Gardes; "the Sanford Villa" (A/D)
14. Pont d'Eze; small village too (A)
15. La Turbie, Avenue de la Victoire (A)
16. Cemetery of Cagnes-sur-Mer (A)

The following maps illustrate the sites the filmmaker acknowledged and framed as beautiful.

GENERAL NOTE

The following list chronicles the major locations of the scenes examined. However, it must be clarified that there are differentiations between (A) the actual site (where the setting of fiction is the place of shooting), (B) site of fiction (where the place of shooting is not the setting of fiction, but another location), (C) the faux site (when it does not equal the setting of fiction), and (D) the site that is recreated on a studio set.

1. 58 Boulevard de la Croisette, 06400 Cannes, France; Hôtel Carlton (A/D)
2. 37 Promenade des Anglais, 06000 Nice, France; Hotel Negresco (A)
3. Commissaire de Police, Avenue Foch, Nice (A)
4. Mont Boron; suburb of Nice (A)
5. 06620 Gourdon, France; approach to Robie villa (C)
6. Saint-Jeannet; John Robie's villa (C)
7. Le Bar Sur Loup; car chase; shot from helicopter (A)
8. Tourrettes-sur-Loup (A)
9. Monaco (Port Hercule); Bertani's restaurant (A)



Carlton Hotel, Cannes, France

fig 2.2 This is the location of the Carlton Hotel. The address is 58 La Croisette, Cannes, 06406 France. It is right off the Promenade de la Croisette, a street that is two kilometres long and entirely parallel to the coastline.

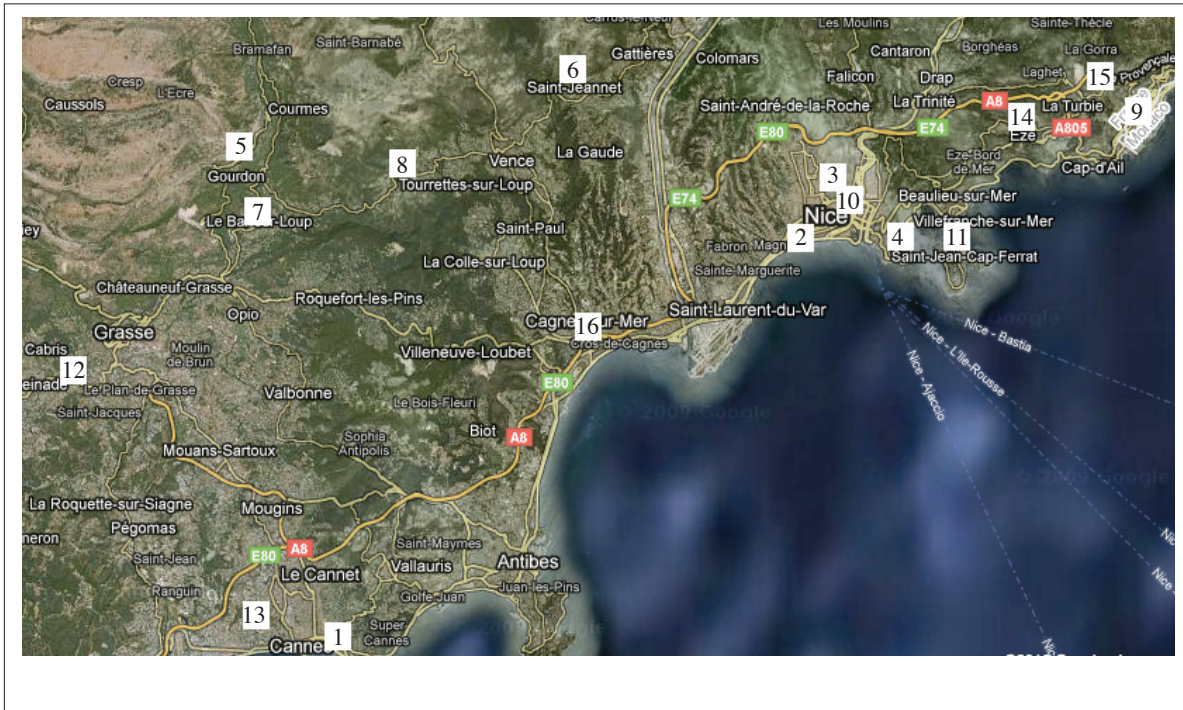


fig 2.3 Map of French Riviera. Scene Locations.

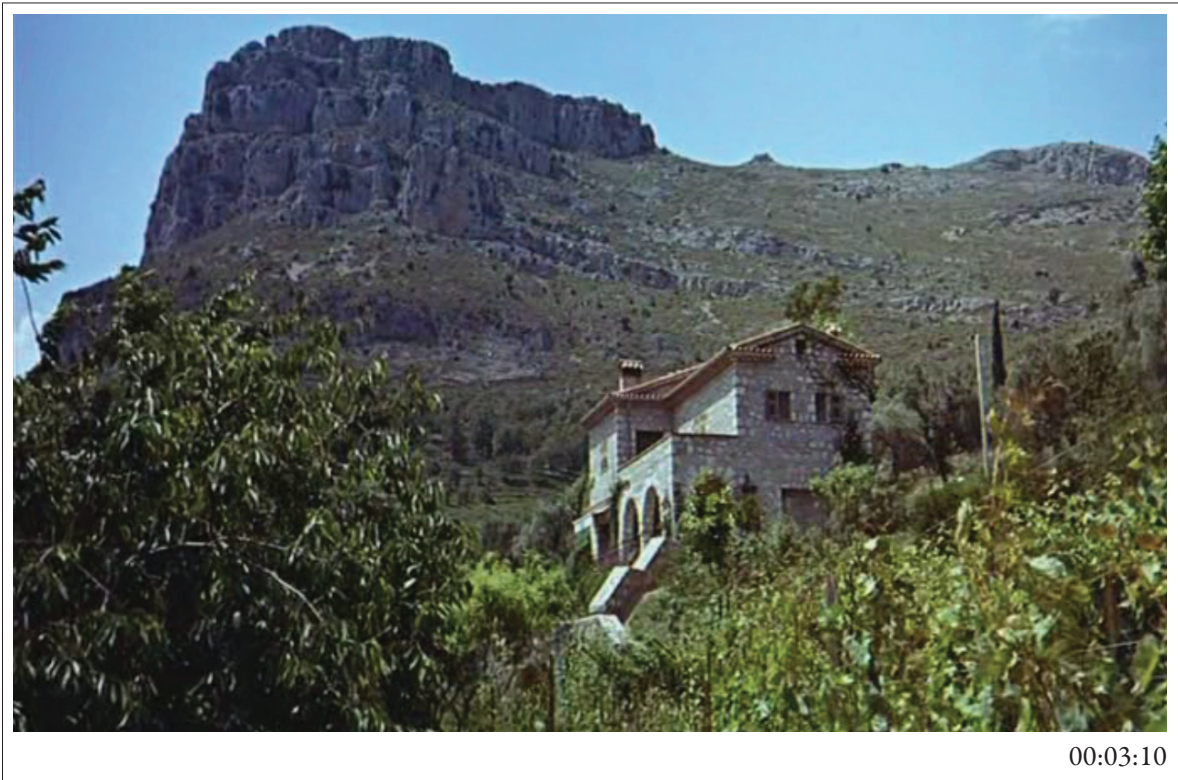


fig 2.4 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(15) EXT. MOUNTAINS - (DAY) - LONGSHOT

A panoramic view¹ of the mountains behind the French Riviera. A winding road coils from the foreground into the distant mountains², where it disappears. The police car is laboring up the incline. The CAMERA PANS OFF it and looks farther into the distance.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

(16) EXT. MOUNTAINS - (DAY) - LONG SHOT

Another view of the mountain beyond the snow-capped peaks in the distance. Far away to the left, a villa³ sits atop a small rise. It is about two or three miles away from us. At that range, it looks small.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

(17) EXT. VILLA - (DAY) - LONG SHOT

The villa, and its flower gardens⁴, fills the screen.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

(18) EXT. VILLA - (DAY) - MEDIUM SHOT

The front door of the villa opens. A middle-aged, portly housekeeper emerges and shakes out a dust cloth. She goes back into the villa.

(19) INT. ROBIE'S LIVING ROOM - (DAY) - LONG SHOT

It is a large, attractive, masculine room⁵. It is lined with books, and a few good oil paintings. There are many flowers in the room. The housekeeper returns from the door and goes on with her dusting. The CAMERA PANS AROUND the room and comes to rest at an armchair. It CLOSES IN on a sleeping black cat.

- 1 Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* (1955) is a film of "city as postcard".

This film features all of the French Riviera's main attractions. It is a comprehensive itinerary of tourist sites, framed in the context of an outsider looking into an exotic and unfamiliar city. Because it needs to include all the staples of tourism, the film warps the city's topography and distorts relation of actual spaces. Each event takes place at a well-known destination, skimming or completely neglecting the grittier connective fabric between them. In order to capitalize on panoramic views, the scenes are non-sequential. The city is free from daily activities. The city's culture is presented in a series of stereotypical vignettes. The protagonist's experiences cover a lot of ground without exhaustive stimulation. This fragmentary representation creates a superficial reading of place, collecting all the Polaroids for evidence of passage without depicting the space in realistic sequence (Penz, 85). Much like a formulaic holiday, the cycle of seeing the place, recording the impression, and filing the memory, is the backbone of the chronicle. The objects are recontextualized at will akin to a museum visit. Sometimes there is even the implication of the *correct* way to experience landmarks (Penz, 86). For example, the stunning views down the Boulevard de la Croisette can only be possible from the vantage points of the best suites of prominent hotels along that stretch. This is not unlike the city planning of extreme political regimes. Haussmann's Paris or Mussolini's Rome made the new empire's key monuments connect without deviation (Penz, 87). The city is tamed by manipulating the city's constituent parts. The reduced scale contributes to the comprehension of a place. This distilled city allows for a clear distinction: this is desirable, this is not. It becomes obvious what is to be coveted by suppressing the parts that do not make it to the episode. The spaces of luxury surface.

There is little appreciation for spatial relationships and the real urban context of each place because the locations in this film migrate from one scenic vista to another. Hitchcock ensures the audience soaks in the full effect of the Mediterranean sunlight. The car chases show off the winding country roads and the speed boat ride sets off the lovely coast line, but in every instance, the real city

is distant; all the blemishes of the landscape fade with it. The city is a series of installations, without the community.

- 2 The view of the mountains and the approach to John Robie's villa is actually a faux site; the shot location is Gourdon, France, far away from Mont Boron, the rich suburb of Nice the police car has just driven away from.
- 3 The villa is off of the main road (the D18) that leads to the village of Saint Jeannet. It is a charming village with quaint cafes and the *Baou*, a world-renowned climbing destination, the cliff the audience sees behind the villa in Fig 2.4. Today, the villa is privately owned and visitors are not allowed. This recent photograph of the villa taken from the town shows renovations made to the terraces, but the overall landscaping and atmosphere of the house remains intact.



fig 2.5 John Robie's villa from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

- 4 There is an extremely rich history in the development of garden styles. From Persian, Egyptian, and Hellenistic gardens of the ancient civilizations to Chinese and Japanese gardens of the East to European Gardens (such as Italian Renaissance, French Baroque, and Anglo-Dutch), the display of nature's beauty through designed landscapes expressed status, pride, and (often) allegorical meaning.

Many plants considered as decorative flowers originated as weeds. When some were attractive enough, gardeners ensured their survival by artificial selection. Even with this domestication, the idea of a garden dedicated solely to flowers was not common until the 19th century. In this case, the flower garden is a sign of taste in a civilized life, a presentation for private delight.

Works Cited

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- 5 The description of Robie's living room includes several typical elements that often represent a fine standard of living. A "masculine" room usually entails dark woods, plenty of plush fabrics on sturdy but refined furniture, and technical trinkets (measuring instruments, globes...) and a general lack of the feminine touch. The book-lined wall suggests scholarly and gentlemanly pursuits, even in line with mild bibliophilia. Traditionally, oil paint is the principal medium of masterpieces, the pigments bound with drying oil, usually linseed oil, and most commonly painted on board or stretched canvas. The artworks listed for the highest price paid at auctions or private sales have all been oils (with Jackson Pollock's "No. 5, 1948" in the top spot, with the inflation-adjusted price of \$150.6 million). The many flowers arranged in the room are indicative of the owner's hobby – the flower garden – and of the leisure time he must have in order to have such impressive results.

Work Cited

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00:07:17

fig 2.6 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(51) EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - (DAY) - LONG SHOT - (HELICOPTER)¹

The CAMERA SKIMS the rooftops of a village, and it travels along with the two cars as they tear their way through.

(52) EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - (DAY) - LONG SHOT - (HELICOPTER)

Once more the cars are on the open highway². THE CAMERA MOVES ALONG with them, and they approach a village which is of the medieval, walled-in type³. THE CAMERA, in mid-air, loses them as they enter this village.

THE CAMERA TRAVERSES along the outer walls so that we only hear the SOUND of the cars racing through the village. We reach the other end of the village and, to our surprise, it is the police car which emerges first.

The car pulls up suddenly, and one or two of the policemen get out and look down the highway, on which there is no car in sight. Abruptly, Robie's car roars out of the village past them. The police jump back into their car, and resume the pursuit.



fig 2.7 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

1 By filming in new and alluring locations, the landscape and architecture are highlighted. Before the war, Hollywood studios did not want the expense and trouble of filming on site. However, with the ease of the new commercial air travel industry in the 1950's, stock footage simply would not suffice. It became convention, or even prerequisite, to film on location (Morrdén, 25). The use of a helicopter in this film was the first of its kind and took advantage of the improved film quality and lighter equipment. The film's panoramic shots of scenery were considered so accomplished that the film won the Academy Award for Best Cinematography in 1956.

2 In this film, the car acts as much more than a means of transport; it is for the joy of the ride itself:

...it is argued that everyday car cultures are implicated in a deep context of affective and embodied relations between people, machines and spaces of mobility and dwelling in which emotions and the senses play a key part – the emotional geographies of car use. Feelings for, of and within cars ('automotive emotions') come to be socially and culturally generated across three scales involved in the circulations and displacements performed by cars, roads and drivers: embodied sensibilities and kinaesthetic performances; familial and sociable practices of 'caring' through car use; and regional and national car cultures that form around particular systems of automobility.

Works Cited

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- Hall, G. "Socio-Economic Variations in Pleasure-Trip Patterns: The Case of Hull Car-Owners." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 57 (1972): 45-58. JSTOR. Web.

3 This village is Tourrettes-sur-Loup, dubbed "City of Violets" because of the small purple flowers cultivated there. The village is on top of a cliff overlooking the Loup valley. The town has evolved so that the walls of the outermost buildings form a bastion, and the three towers that rise above it give this place its name. The village enjoys the frescoed chapel, Chapelle St-Jean, a 12th-century church with paintings from the school of Brea, and a 1st-century pagan shrine dedicated to Mercury, the Roman god of messengers and merchants.

Work Cited

- Porter, Darwin, and Danforth Prince. *Frommer's Provence & the Riviera*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2006. Print, p.285



fig 2.8 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(76) REVERSE ANGLE — (DAY) — LONG SHOT

We see Robie approaching some steps leading to a smart little restaurant situated on the dock side of Monte Carlo¹.

(77) EXT. BERTANI'S RESTAURANT — (DAY) — SEMI-LONG SHOT

We see Robie descend the steps, and the garden section at the restaurant. It is mid-day, and the customers are arriving for luncheon. The well-appointed tables² indicate that this restaurant has some special quality. There are plenty of waiters, and the clientele are of the well-to-do and fashionable set. We see Robie approach the garden entrance to the restaurant.

(78) EXT. BERTANI'S RESTAURANT — (DAY) — SEMI-CLOSEUP

Robie enters behind a small group of people who are waiting for a table. The headwaiter motions the group forward to a table, leaving Robie exposed at the entrance, alone. His country clothes³ contrast sharply with the sophisticated atmosphere.



fig 2.9 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

1 As John Robie approaches the steps of the restaurant, there is a careful shot across the edge of Port Hercules to Avenue d'Ostende, the street that leads to the famous Monte Carlo Casino, designed by Charles Garnier, who also designed the Paris Opera. Both buildings are Beaux Arts Neo-Baroque. The destination, Monte Carlo, is significant, after the fact: the other star of this film, Grace Kelly, went on to marry Prince Rainier III of Monaco in April 1956, after filming, to become Princess consort of Monaco.

2 Emily Post was a prominent figure in the propagation of "etiquette". Her book, *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics, and at Home* (1922), has been continually updated with new editions, until present day. It is a very comprehensive guide to etiquette and manners in assorted situations. She also wrote a column for the Bell Syndicate on the topic of "good taste". In 1946, she founded the Emily Post Institute.

In this scene, the restaurant has crisp white linen, crystal stemware, and seasonal flowers at each table, placed far apart from each other. The tables themselves are set in the informal manner, as the "Emily Post Institute Table Settings" diagram depicts. See Fig 2.10.

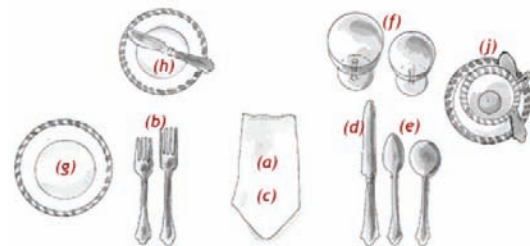
3 Cary Grant abandons his usual tailored suits for a more casual country look, designed by Edith Head. In LIFE magazine, 11 April 1949, Russell Lynes published a matrix of high to low-brow culture. In it, one can see the distinction between city and country clothes as well as the differences between varying tiers of the social hierarchy (see Fig. 4.19 for illustration).

Guide to proper table settings for every occasion:

Basic



Informal



Formal

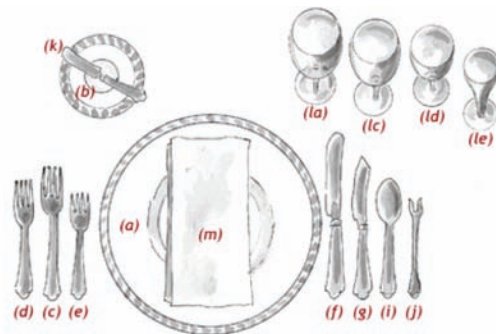


fig 2.10 Emily Post Institute Table Settings



fig 2.11 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(139) EXT. MEDITERRAEAN - (DAY) - MEDIUM SHOT

A VERY LOW CAMERA, just skimming the water line, takes in the full length of a speedboat¹. The spray fans upward from the bow, almost obscuring the passengers. We can just pick out the name on the side of the boat, through the film of water. It reads "MAZUIS MOUSE". In the background we see the coastline, and the high mountains beyond. We are rounding one end of Cap Ferrat².

(140) INT. SPEEDBOAT - (DAY) - SEMI-CLOSEUP

SHOOTING ACROSS the passengers. Danielle is in the foreground steering, while Robie sits in the seat beyond. She handles the boat quite well, and appears to enjoy herself. Some of the spray falls on both of them. She doesn't seem to mind. He wipes some of the water off his face.

ROBIE

You're getting us wet!

She laughs, but doesn't slow up a bit.

DANIELLE

It must be true what they say. Cats don't like water.

He gives her a look of annoyance.

ON LUXURY

- 1 This scene was filmed mostly in the studio. However, the background shots of the landscapes behind are topographically true to life. As the speedboat leaves Port Hercules and heads westwards, the framing of the shot allows the audience to see the Musée Océanographique on a high cliff of Monaco-Ville, right next to the Royal Palace of Monaco, in an older section of the principality.

fig 2.12 & 2.13 Film Stills from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

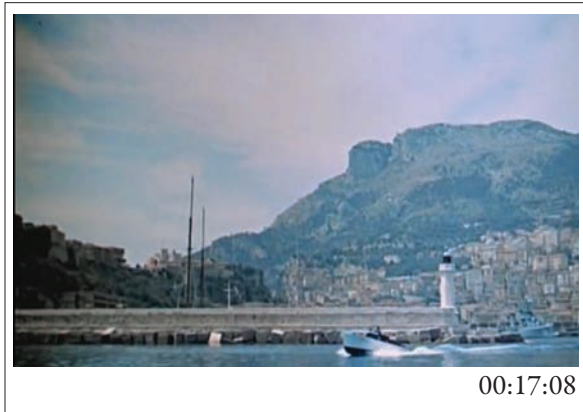
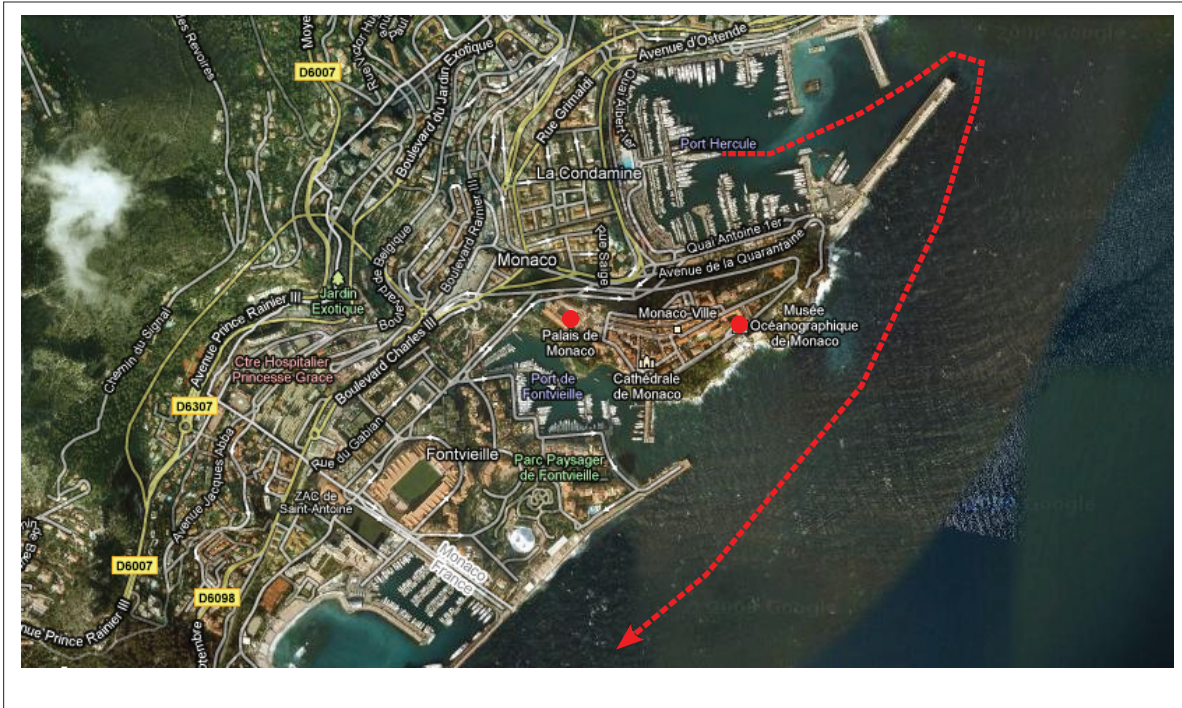


fig 2.14 Map of Monaco, speedboat route



- 2 Originally, Cap Ferrat was the domain of King Leopold II of Belgium. There are many grand villas, including Villa Mauresque, which was originally built for Leopold's father. The writer W. Somerset Maugham had once described the area to his nephew, Robin Maugham, as "the escape hatch from Monaco for those burdened with taste."

fig 2.15 & 2.16 Film Stills from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

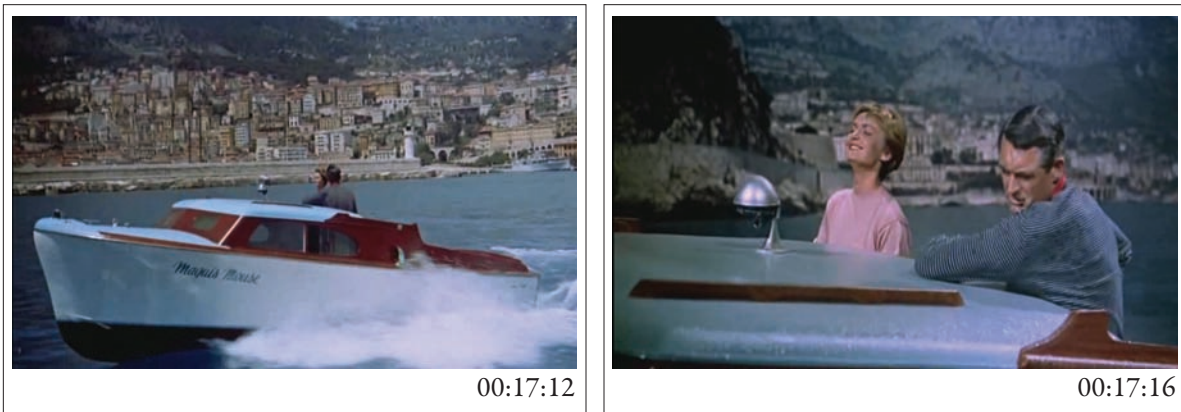


fig 2.17 Map of French Riviera, speedboat route

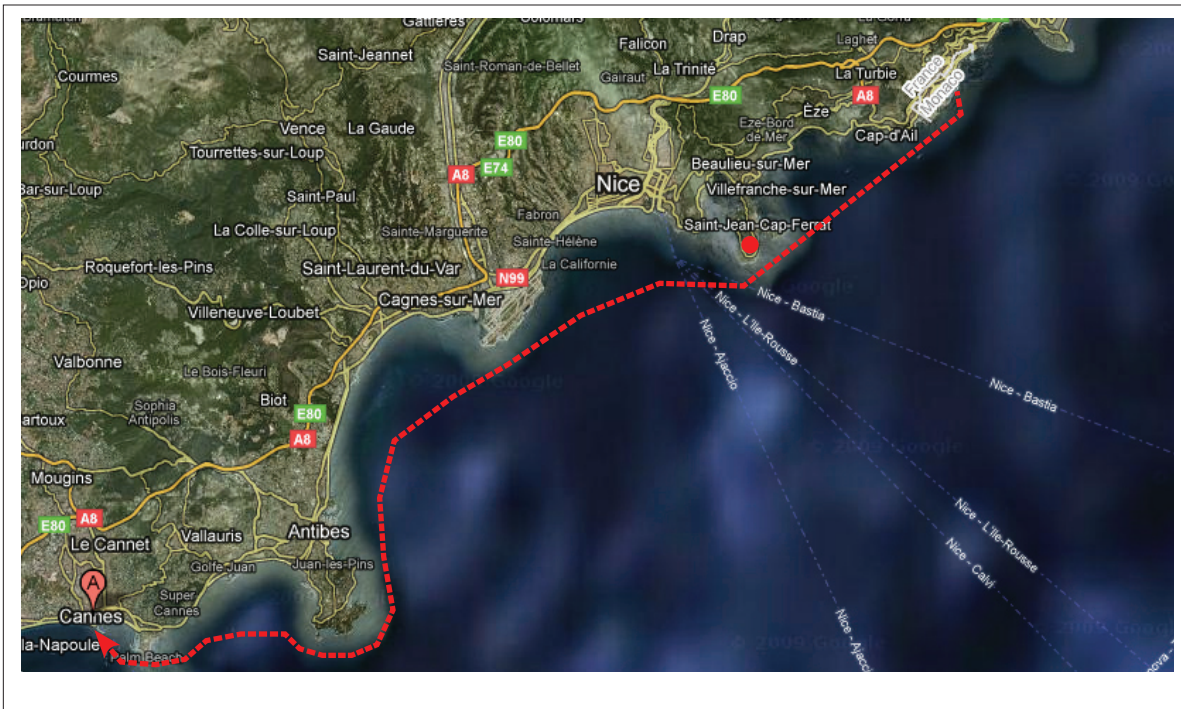




fig 2.18 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(167) EXT. BEACH - (DAY) - MEDIUM SHOT

Robie allows his feet to touch the bottom, and he pushes himself into an upright position. The water is quite shallow. He walks casually out of the water, up the beach, the CAMERA PANNING him. As he moves away, and is lost among the other habitués and bathers of the Beach Club¹, we get a full impression of the Club and its surroundings.

(168) EXT. BEACH - (DAY) - MEDIUM SHOT

Robie finds an open spot on the beach, and reclines on the sand. He stares at the sky once more. Beyond him, perhaps twenty-five feet away, a girl is half-kneeling, half-sitting under a beach umbrella. Her hair is covered by a bandana, and she wears dark glasses. The most startling thing about her, next to her natural physique, is her simple but elegant bathing suit². She is putting sun tan oil on her shoulder. Her movements are unhurried.

- 1 The beach of the Carlton Hotel is only one of around twenty or so within the strip of Plage de la Croisette, situated between the *Vieux Port* and the *Port Canto*. Though they are privately owned, one does not need to be a guest of the hotel in order to enter. There is a *payante*, a cover fee, for a full day's use of a mattress, a chaise lounge, and a parasol (today's prices are around 15€ to 22€). Because the sand is not actually that soft or refined, but slightly pebbly, many people make use of this option. A wooden barricade that ends close to the waterfront separates each of these neighbouring beaches. Not surprisingly, with its cachet, the beach at the Carlton Hotel is more about voyeurism, star-spotting, and exhibitionism than practicing your front crawl.

Sources:

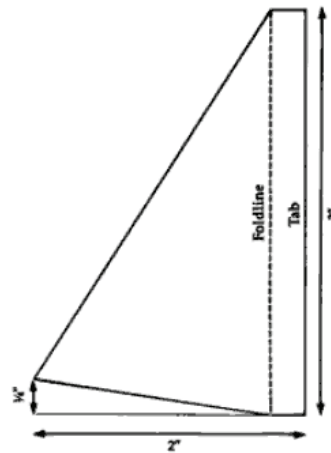
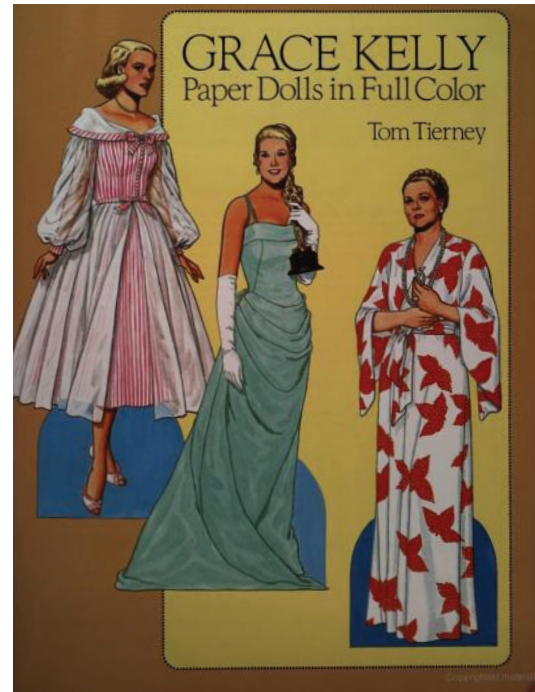
"Beaches in Cannes at Frommer's." *Frommer's Travel Guides: The Best Trips Start Here!* Wiley Publishing, 2010. Web.

- 2 "A dress should be tight enough to show you're a woman and loose enough to prove you're a lady"
—Edith Head

The head costume designer for this film, Edith Head, is known for her injection of class and glamour into every ensemble she creates. Her many memorable quotes are only overshadowed by her critically acclaimed success, with 34 Oscar nominations for Best Costume Design, and eight awards. In this case, the simple but elegant swimsuit, combined with the dark sunglasses and bandana, really allows for the character of Grace Kelly to stand out from the rest of the sunbathers on the beach. From her book "The Dress Doctor", Head wrote: "Don't let your clothes be fitted too tightly. Even a perfect figure looks better if it does not resemble a sausage."

Work Cited

Head, Edith, and Jane Kesner Morris. *Ardmore. The Dress Doctor*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1959. Print.



Note for the making of the paper dolls: To stand dolls, fold the bases back. From the scraps of the pages left after the dolls are cut, cut a brace for each doll, following the diagram. Glue in place.



Dress from *The Country Girl* (Paramount, 1954). Designer: Edith Head.

Gown from Grace's Academy Award acceptance speech. Designer: Edith Head.



Dress from *High Noon* (United Artists, 1952). Designer: Ann Peck.

Outfit from *Mogambo* (MGM, 1954) Designer: Helen Rose.



Dress from Hitchcock's *Dial M for Murder* (Warner Bros., 1954). Designer: Moss Mabry.

Ensemble from Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (Paramount, 1954). Designer: Edith Head.



Bathing suit from the 1950s.

Coat from *The Bridges of Toko-Ri* (Paramount, 1954). Designer: Edith Head.

fig 2.19 Grace Kelly Paper Dolls



fig 2.20 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(179) EXT. FLOWER MARKET¹ - (DAY) - LONG SHOT

The crowded, colourful and busy flower market in Nice. Into the foreground, a hand appears holding a coin². It begins flipping the coin casually into the air.

(180) EXT. FLOWER MARKET - (DAY) - SEMI-CLOSEUP

Robie is looking around nonchalantly for the man he is supposed to meet. The coin flips up into the bottom of the picture occasionally.

(cont'd)

(183) EXT. FLOWER MARKET - (DAY) - MEDIUM SHOT

Nearby, with his back to THE CAMERA, a man is bending over a flower display, examining the blossoms. He is dressed in good taste, although a little formal for the Riviera in the summer - a light business suit³, homburg hat⁴, bow tie⁵. Still bending over the flowers, he turns in the direction of Robie, and reveals an alert and friendly face. He sports a small moustache. He speaks one word:

HUGHSON
Tails?

1 Historically, the concept of Western public life has developed in parallel with the marketplace. The ancient Greek *agora* served as a meeting place as well as a platform for sportsmen and political figures. Buildings surrounded the large, usually rectangular space where public records and important documents were archived and daily business was run. Shops were located in the *stoa*, a long building with columns that formed the edge of the agora. The trade in exotic merchandise took place here. Luxury products, like ivory and silk, made their way to the agora from faraway lands such as India and China.

For this scene of the film, the flower market of Nice serves for business as well as a meeting place. Situated on the *Cours Saleya*, and parallel to the *Quai des Etats-Unis*, it was once an exclusive area of upper class families, with the street opening onto the *Palais des Rois Sardes* (Palace of the Kings of Sardinia).

Glowacki, Kevin T. "The Ancient City of Athens." *The Stoa: A Consortium for Electronic Publication in the Humanities*. 10 June 2010. <<http://www/stoa.org/athens>>

2 Even as far back as 1200 B.C.E., cowrie shells were used as money in China. In 687 B.C.E., the invention of coins in Lydia coincided with the invention of the retail shop. It is only centuries later, in 806 A.D., that the Chinese invent paper money.

Chung, Chuihua Judy., Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, Sze Tsung, Leong, and Tae-wook Cha. *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*. Koln: Taschen, 2001. Print.

3 The word suit is from the French *suite*, meaning "attendance, act of following", which is from the Latin *sequitus* meaning "to attend, follow"; the components of the ensemble are meant to follow each other in cloth and colour. The meaning for "a set of clothes to be worn together" is from the early 15th century, from the concept of the livery or uniform of court attendants. By 1979, "suits" had evolved into a derogatory term for "businessman".

"Suit." *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Web. 03 May 2010. <<http://www.etymonline.com/>>.

4 The Homburg hat, also known as the Anthony Eden hat, was a formal accessory of the 1930's and 1940's. However, by the mid-1950's, it developed an association with the British comedian Tony Hancock that lowered its urbane cachet. The hat itself is similar to the *trilby* and the *fedora*, except the brim is fixed in a tight upwards curl rather than a softer, flexible edge, and the single dent in the centre of the crown is never pinched inward. Usually wool or fur felt, with a grosgrain band, Edward VII made the Homburg hat popular with ranks from his visit to Bad Homburg in Hassen, Germany in 1905. In the hierarchy of formal dress, the homburg is directly after the top hat, and before the bowler and the fedora. It can be appropriately paired with a topcoat, a stroller, or the black tie suit.

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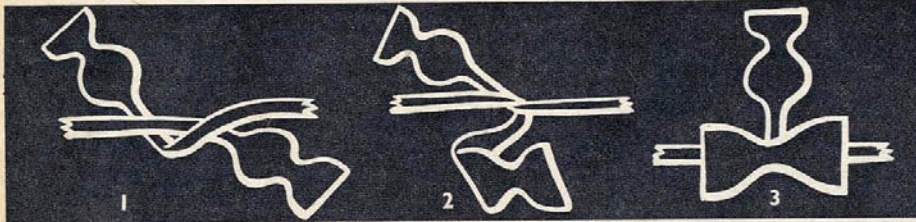


fig 2.21 Homburg hat advertisement (1950s)

5

HOW TO TIE A BOW TIE

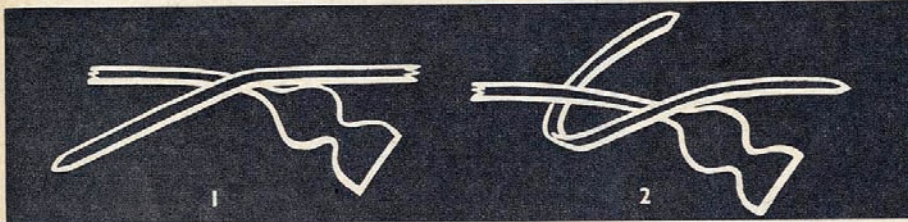
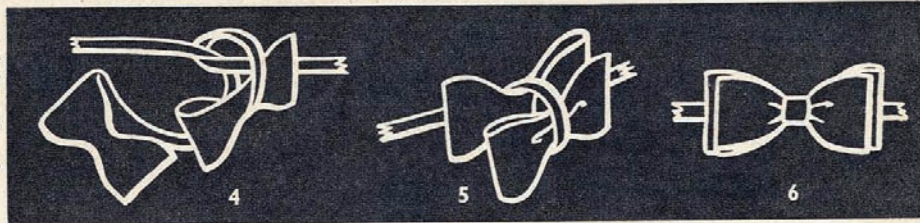
Following our article on Bow Ties (March) several readers have been asking for instructions on how to tie a bow. One reader wanted 'A Magic Formula'. These illustrations will, we hope, tie up with these requests



DOUBLE-ENDED TIE

1. Lower end one inch shorter than the other.
2. Double back the shorter end.
3. Tighten round neck by pulling longer end.

4. Bring long end over short and fold its bow in two.
5. Thread through loop at back.
6. Pull both ends to tighten and adjust.



SINGLE-ENDED TIE

1. Single end over double.
2. Pass under and up at the back.

- 3 & 4. Loop single end and pass folded double end through it.
5. Pull single end to tighten and adjust. Tuck single end behind collar.

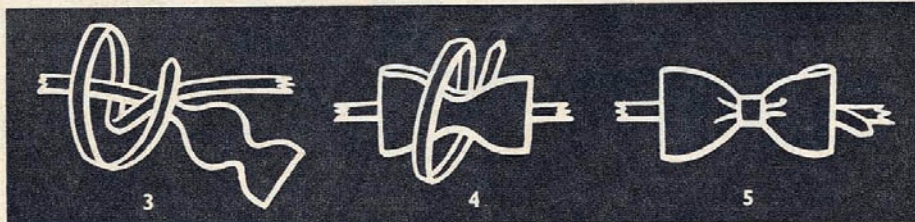


fig 2.22 How to tie a bow tie



00:31:13

fig 2.23 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(247) INT. CARLTON¹ DINING ROOM² - (NIGHT) - MEDIUM SHOT

At a table in the far corner, three people are seated. They have reached the coffee stage of dinner³. The man we immediately identify is Hughson, wearing a tuxedo⁴. With him are two women, one middle-aged, one young. Both are extremely well-dressed⁵, but the older woman is conspicuous by a display of jewellery⁶ which she wears. The younger woman wears not a single piece of jewellery. There is no distraction from the full force of her beauty⁷.

HUGHSON

Mrs. Stevens, wouldn't it be perhaps better if you left some of those jewels back in the hotel safe⁸?

Mrs. Stevens puts out a cigarette she has been smoking⁹. She puts it out in her coffee cup.

MRS. STEVENS

Stop acting like an insurance agent. I didn't buy these things for my old age - I bought them to wear.



fig 2.24 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

- 1 Built in 1909, the Carlton Hotel Cannes is massive, ornate, and clad in white marble. It has 338 rooms and the pale décor of the Belle Époque of the French Riviera. The seaward domes of its roof are said to be modeled after the breasts of Caroline “La Belle” Otero, a famous courtesan of World War I. Italian fascists took over the hotel in 1944 for underground storage. The staff is notoriously discrete regarding high profile clients, but rumours do surface. It was said that one member of royalty reserved three rooms solely for her clothing from 120 suitcases. This is where we first see the female lead, Grace Kelly. It is appropriate that it was here at this very hotel she first met her future husband, Prince Rainer of Monaco.
- 2 There are several dining rooms at the Carlton. The seventh floor formal dining room, *La Belle Otero* (named for the aforementioned famous courtesan), is of ornate Louis XV-esque décor. The dining room in this scene, though ornate, with coffered ceilings, chandeliers, and marble columns, has wicker chairs and opens straight onto the main lobby area. This must mean it is one of the two less formal restaurants on the ground floor: either *La Côte* or *La Brasserie*.

“Carlton Hotel, Cannes.” *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*.
Web. 15 May 2010. < [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
Carlton_Hotel,_Cannes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlton_Hotel,_Cannes)>

- 3 In Emily Post's *Etiquette* (1922), Chapter XIV: Formal Dinners, there is a caveat in capital letters at the start: NOT FOR THE NOVICE TO ATTEMPT. She goes on to explain very comprehensively, the customs for proper dining.

It may be due to the war period, which accustomed everyone to going with very little meat and to marked reduction in all food...but whatever the cause, people are putting much less food on their tables than formerly... Under no circumstances would a private dinner, no matter how formal, consist of more than:

1. Hors d'oeuvre
2. Soup
3. Fish
4. Entrée
5. Roast
6. Salad
7. Dessert
8. Coffee

Formal dinners have been as short as the above schedule for twenty-five years.

- 4 Briton Beward Bulwer-Lytton first wrote about the colour black for eveningwear: "people must be very distinguished to look well in black" (1828). In the summer of 1886, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) sent James Brown Potter (a resident of Tuxedo Park, outside of New York City) to his own Saville Row tailor, Henry Poole & Co., to be fitted with a short black jacket and black tie, inspired by the British military uniforms of the time. This style traveled back to the United States; when, at the formal ball in the Tuxedo Club in October 1886, Pierre Lorillard named his tailless black jacket the "tuxedo" after the locale. From then on, the tuxedo was the staple in men's formal wear.

Bellis, Mary. "The History of Men's Tuxedos and Male Formal Wear." *About.com Guide*. 2010. Web. 10 July 2010. <<http://inventors.about.com/od/tstartinventions/a/tuxedo.htm>>

- 5 Again, Edith Head, who had a mighty reign in Paramount Studios from 1924-1967, designed all the costumes. She was the "dress doctor" because: "on any given day, the patient may have been Katharine Hepburn, Ginger Rogers, or Barbara Stanwyck. The medicine prescribed: a potent mixture of style and glamour befitting the role in question or a personal appearance at an upcoming Hollywood event." (Head & Donovan, 1)

- 6 The actress Jessie Royce Landis who plays the character Jessie Stevens wears diamond drop earrings, two diamond bracelets on her left wrist, one heavy gold chain bracelet on her right wrist, two large cocktail rings on each hand, an elaborately set diamond necklace, and a silver brooch on her evening gown.

- 7 Of course, Grace Kelly is able to make true of this sentence. However, it is interesting to look at this statement through the words of Roland Barthes and his essay on "Gemstones to Jewellery." Our culture has turned these lifeless stones into the embodiment of affluence and dignity. Barthes' succinct description of the diamond translates the irony of its relationship to luxury: "This cold fire, this sharp, shining object which is nevertheless silent, what a symbol for the whole world of vanities, of seductions devoid of content, of pleasures devoid of sincerity!" (Barthes, 60)

- 8 This is the old world tradition of the front desk hotel safe, before individual automated safes in each hotel room. The responsibility shifted from the authoritative and service-based core of the hotel to the individual guest – more democratic, less indulgent.

- 9 Emily Post wrote: "If there is no smoking-room, coffee and cigars are brought to the table for the gentlemen after the ladies have gone into the drawing-room." (Post, Ch.14) Mrs. Stevens is a smoker herself, a clue that she is not like most society women.



00:32:59

fig 2.25 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(257) INT. MUNICIPAL CASINO¹ - (NIGHT) - MEDIUM SHOT

SHOOTING ACROSS the roulette table, with the spinning wheel, we see Mrs. Stevens backed by the standing figures of her daughter and Hughson. The croupier and the watcher sit to her right. Amid the hubbub and the cries of the croupier, and the click of the ball, and the rattle of chips - one VOICE comes out clearly:

MRS. STEVENS

I knew I shouldn't have stopped here. Baccarat's² my game. Why did you let me get so close to this whirling pickpocket, anyway?

Francie and Hughson exchange glances of amusement. She watches the wheel spin. The ball drops.

CROUPIER³

Vingt-trois. Le numero vingt-trois gagne la mise.

MRS. STEVENS

(Slumps a little) Wouldn't you know?

HUGHSON

Well, shall we move along?

CROUPIER

Faites vos jeux. Faites vos jeux.

She holds up one remaining stack of chips⁴.

MRS. STEVENS

Let me get ride of these. Two spins.

As she turns to place her bets, something catches her eye.

1

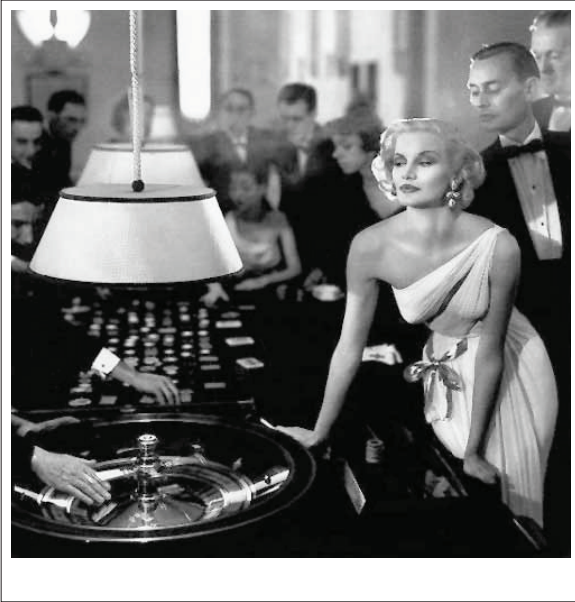


fig 2.26 Sunny Harnett, evening dress by Gres



fig 2.27 & 2.28 Photographs of the Municipal Casino of Cannes

The Municipal Casino of Cannes, a history.

April 5, 1905

Henri Ruhl, Manager of the Hôtel Scribe in Paris, is awarded concession for a Municipal Casino to be constructed in Cannes.

January 28, 1907

After two years of construction, Municipal Casino of Cannes opens with a theatre, a grand hall for entertainment and gambling, and reception rooms including the Salles des Ambassadeurs in the style of Louis XVI that looks onto the gardens and the sea. The main tables were for Baccarat and Chemin de Fer.

1914-1918

The Municipal Casino of Cannes shuts down to be transformed into a hospital for World War I.

1919

After war damage, the casino is renovated by Eugène Cornuché, a patron of the arts. A few years later, his associate, François André, owns and operates the casino until he is succeeded by his nephew, Lucien Barrière, in 1962.

December 1929

The Municipal Casino of Cannes inaugurates Roulette and Trente et Quarante, two games that are formerly banned from all French casinos. Future celebrities – Edith Piaf and Buster Keaton – then unknown, perform on the stage of the casino.

1939

The casino is scheduled to host the First International Film Festival but, with the start of World War II closes in September. It remains closed until the Liberation of France.

1946

The great hall of the casino is equipped for the First Cannes Film Festival to ever be held. Jean-Gabriel Domergue, the inventor of the “pin-up” and curator for the Musée Jacquemart-André, organizes garden décor, parties, and fireworks.

July 1979

The Municipal Casino is demolished. On its site, the new Festival Hall, *Le Palais des Festivals et des Congrès*, is built.

August 1988

The successor to the Municipal Casino, Casino Croisette, opens in Le Palais des Festivals et des Congrès.

Work Cited

“Le Casino Municipal.” *Site Officiel De La Ville De Cannes*.
Web. 04 Apr. 2010.

- 2 “He likes the solid, studied comfort of card-rooms and casinos, the well-padded arms of the chairs, the glass of champagne or whisky at the elbow, the quiet unhurried attention of good servants.”

(Ian Fleming’s *Casino Royale*, 1953)

Baccarat is Mrs. Stevens’ preferred game, just as Ian Fleming made baccarat James Bond’s favoured casino game. The Italians introduced it to the French during the reign of Charles VIII of France (1483 to 1498). There are three variations of baccarat: *baccarat chemin de fer*, *baccarat banque* (or *à deux tableaux*), and *punto banco* (the North American baccarat). Baccarat is a simple game where there are only three outcomes – player, banker, and tie. In North America, baccarat is – with high stakes at play – usually played in special rooms set apart from the main gaming floor, where there is more privacy and security. Mrs. Stevens’ “new money” – American oil money – makes her the perfect candidate for this high stakes game. Mrs. Stevens is correct when she says that the odds of winning are better than roulette.

A list of casino games and their calculated “house edge” – the difference between the true odds and the odds that the casino pays you when you win. The lower the percentage, the better for the player, because the casino profits from a percentage of the player’s original bet.

Casino Game & House Edge

Craps (double odds)	0.60%
Blackjack	0.80%
Baccarat (banker)	1.17%

Baccarat (player)	1.63%
Roulette (single zero)	2.7%
Three-Card Poker	3.4%

Works Cited

Griswold, John, Andrew Lycett, Zoe Watkins, Raymond Benson, and George Almond. *Ian Fleming’s James Bond: Annotations and Chronologies for Ian Fleming’s Bond Stories*. Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2006. Print.

“Casino Game Odds.” *Online Gambling Odds and Information*.
Web. 15 May 2010.

- 3 A croupier sees both the glamour and the underbelly of the casino. Training varies depending on the region; blackjack is the debut game for North America, roulette for Europe. The word *croupier* is from the original meaning (prior to 1731) as “one who rides behind another, on the croup or ‘rump’ of a horse”, which grew to include “anyone who backs up another.”

Works Cited

White, Linda. “Success Is in the Cards.” *Jobboom Career Connection*. Toronto Sun. Web. 15 May 2010.

“croupier” *Online Etymology Dictionary*.
<http://www.etymonline.com/>

- 4 Before the invention of poker chips, people used all kinds of small but valuable objects – often coins, gold dust, or gold nuggets – to represent the stakes. When more standardized chips were introduced, they were made from a variety of materials, including bone, wood, clay and ivory. Manufacturers started including designs and engravings on the surface to hinder counterfeiting. A clay-composition poker chip was most popular from the 1880s to the 1930s, but by the 1950s, chips usually were compression molded, with some percentage of earthen material in them. Today, to prevent fraud and track chips, chips may incorporate high-resolution patterns, custom colour combinations, UV markings on the inlay, and even RFID.

Work Cited

Rizzo, Pete. “Poker Chips History.” *PokerPages: Poker Information, Tournaments, Players, Poker Rules and Strategy, Learn Poker*. Web. 15 May 2010.



fig 2.29 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief*(1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(287) INT. STEVENS SITTING ROOM¹ - (DAY) - MEDIUM SHOT

A tableau of three people. Mrs. Stevens, Robie and Hughson, frozen for a brief instant. Mrs. Stevens is in a somewhat elaborate, but tasteful, dressing gown². She wears a couple of expensive rings on her fingers and earrings. There is a startled look on her face, as she stands near the window, and faces the doorway.

On one side of the room stands a portable tea service³, with the remains of a petit dejeuner for three on it. Robie dressed in casual sport clothes, sits on a settee. He is also looking toward the door, with a blank expression on his face, which borders on surprise.

Standing in the doorway, hat in hand, is H. H. Hughson.

ROBIE

How much did he get away with last night?

Hughson closes the door behind him, and advances into the room. He puts he hat on a small table.

HUGHSON

The gems were insured for thirty-five thousand⁴. In dollars.

MRS. STEVENS

(Shrugs) Somebody wins - somebody loses.

1



00:39:59

fig 2.30 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

2



fig 2.31 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

3 The silver tea set evokes old world charm. With filigree designs, the polished sterling set had – since the 1800s, when it was a veritable status symbol – a certain cachet. The makers of that time stamped their signature mark on the base of each piece to authenticate its origins. The elaborate tea service from the Carlton Hotel room service would have these markings.

Work Cited

“Silver Tea Set.” *Silver Tea Set*. Web. 15 May 2010.

4 According to the Bank of Canada inflation calculator, with an average annual rate of inflation or percentage decline in the value of money, \$35,000 in 1956 would be worth \$286,950.35 in 2010.

Work Cited

“Rates and Statistics - Inflation Calculator.” *Bank of Canada*. Web. 23 Apr. 2010.



01:26:01

fig 2.32 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

TO CATCH A THIEF

(553) EXT. SANFORD VILLA¹ - (NIGHT) - LONG SHOT

Shooting from the roof we see a courtyard below, and the garden beyond. The guests are beginning to appear in the grounds. They are all in Eighteenth Century French costumes², varied and colorful. Buffet tables are in evidence. A dance³ area has been cleared, with a bandstand at one end.

(554) OMITTED

(555) OMITTED

(556) EXT. SANFORD VILLA - (NIGHT) - SEMI-LONG SHOT

This is the main doorway from the house to the grounds. A flight of broad, wide stone steps lead from a terrace. We get a glimpse of a large entrance hall brightly-lit inside. Through this doorway and onto the terrace where Mr. and Mrs. Sanford, in their costumes, greet the arrivals. Having made their Eighteenth Century curtsies to the hostess and host, each new arrival moves on down the steps and approaches THE CAMERA.

THE CAMERA concentrates on the central figure of each new tableau. As the figure comes nearer, our attention is centred on the jewellery being worn. We are therefore successively treated to displays of fabulous stones⁴ and elegant settings.

The SOUND of music is heard off, flourishing the entrance of the guests⁵.



fig 2.33 Film Still from *To Catch a Thief* (1955)

- 1 The gate of the Sanford Villa is a *faux* site. Hitchcock used the gates of a villa at Place Saint-Francois, Grasse, and shot from outside the property. The Grand Corniche road is the main road for the estates in that area. The villa itself, however, is actually at 145 Boulevard Leader, Cannes (in La Croix des Gardes).

The villa as a typology is inherently an urban invention. The European villa evokes *rusticor* (to go out to the country) and *otium* (a highly literate, educated, and deliberate attempt to reconnect with the natural world for pleasure and leisure). The most expressive of examples, Hadrian's Villa near Tivoli, Italy is the embodiment of these ideals. To cite Vitruvius's *The Ten Books of Architecture*, the villa manifests all of the ideals of "firmitas, utilitas, venustas" (structure, function, beauty).

- 2 It is appropriate for the ball to be a masquerade in 18th century French costumes. Louis XIV's reign (1643 to 1715) bred the opulence that consolidated France's foothold as the main site for luxury goods.

Roberto Rossellini's film *The Taking of Power by Louis XIV* (1966) acutely demonstrates this. Throughout the film, the costume is significant. First, everyone wears elaborate costumes – plumed hats, tall shiny boots, layers and layers of cloth -- so that all characters, peripheral or central, are flamboyantly dressed. The dressing of the King was significant in and of itself. In the morning, it was an honour to watch the king rise; dressing him was part of a ritual, along with the washing of his hands and face, and the confirmation that he had performed his conjugal duties to the Queen. Near the end of Rossellini's film, before reading from his philosophy books, the king takes his time to undress, piece by piece, out of his court clothes, into comfortable study attire. As the Sun King, he uses fashion to domesticate the whole aristocracy. He instructs that the ensemble must cost close to one year's salary and nonchalantly motions for more lace. Under all the expenses of keeping up with the trends, the exorbitant fees take their toll on the nobility, morphing them into preposterous walking dolls. Thus, Louis XIV used clothing as a

means to control a totalitarian state. Alongside of using clothing as a manifestation of his dictatorship, architecture also played a large role. All of Versailles' extravagant fountains and gardens impressed and, just as importantly, distracted. Rossellini had said that Louis XIV had an empirical understanding that vanity was a very real and solid thing that existed amongst everyone. He used this knowledge to its maximum power.

- 3 In Emily Post's *Etiquette*, we can assay what we have given up in our more colloquial culture in the arrangements, the conduct, and the appearance of an event like this one.

Chapter XVII

A BALL is the only social function in America to which such qualifying words as splendour and magnificence can with proper modesty of expression be applied. Even the most elaborate wedding is not quite "a scene of splendour and magnificence" no matter how luxurious the decorations or how costly the dress of the bride and bridesmaids, because the majority of the wedding guests do not complete the picture. A dinner may be lavish, a dance may be beautiful, but a ball alone is prodigal, meaning, of course, a private ball of greatest importance.

On rare occasions, a great ball is given in a private house, but since few houses are big enough to provide dancing space for several hundred and sit-down supper space for a greater number still, besides smoking-room, dressing-room and sitting-about space, it would seem logical to describe a typical ball as taking place in the ballroom suite built for the purpose in nearly all hotels.

Other chapter sub-headings include:

Decorations

Details of Preparation for a Ball or Dance in a Private House

The Hostess at a Ball

How to Walk Across a Ballroom

4 The perception of value is contagious, working like bacteria in a Petri dish culture: the initial inoculation of low numbers, the slow inception, the exponential rise, to a plateau population of pure saturation, then death by over-congestion. Shoppers are willing to invest at different “price points”, depending on how much Gucci/Louis Vuitton/Versace is in a product. That is why easily visible goods, like t-shirts, shoes, dark sunglasses, watches, handbags, and luggage, are the best inventory; their owners flash the logo to onlookers (Twitchell, 109). However, that perception also works in reverse: value dilutes if the logo noise is too loud. Without obvious indications, the connoisseur needs to read the code of luxury. According to the late Thomas Hoving, the former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, there is an “ineffable sense of connoisseurship.” Elaborating on this concept, art historian Bernard Berenson calls his evaluative eye a “sixth sense”: “When I see a picture, in most cases, I recognize it at once as being or not being by the master it is ascribed to; the rest is merely a question of how to fish out the evidence that will make the conviction as plain to others as it is to me” (Grann). He noted that for him, there is even a visceral reaction of discomfort upon viewing a fake. This knowledge is elusive; some never learn.

Luxury is as an inadvertent shortcut to meaning in a transitory world. Luxury is always socially constructed; symbols are its most potent weapon. Jewellery remains a vital element because it underlines the desire for order, for composition, and for intelligence. There is nothing inherently useful in a gemstone; instead, it announces, and it announces inflexible order. Jewellery makes gemstones to wear. Jewellery reigns over clothing not because it is absolutely precious, but because it plays a crucial role in making clothing mean something (Barthes, 64). All the jewels in these films have special importance. Some evoke innocence and others infamy, based on the value of the gemstone: Holly Golightly’s naiveté and respect for the concept of jewellery, the financial means to a comfortable retirement John Robie sees in them, and the indifferent display of the them for the socialites in *La Dolce Vita*.

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- Twitchell, James B. *Living It Up: Our Love Affair with Luxury*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002. Print.

5 Architecture within movies has a very different relationship than architecture for viewing movies; it is necessary to sketch a brief history of how films became a respectable medium. It sheds some light on how cinema merged with our society, an athenaeum of cultural ideas.

In the early 20th century, films projected in impromptu spaces, adapting halls and storefronts. There is no indication that films were shown in these spaces exclusively. In time, the movie theatre developed a specialized typology. Most of the early cinemas were converted vaudeville houses – the space preceding the program. There was a stage in front of the screen for live entertainment and an orchestra pit for musicians accompanying silent films. However, beyond adapting the traditional stage or creating a shelter for the screen, there was still no governing design principle. Then, in 1913, Samuel L. Rothapfel opened Regent Theatre in New York City. As the first “luxury” cinema, the pseudo Spanish architecture with its eccentric Italianate colonnaded façade attracted audiences, and seemed to legitimize film, as it competed for prestige with traditional operas and theatres. An article on the theatre’s opening in “Motion Picture News” sings its praises: “This excellent production in an environment so pleasing, so perfect in its artistic details, that it seemed as though the [architectural] setting were a prerequisite to the picture, and that both must, henceforth, go together.” The next year, the Strand Theatre opened on Broadway in New York. Dubbed the “movie palace”, the theatre was embellished with crystal lamps, various paintings, gold leaf, and a steep entry fee for the time (25 cents). The ticket bought you a thirty-piece orchestra,

plush carpets, uniformed ushers, and an atmosphere once only available in privileged circles. To quote Lucinda Smith: “Once the theatres were upgraded, the movies then became respectable.” This is when movie theatres became integrated social structures, at the centre of urban life. They changed the way city dwellers lived, providing dignified entertainment to a broad social spectrum; everyone lived glamorous lives vicariously on the silver screen.

After the lavish movie palaces in the 1920s and 1930s, tastes in theatres changed after the war. Post-war theatres economized, but business was steady. Then, in the 1950s and into the 1960s, they had to compete with the television set. Many theatres downtown closed. It was not until the 1970s, with the development of the multiplex where the moviegoer had a choice of movie to see, did the slump finally end. Movie theatres became the anchor in suburban malls. Designed around circulation studies, they replaced public gathering space with concession kiosks -- the real money-makers for theatre operations. There is still a disparity between the theatre itself and the spaces of the films shown, but currently, there is fresh experimentation in “luxury” cinema. Mostly in Asian markets, theatres have ostentatious interiors, with concierge-reserved reclining seats and waiters on staff, and simulator-movie auditoriums like amusement park rides.

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- Thomsen, Christian W., and Robert Blanchet. *Hollywood Recent Developments*. Stuttgart: Ed. Menges, 2005. Print.

La Dolce Vita (1960)



fig 3.1 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA(1) RUINS¹ OF THE FELICE AQUEDUCT – (MORNING)

A vast panorama of the Roman countryside. To one side are the ruins of the San Felice aqueduct², towering arches that come striding across the land. Two thousand years ago, these arches brought water to the city, but now there are many gaps where whole sections of the aqueduct have fallen in. Directly in front is a soccer field, the goal posts dwarfed by the height of the aqueduct. In the distance the sound of motors is heard. A speck in the sky grows rapidly larger. It is a helicopter, and beneath it is a hanging figure. A second helicopter follows close behind. As the 'copters pass over the field the figure suspended below can be clearly seen. A large statue of Christ the Laborer swings from a cable. The shadow of the 'copter and this incongruous figure flashes across the walls of the aqueduct. The helicopters pass on.

ON LUXURY

- 1 The locations of *La Dolce Vita* often refer back to antiquity, not only because it is impossible to escape the past in the eternal city, but also because connotations of luxury must always hint at a resplendent history. From the opening shot of the Statue of Christ being flown in by a helicopter past the Acquedotto Felice to the iconic frolic through the Fontana di Trevi, the film points to a society not satisfied with a world of spiritual pleasures, but a society of man-made spectacle that relies on media, movie stars, and gossip journalism to rescue it from boredom (Burke, 86).
- 2 The movie opens with a shot of the ancient aqueduct of San Felice from the *Parco degli Acquedotti*. The aqueduct serves as a backdrop for the helicopters passing it. In the second helicopter are a journalist and a photographer, who later try to exchange

phone numbers with several women sun-tanning on a rooftop. This dense mix of the ancient and the modern, the sacred and the transient, and mass communication and personal network, all culminate as Fellini's favourite topics. The aqueduct no longer carries water into the city; instead it is the route bearing images (Penz, 93). The aqueducts have been appropriated and embraced as a symbol for a past era of finer craftsmanship and quality.

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- Penz, Francois, and Maureen Thomas. *Cinema and Architecture: From Historical to Digital*. London: BFI (British Film Institute), 1997. Print.



fig 3.2 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



fig 3.3 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

00:04:19



fig 3.4 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

00:04:38



fig 3.5 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA(3) VIA VENETO¹ – (NIGHT)

Via Veneto – a half mile of smart nightclubs² and open-air cafes³, airline offices and expensive shops⁴, where an international café society of aristocrats and celebrities⁵, millionaires and pederasts, meet⁶ to drink and gossip and escape the boredom of themselves. This is Marcello's beat, here he spends his nights ferreting out the spicy tidbits that will be served up – with photographs⁷ – to the sensation-hungry readers of his tabloid magazine⁸. Here the tourists come to gawk, and the photographers prowl like jackals⁹, for this is the center of "La Dolce Vita" – the sweet life.

As Maddalena and Marcello come out of the nightclub, the photographers recognize them and close in.

A VOICE

Hello.

MARCELLO

Hello.

MADDALENA

Ah, you have your friends ready to attack.

- 1 At the top end of Via Vittorio Veneto stands the Aurelian Walls, built around 274 AD. In the last quarter of the 19th century, the Ludovisi family (descendents of Pope Gregory XV) divided their huge estate into blocks for an upper middle class market. The new boulevard they carved to connect to their neighbours, the Barberini, was wide and curving, to accommodate horse carriages. This became Via Veneto. Today, the influence of the Ludovisi family are found in the Casino dell'Aurora (above Via Aurora) and Villa Ludovisi (behind Palazzo Margherita). Piero Gherardi created an exact replica of Via Veneto in Rome's Cinecitta Studios, without the gentle slope from Piazza Barberini to Villa Borghese.
- 2 These nightclubs are now long gone and remnants of this glamorous past are scarce. There are only over-crowded and over-priced tourist traps now.
- 3 There are many cafés still here, including Café Paris (which opened in 1956). However, tented glass enclosures have replaced the open-air seating areas that lined the sidewalks and gave this street its original bustling atmosphere.
- 4 In the 1950's and 1960's, besides cars and film, there was one other field where Italian taste set trends: fashion. From America's First Lady, Jacqueline Kennedy and her love of Oleg Cassini, to Gucci, Pucci, and Simonetta dressing silver screen stars, Italian fashion was glamorous, with the price tags to prove it.

Retail spaces undergo an evolutionary process. New typologies are born, gain popularity, fade, or continually evolve. Today, rather than shopping within a city, the city operates between the shops (Koolhaas, *The Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*, 194). Shopping has flattened public space with the ubiquity of brands and the enormity of international commercialization.

This began during the time Émile Zola wrote *Au Bonheurs des Dames*. Zola understood that the department store would essentially kill the boutique. His novel describes the opening of a fictional Parisian department store, modeled on Le Bon Marché, and its effects on consumption. The

inherent advantages of the department store – the gathering of merchandise into one space, choice for consumers, mass quantities – undercut luxury boutiques. When the coveted goods come more easily and by several channels, their significance decreases, and buying becomes an entirely different process.

- 5 “Sophia Loren is with Errol Flynn and Audrey Hepburn with Anthony Quinn.”
- 6 The city is a fundamental prerequisite to luxury. Luxury, even in the country, requires a high degree of urbanity; there must be the right combination of wealth, beauty, power, and publicity present in order to catalyze indulgence. First, the spectacle of the city allows the seduction to occur; the public must have front row seats to the display. Prominent people may aim to impress one another, but what truly establishes celebrity (or infamy) is absorption into the public. Contrary to simple logic, this pursuit unifies, rather than divides, societies. With the city as the playground for spectacle and conspicuous display, public events and commercial institutions become a site of aesthetic and social effects. Desirability becomes a matter of portraying patterns of consumption, display, and entertainment. This constitutes the “fashionable milieu” (Gundle, 56), where desire is associated with privilege. With a balance of exclusion and access, a location establishes itself as a refined institution. The commercial and entertainment sectors of a metropolis, are absorbed into the fabric of the city, solidifying these moments of luxury – in the mind of its inhabitants and all those others who become exposed to it.
- 7 Susan Sontag writes in *On Photography* that the photograph is an imaginary possession from a past experience, framed by bias and circumstance. Sontag elaborates that the image allows one to take possession of a past and or a space that was ultimately never theirs to own (Sontag, 9). Therefore, photographs promote nostalgia, since the subject is automatically touched by pathos. Luxury today is full of nostalgic tendencies and recycling of the past.

- 8 Through the mass dissemination of photographs of event images, there is a sense of participation in them. Without this system in place, there would be no fashionable milieu. As Mallarmé said, “Everything in the world exists in order to end up in a book.” Luxurious settings end in the collective consciousness.
- 9 This statement mostly refers to Paparazzo, the character in *La Dolce Vita* played by Walter Stantesso. In “Word and Phrase Origins”, Robert Hendrickson attributes Fellini’s naming of Paparazzo to a word that describes the buzzing of a mosquito. However, in “A Sweet and Glorious Land: Revisiting the Ionian Sea”, Ennio Flaiano claimed the name was taken from a character of that travel book, Signor Paparazzo. Either way, the term has endured to identify photojournalists who capture prominent people in candid shots. In Chinese, the literal translation of paparazzi is “dog gang”, much like the “jackals” Fellini wrote in his screenplay.

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GENERAL NOTE

Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960) is a portrayal of the "city as fabric" and clearly records the urban fabric of Rome, establishes certain civic sites, and gives a distinct impression of its boundaries. The film is effusive and all-encompassing, with an even distribution between interior versus exterior shots, the historical centre (*centro storico*) versus beyond, and modern architecture versus ancient ruins. Rome and its environs offers endless material and cultural complexity built up through time to purport numerous ways to take on the city (Penz, 84). Fellini thus adds his name to the ranks of great Italian directors by contributing a view of Rome the world now knows and accepts:

De Sica, Visconti, Rossellini, Antonioni, whom all the world by now knows, almost as if they were the Colosseum or the Piazza Venezia.

—Cesare Zavattini (Bolzoni, 21)

In this portrayal of a city, the spaces are truer to daily life. The observations are more acute, offering insights into neighbourhood connections and composition. The focus is not on the spectacular, but on the subtle relationships that occur in more commonplace, or even banal, contexts. It explores the gradation from private, to semi-private, to public space. The film is more concerned with the view of the bedroom, the apartment stairwell, or the seedy nightclub, than the shiny opera house. The choreography of the camera allows these relationships to reveal themselves gradually and subtly (Penz, 89). The protagonist is a citizen of the city, already acquainted and uninterested in its monuments. The story weaves its way through the city in a way that is true to its particular culture. In doing so, the film acknowledges external cultural contexts to help position the specific district within it (Penz, 90). In the larger context of the city, district boundaries – what lies within and beyond them – establish notions of identity and belonging. In these situations, the areas of privilege become apparent.

This is the approximate inventory of most of the scene locations. The same system of differentiating the (A) the actual site, (B) site of fiction, (C) the faux site, and (D) the site that is recreated on a studio set, applies.

1. Parco degli Acquadotti, 00178 Rome, Italy (helicopter flyover) (A)
2. Ciampino Airport, Ciampino, Rome (A)
3. The Westin Excelsior Rome - 5 Star Luxury Hotel, Via Vittorio Veneto, 125 (A/D)
4. St. Peter's Basilica, Via San Telesforo, 15 (A/D)
5. Baths of Caracalla, 00153 Rome (D)
6. Fontana di Trevi, Piazza di Trevi, 00187 Roma (A)
7. Acque Albule, Bagni di Tivoli ("Madonna siting") (B)
8. Fregene, Fiumicino ("waitress from Umbria") (C)
9. Via di Tor de' Schiavi, 00171 Roma, Italy (A/D)
10. Via Vittorio Veneto, Cafe de Paris (D)
11. Livio Odescalchi Palace of Bassano di Sutri (16th c. villa, on Via Lassa) (A)
12. Esposizione Universale Roma (EUR), Rome, Italy ("Steiner's apt") (A/D)
13. Passo Oscuro, Fiumicino ("Ricardo's beach house") (A)

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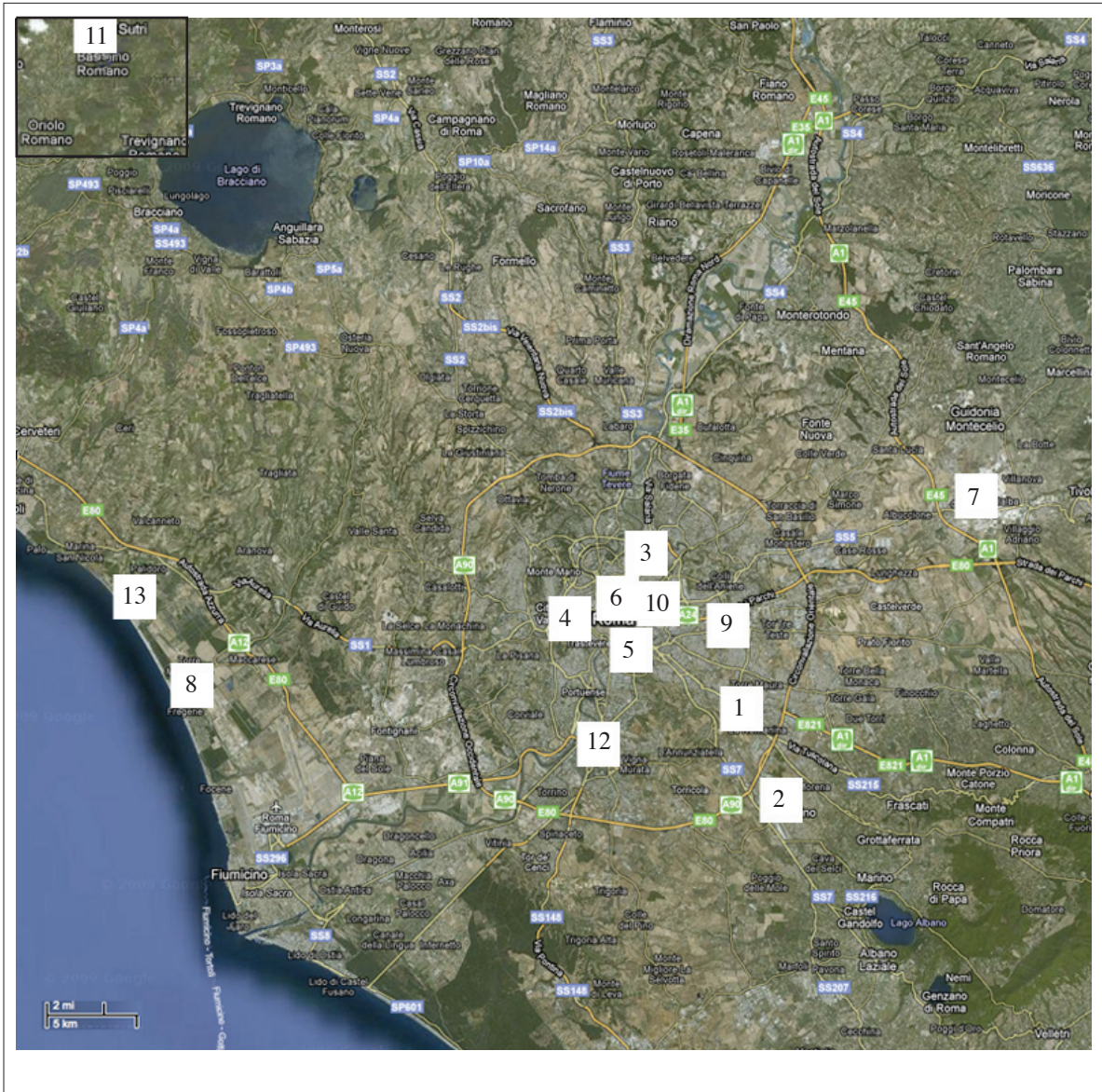


fig 3.6 Map of Rome. Scene Locations.



fig 3.7 Via Vittorio Veneto, Rome, Italy



fig 3.8 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



00:23:19

fig 3.9 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



00:26:15

fig 3.10 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA(13) CIAMPINO AIRPORT¹ - (MORNING)

View of a transatlantic plane approaching the field. The plane comes in fast for a landing. At the edge of the field, the police are trying to hold back the crowd. There must be a hundred photographers. Now they break loose and run forward, A man is standing on top of a little Fiat taking newsreel pictures. The plane has landed now. A man in white overalls is giving directions. The photographers rush up, shouting and taking pictures. The noise is tremendous. The steward² tries to pull a photographer off the ladder. The photographer is fighting to stay on the ladder.

STEWARD

Come on, get down.

CERUSICO

I just want one picture, just one. Lemme go, you're hurting me.

(14) THE OLD APPIAN WAY³ - (MORNING)

A quiet country road bordered by tall trees. On one side is an old farmhouse. Suddenly a big car comes in sight, surrounded by swarms of photographers on motor scooters. They are shooting pictures of Sylvia in the back seat.

SYLVIA

Oh Edna, look at all the chickens!

Marcello is driving an open sports car⁴. Cerusico leans way out taking pictures.



fig. 3.11 Via Appia (1891)



fig. 3.12 Via Appia, Piranesi's imagination (1756).

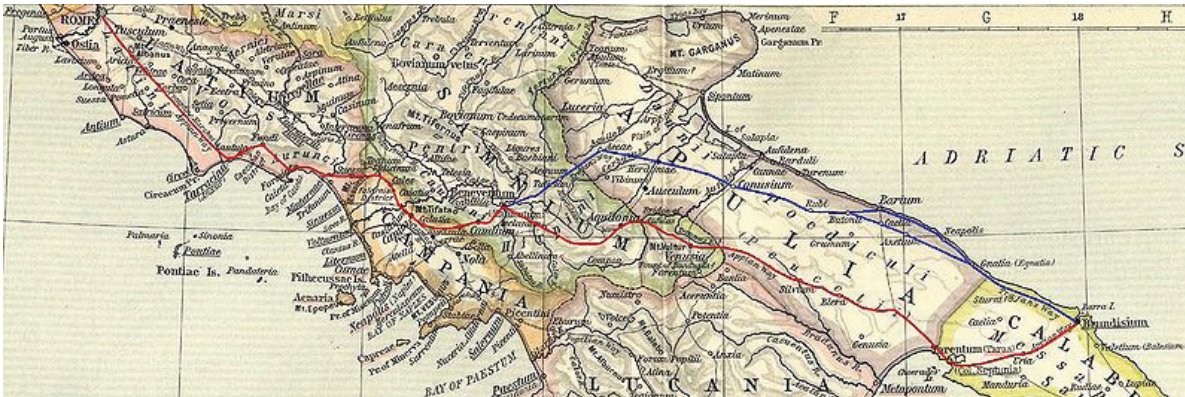


fig. 3.13 Map of Via Appia by William R. Shepherd (1911)

- 1 The Ciampino airport first opened in 1916. It is still in used today as one of the oldest airports in continuous operation. Until 1960, Ciampino was Rome's main airport, serving more than two million passengers annually. However, with the opening of the Leonardo da Vinci – Fiumicino Airport, Ciampino is now mostly for charter, military, and executive flights. It sits just 12 kilometres southeast of central Rome, not too far from the Parco degli Acquadotti of the opening scene and also quite close to Cinecitta, the film studio where many of the scenes of Fellini's film were shot.

Work Cited

"In Ciampino." *ADR: Aeroporti Di Roma*. Web. 15 May 2010.

- 2 The terms "steward" and "stewardess" are already dated. The appropriate names are now "flight attendant" or "cabin crew". However, between 1950 and 1967, a stewardess was quite glamorous. The airlines were trying to brand air travel with a new image, one catering to the largely male clientele in powerful occupations. Dating a stewardess had a cachet equal to dating an actress. It was said that people jealously gawked at the parade of fashionable stewardesses through the airport terminal on their way to a presumably exciting and foreign destination. Actually, the profession was far from glamorous. The stewardess was to be suggestive while cordially warding off crude advances. The average salary was rather low -- an American Airlines stewardess of 1960 earned \$24,400 per year (adjusted to 2002 dollars). Then, on July 22, 1968, the first major hijacking of a plane – by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) – of an El Al Israel flight from Rome to Tel Aviv made international headlines, resulting in tightened security, and the decline of the stature of the "stewardess".

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- 3 The Via Appia is the world's first highway -- it did not connect destinations. It was 45 kilometers of straight road and purposely did not traverse through towns. Marble tombs line it on both sides. The delineation for the bounds of mortality was the city

wall: the living within it and the dead buried outside of it. Here, it is a scenic entry to the city and a route for the celebrated American starlet, Sylvia, played by Swedish actress Anita Ekberg. This scene was to be an inverted interpretation of the ceremonial entrance Queen Christina of Sweden took on December 23, 1655. The customary procession for foreign diplomats is from the north down the Via Flaminia. However, the modern version is from Ciampino Airport then up Via Appia (Penz, 93).

In 1784, *Via Appia Nuova* (New Appian Way) was built parallel to *Via Appia Antica* (Old Appian Way). In 1951, the building of the *Grande Raccordo Anulare* (GRA), the ring highway around Rome, cut the Appian Way in half.

Work Cited

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 Piranesi, Giovanni Battista. *Le Antichità Romane, T. 2, Tav. II*. Digital image. Wikipedia Commons. 25 Oct. 2009.
 "Via Appia." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 15 May 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appian_Way>.

- 4 The convertible has, since its modern inception in the 1950s, been a symbol of freedom and luxury. The openness of the car body allows for unobstructed views – the wind to flow through, the sun to shine in – all at high speeds, giving the driver a certain sense of indulgence and liberation. Not only does it stimulate the senses, but it also boosts the social status of the driver and passengers to those who observe them. This is why presidents and homecoming queens parade in them and why celebrities often drive them. There is an accessibility to the convertible that also seems exclusive at the same time. In this case, it is not the destination, but the journey that counts.

Source:

"HowStuffWorks "Classic Convertible Cars"" *Howstuffworks "Auto"*, by the Auto Editors of Consumer Guide. Publications International, Ltd., 2010. Web.



00:26:35

fig 3.14 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



00:27:11

fig 3.15 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA

(15) LIVING ROOM OF SYLVIA'S SUITE AT HOTEL EXCELSIOR¹ - (MORNING)

A beautiful room, all in white. Sylvia is seated on a divan², surrounded by reporters and photographers. Behind her is a table with a big bouquet of flowers. There are people coming and going constantly. The reporters are firing questions to Sylvia in French, Italian, German³ - all the languages of Europe. An interpreter translates rapidly in a matter-of-fact voice. In a chair at her left is an Englishman with an enormous moustache⁴. The questions come fast - so fast she doesn't have time to answer them all. The Englishman leans forward:

THODI

You like the Eternal City⁵, Miss Rank?

(cont'd)

INTERPRETER

How do you sleep - in pajamas or nightgown?

SYLVIA

Neither. (She stretches sensually) I sleep in only two drops of French perfume⁶.

- 1 Built in 1906, the Hotel Excelsior in Rome is next to the US embassy on Via Veneto. The following is a description of its newest reincarnation from its official website:

The Westin Excelsior Rome just went under a costly \$7 million renovation. The hotel has a long history of hosting celebrities, statesmen and artists visiting since 1906. It is, in fact, named on Condé Nast Traveler's 2006 Gold List. It is located in the well known area of Via Veneto, an ideal location for shopping, restaurants and cafes. The Westin Excelsior, Rome has a great reputation for outstanding service and a wonderful location. The hotel presents its own Restaurant Doney, where you can choose from many Roman Specialties, prepared with the freshest ingredients and a skilled chef. For the health conscious traveler, please enjoy a personalized workout with our trainer in the health club or treat yourself to a shiatsu massage in our fully equipped spa. The well known Villa Cupola is the largest suite in Europe and its magnificent style is shown all around the wonderful hotels with all the extravagant furnishings and newly remodeled 287 guest rooms and 32 suites.

It is quite likely that Sylvia's suite is the famed *Villa Cupola*. The suite spans the fifth and sixth floor, directly underneath the cupola of the building, covering 6,099 square feet and another 1,808 square feet of balcony and terrace space, costing 11,400 euros per night. Inside, gilded Empire-style furniture of velvet-covered chairs, bathrooms of Italian marble, original frescoed ceilings, and ornate chandeliers decorate the suite.

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 "The Westin Excelsior Rome." *Westin Hotel & Resorts*. Web.

- 2 The word "divan" is Turkish meaning "Oriental council of state", which came from the Persian word *devan* ("bundle of written sheets, a small book, a collection of poems"). The word evolved from

"book of accounts" to "office of accounts" to "council chamber" to, finally, "long, cushioned seat", as they were usually found in council chambers. Adopted by the English in 1702, it peaked in style from 1820 to 1850 as the Romantic Movement swept through arts and literature. It was the most common piece in the boudoirs of wealthy estates.

Works Cited
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 "Divan (furniture)." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web.

3 The Indo-European Family of Languages in Europe

The Germanic languages are: English, Dutch, Frisian, German, Danish, Faeroese, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish. The Romance languages from Latin are: Catalan, Corsican, French, Italian, Ladino, Sard, Sicilian, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Romansch, and Vlach. Here, Fellini cites French, Italian, and German as the ones that "count" in Europe, probably based on widespread usage but also their ties to history and power.

Work Cited
 "Indo-European Languages." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2010. Encyclopædia Britannica Online.



fig 3.16 Map of Indo-European Languages

4 Facial hair for men is associated with characteristics of personality, intelligence, virility, and social status. These associations resulted in a multitude of refinements. Historically, moustaches are associated with military men. The rather satirical World Beard and Moustache Championships of 2007 had six sub-categories for moustaches:

1. Natural: Moustache styled without any aids.
2. Hungarian: Big and bushy, beginning from the middle of the upper lip and pulled to the side.
3. Dalí: Narrow, long points bent or curved steeply upward; areas past the corner of the mouth must be shaved. Artificial styling aids needed. Named after Salvador Dalí.
4. English: narrow, beginning at the middle of the upper lip the whiskers are very long and pulled to the side, slightly curled; the ends are pointed slightly upward; areas past the corner of the mouth usually shaved. Artificial styling may be needed.
5. Imperial: whiskers growing from both the upper lip and cheeks, curled upward (distinct from the royale, or impériale)
6. Freestyle: All other moustache styles. The hairs are allowed to start growing from up to a maximum of 1.5 cm beyond the end of the upper lip.

Work Cited

"WBM 2007 | Beard & Moustache Categories & Rules of Judging." *The Handlebar (Moustache) Club*. Web.

5 Since the founding of Rome (8th century B.C.) – from the legend of *Romulus and Remus* – the city has existed without any interruptions. This continuity ensures layers of history, monuments, and culture. In digging to build a subway in Rome, we see the literal manifestation of this compression. Rome already has two metro lines (creatively named Line A and Line B), with a third one currently under construction. However, the continual unearthing of historical relics and ruins hinders its progress. Out of the 30 stations planned, 10 have major archeological site interferences, according to the *Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma*, Rome's archaeological agency.

The latest major discovery is from October 2009: the rotating dining room of the Roman emperor Nero (ruling from 54 to 68 AD). Nero was known for his sumptuous lifestyle. The revolving banquet space that used machinery to simulate the

earth's rotation was only a small part of his *Domus Aurea* (Golden Palace) on the Palatine, Esquiline and Caelian hills. Chronicled by the Latin historian Suetonius, the expansive palace and the rotating dining room were elements of luxurious living during Ancient Roman times.

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6 Perfume has been a luxury item for as long as civilization has existed. In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, ancient Mesopotamians burned incense for the gods. At Olympia (around 776 BC), athletes applied aromatic oils before the early Olympic games of Ancient Greece. The Ancient Egyptians practiced *enfleurage* – the process of infusing aromatic plants in oil by grinding them together. Cleopatra (69 – 30 BC) was said to have scented the sails of her ships: "From the barge/ a strange invisible perfume hits the sense/ of the adjacent wharfs" (from Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*). The Ancient Romans bathed and saturated their tunics in perfume. In the 13th century, the Spanish alchemist Arnaude de Villeneuve created *aquae vitae* by distilling alcohol in a method still used today. Louis XIV perfumed his rooms with rosewater and marjoram. Napoleon liberally perfumed himself with cologne each morning. By the mid-19th century, Houbigant and Guerlain created scents for the wealthy. Before World War Two, Chanel, Lanvin, Schiaparelli, and Patou all launched perfumes. The bottles of heavy scents were of fine crystal from Baccarat and Lalique for an exclusive clientele. It was an essential part of the luxury business – along with couture clothes, exquisite shoes, fine leather and lace, and fetching *chapeaux*. This was not to be mistaken with "eau de cologne" – a cheaper version of perfume, modified with orange blossom or lemon water – or "eau de toilette," a 6 to 12 percent extract diluted with solvents like ethanol and water.

Work Cited

Thomas, Dana. *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster*. New York: Penguin, 2007., pp.140-142



00:38:58

fig 3.17 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



00:39:06

fig 3.18 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA(18) CARCALLA NIGHTCLUB – (NIGHT)

The vast ruins of the ancient Roman Baths of Caracalla¹, transformed into a nightclub. The room is enormous; we cannot see the ceiling. Along the walls are huge heads of Roman emperors, half-sunk in the earth. Here and there on the floor are scattered isolated tables sheltered by gaily triped tents and lit by candlelight. On the dance floor we see some of the patrons – a hideous dowager with a boy of twenty, a fat old man with a Chinese girl, a middle-aged couple, utterly bored². A Negro orchestra is playing softly "Arrivederci, Roma." Marcello and Sylvia are dancing. Marcello is holding her very close.

(cont'd)

OLD LADY

Magnificent! And all this was just the emperor's bath?

- 1 Aldo Rossi's *The Architecture of the City* (1966) discussed the *urban artefact* as a building that culminates important chapters of cultural history into a single artefact. It is intimately bound to the city's evolution and nature: "With time, the city grows upon itself; it acquires a consciousness and memory. In the course of its construction, its original themes persist but at the same time it modifies and renders these themes of its own development more specific." The city and its monuments attest to preserving myth and ritual: "Aesthetic intention and the creation of better surroundings for life are the two permanent characteristics of architecture. These aspects emerge from any significant attempt to explain the city as a human creation." And the experience of them becomes a pursuit of beauty: "As the first men built houses to provide more favourable surroundings for their life, fashioning an artificial climate for themselves, so they built with aesthetic intention." According to Rossi's premise of the *genus loci*, districts that embody these ideas at its genesis gather historical cachet and cultural importance. These areas of the city require a lot of time to develop; an element that cannot be rushed. After the 1950's, society started to try to replicate these armatures artificially, synthetically infusing status to places that have not yet matured (Rossi, 21). The newly developed suburbs could never hope to manifest such a concept.

Found along the Via Appia, the Bath Complex of Caracalla, built from 212 to 216 AD, is the perfect example of Rossi's *urban artefact*. The Emperor Caracalla was famous for immense architecture without any views outward. The main bath could accommodate over 2,000 people at once. There is no intermediate level of scale. Once inside, one loses all connection with their sense of proportion. An unprecedented amount of concrete and water were required to build this complex. The baths, as social condensers, fulfil their role today as much as they did in the past. Today, in another iteration, it is a modern opera stage for the summertime, by the *Teatro dell'Opera di Roma*.

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- 2 Strange pairings of couples who would never be seen together during the daytime, often because of scandal, frequent clubs and cafes along Via Veneto at night:

The night of Aug. 14, 1958...is the unofficial birth date of the paparazzi: a pack of Italian photographers, including Tazio Secchiaroli, on whom the Fellini character was supposedly based, were strolling along the Via Veneto in Rome -- Hollywood on the Tiber, as it was called in those days -- and happened upon the deposed King Farouk of Egypt at the Cafe de Paris with two young women. Flashbulbs popped; the King grabbed Mr. Secchiaroli. And another photographer, Umberto Guidotti, took a blurry, almost indecipherable, picture of the two men tussling. When it turned out that magazines were willing to pay more for the blurry picture than for Mr. Secchiaroli's photograph of the King sitting sedately at the cafe, voila, the paparazzi were in business.

(Kimmelman)

Work Cited

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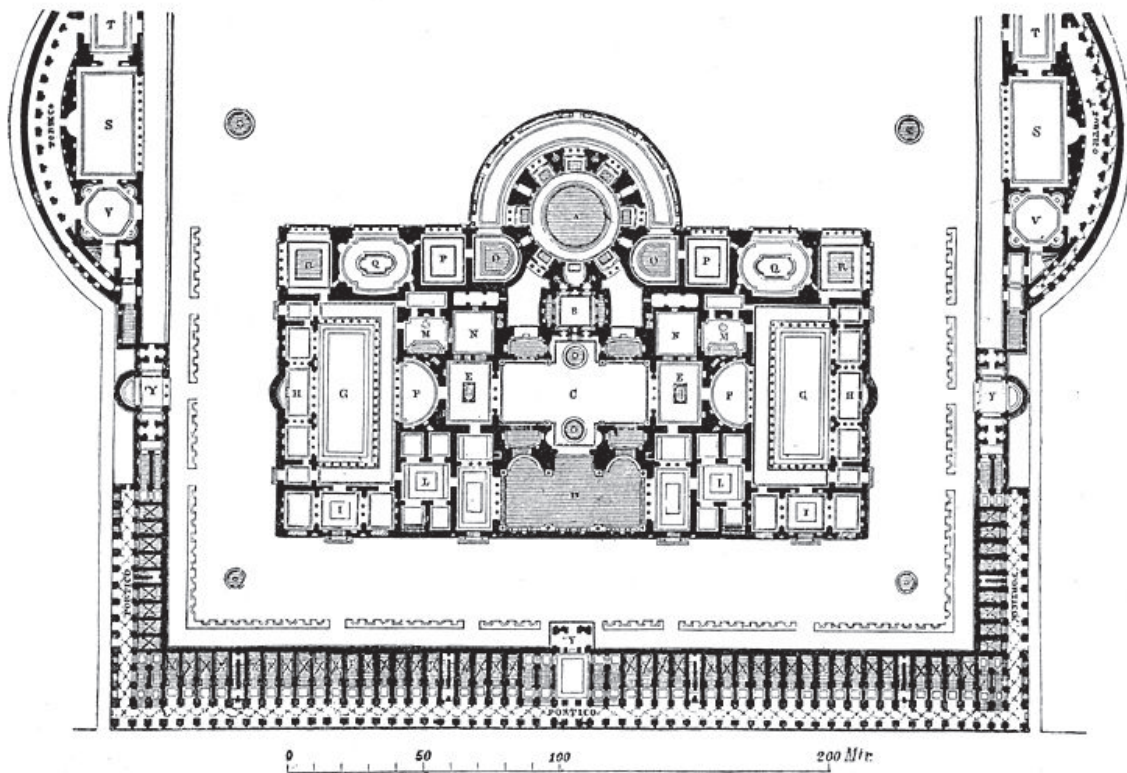


fig. 3.19 The bath complex covered approximately 13 hectares (33 ac). The bath building was 228 meters (750 ft) long, 116 meters (380 ft) wide and 38.5 meters (125 ft) estimated height.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| A-Calidarium | I-Vestibules |
| B-Nymphaeum | L-Dressing Rooms |
| C-Great Hall | N-Steam Baths |
| D-Frigidarium (Pool) | Q-Lounges |
| E-Courts | S-Gymnasia |
| G-Palaestra | T-Study Rooms |
| H-Lecture Halls | V-Nymphaea |



00:48:13

fig 3.20 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA

(23) STREETS NEAR THE FOUNTAIN OF TREVI¹, AND THE FOUNTAIN – (NIGHT)

A silent narrow street in the old part of Rome. Marcello stands by the car, looking around anxiously. Behind him, not far away, Sylvia is kneeling by the wall. Now she rises, and we see that she has found a little white kitten. She picks it up tenderly and lifts it to her face.

(cont'd)

From somewhere close by comes the sound of falling water. She hears it and hurries forward. At the end of the street she comes upon a large, open square, completely unexpected². In its center, surrounded by a wide pool, is the beautiful fountain of Trevi.

SYLVIA

Oh, my goodness.

She goes to the edge of the pool, takes off her white stole³, and places the little kitten on the ground beside it.

SYLVIA

Wait just five minutes.

Quickly she takes off her shoes and steps into the water. She wades forward, lifting her evening gown as the water rises against her thighs. Then she drops the gown and lets it float on the water. She goes to the back of the fountain, where the water spills off a ledge of rock, and stands in the flow, letting the water bathe her face and breasts. She lifts her arms, and her head falls back in ecstasy⁴. At the edge of the pool, Marcello stares at her in wonder, a saucer of milk in his hand.

ON LUXURY

1 The Fountain of Trevi
Feb. 14, 1837. (Published in the "Keepsake")

A hurried mixture of pleasure and pain
Thrill'd in gusts athwart my brain.
I could not bear my thoughts at home;
So I wander'd forth through the streets of Rome.

Thus musing, still I wander'd on
In converse with the dead and gone.
Through many a freakish turn pursued
The prompting of my wayward mood,
Till full express'd against the sky
'The Trevi' rose to meet mine eye.

The Moon in southern lustre shone,
Pointing with light each hoary stone;
Each rugged limb of the giants old

That watch'd the water as it roll'd.
I sawt me down by the dark pool's brim,
And gaz'd on the spray till mine eyes gre dim;
Till – as by wand of magic art
From forth it – visions seem'd to start.

Nothing was heard at that lonely hour
But the bell that toll'd from some ancient tower;
Save, here and there, a patt'ring sound
Of foot-fall striking on the ground.
Nought else betoken'd living wight;
Such is Rome at dead of night.

Finch-Hatton, George James. *Voices Through Many Years*. London: M. Ward &, 1879. Print.

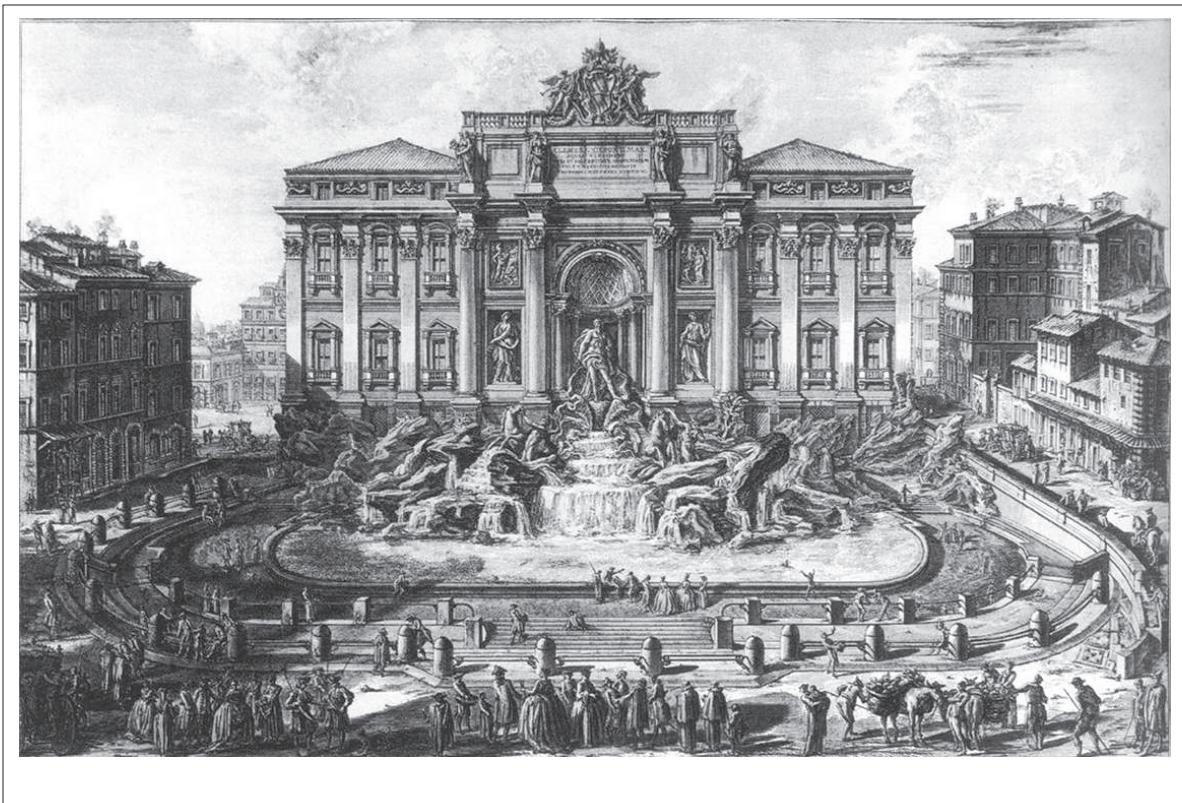


fig 3.21 The Trevi Fountain in Rome (1773), Piranesi, copper engraving

fig 3.22 Approach to Fontana di Trevi, Rome, Italy



- 2 The approach Anita Ekberg takes through the back alleyways and tight *vicolo* streets results in an epiphanic reveal of the Fontana di Trevi. This sequence adds another layer of obligation to pop cultural reference for the “authentic” route to experience the landmark. The conventional view, from Via di San Vincenzo, is bypassed for the effect of stumbling across the piazza from the side streets off of Via Lavatore.

Penz, Francois, and Maureen Thomas. *Cinema and Architecture: From Historical to Digital*. London: BFI (British Film Institute), 1997., p.86

- 3 A stole is a narrow shawl usually made of expensive fabric, like fur, brocade, silk, or chiffon, and worn with a formal gown. It is of a simpler construction than a cape. The origins of the word come from the Latin *stola* (“robe, vestment”), which is from the Greek root of *stellen* (“to place, array”). The modern meaning of “women’s long garment of fur or feathers” arises in 1889.

“Stole.” *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Web. 15 May 2010.

“Stole (shawl).” *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web.

- 4 The most iconic pose of the most iconic scene of *La Dolce Vita* is captured by the posters of the film:

Cinematographic posters are like popular songs: they take you back to certain moments of your life...back not only to the film, but to their season, the atmosphere and the tasted of an era.

—Federico Fellini

Straddling the realms of both art and publicity, the film poster is the entry point to a film and establishes the initial public impression (Bagshaw, 11). The poster entices potential audiences and sets the scene, mood, and star. As an art, the hand-painted poster reached its creative peak in the 1950’s. The demise of them came with the increase of photography in the following decades (Bagshaw, 17). Before the modern standardization of poster campaigns, the artist had full creative freedom. This cultivated a sense of immediacy and irreplaceable spontaneity in the works. Italian cinematic posters are the best examples of this. During its heyday, the poster came in three formats: (1) the large *quattro foglio*/the four sheet format (approx. 200x140 cm), (2) the smaller *due foglio*/the two sheet format (140x100cm), and (3) the *locandina* (70x33cm) – produced in larger quantities than the larger posters for display in shop windows. There was also the *photobusta*/lobby card (68x48cm), usually printed in sets of ten (Bagshaw, 14). Today, originals are very rare, as only 2000 to 3000 copies were printed per movie and were often destroyed after the film’s run (Bagshaw, 11). For the few that survive, we can still look to them for remnants of iconography. See Fig. 3.25.

Bagshaw, Mel. *The Art of Italian Film Posters*. London: Black Dog, 2005. Print



00:48:23

fig 3.23 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



00:48:58

fig 3.24 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



France



Russia



Argentina



Italy



Italy



United States of America

fig 3.25 Posters of *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

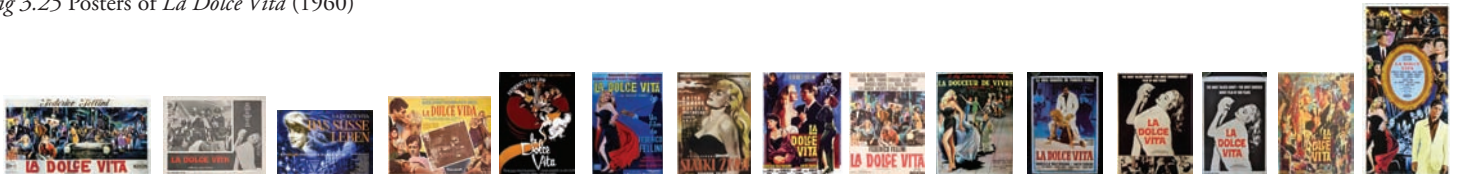




fig 3.26 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA

(25) EXTERIOR OF MODERN BUILDING — (BRIGHT DAYLIGHT)

A modernistic arcade of expensive shops. In front of a white wall, Marcello sits in a wicker chair reading a magazine. The photographer¹ Doria is taking pictures² of a fashion model dressed in white slacks and white hat. In the background a horse is also part of the work Doria is doing. Doria takes a picture and calls to Marcello.

DORIA

I've finished. Now what do I do?

Marcello is utterly bored and doesn't bother to look up.

1 Richard Avedon's photographic work is extensive. Working from the 1940s until the mid-2000s, he witnessed the major change in the last century in the rituals of appearance. His interest in portraiture to capture the personality of his subject parallels the shift of focus from spaces to objects. The guided subjects of his portraits become a single flat image of edited truth. His body of work coincided with the fall of formal high society; his portraits of aristocrats and socialites remain as relics of the change in the perception of luxury. To photograph the class bred to understand the nuances of privileged social behaviour encapsulates them as two-dimensional commodities.

In the 1950's, *Vogue* art director, Alexander Lieberman, commissioned photographers who utilized techniques of social documentary, namely Richard Avedon and Irving Penn. Their images contained a contrived spontaneity. Avedon captured gestures and mannerisms that were true to life. Penn exaggerated the sociological elements of fashion. Then:

In the 1960's, a shift in social attitudes and new directions in publishing...traversed the boundaries customarily placed around the editorial fashion story in a defiant yet controlled way. These conventions extended the role of fashion photography into a larger debate which encompassed discussions of race, sexuality and class within fashion and style.

(Bruzzi, 145)

From then on, the fashion photograph was not an embodiment of an ideal, but of an individual. They were idiosyncratic observations, and the women inside the clothes began to look real.

Similarly, the photographic works of Slim Aaron during that decade culminated in a collection of intimate portraits of "the sweet life". When Truman Capote and Noel Coward used words to record these conditions, Aaron captured them in photographs published in *Harper's Bazaar*, *Town & Country*, and *Life Magazine* (Patrick). His mantra was "photographing attractive people doing attractive things in attractive places." Some critics have noted that he was "Daisy Buchanan before the fall" (Green). His photographs of privileged

personalities evoke nostalgia of more blissful times, even when history later proved their tragic end.

Bruzzi, Stella, and Pamela Church. Gibson. *Fashion Cultures: Theories, Explorations, and Analysis*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Green, Penelope. "Talking with Alice T. Friedman." *The New York Times*. 12 July 2010. Web. 14 July 2010. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/15/garden/15qna.html>>

Patrick, Jon. "Slim Aarons: The Still Undisputed King of Hollywood Photography." *The Selvedge Yard*. 14 Feb 2009. Web log. 19 July 2010. <<http://theselvedgeyard.wordpress.com/2009/02/14/slim-aarons-the-king-of-hollywood-photography/>>



fig 3.27 Christina and Alexander Onassis at Monte Carlo Beach Club. Photography by Slim Aarons (1958).

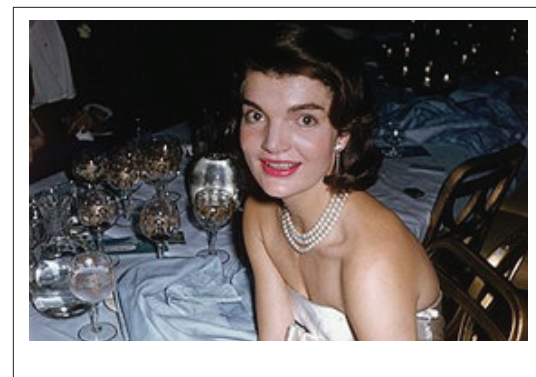


fig 3.28 Jacqueline Kennedy at 'April in Paris' ball. Photography by Slim Aarons (c. 1959).

2 Photographs capture spaces and events that are fleeting or unstable. The image becomes a possession once it has been captured in a photograph. Today, taking a photograph of a place is a necessary memento for being there. Taking a photograph of a thing is a passable substitute for having it. Despite all other uses of a photograph -- a relation to the world, a record of presence, or a token of absence -- it is first an article of consumption. It is an object ready for critique, appraisal, collection, or display (Sontag, 4). This feeling of ownership feeds into the aesthetic consumerist mentality making us into image-junkies. As a photograph transcribed onto film ceases to be a tangible object, a film-still taken out of a film gains a new status as an object. Originally, the images of a film stay on screen for only as long as the editing allows. There is no time for lingering or back-tracking (at least, in a cinema setting). A film-still allows us to mull over a single moment for as long we desire. A film-still is "a neat slice of time, not a flow" (Sontag, 17), and as a succinct and consumable product, the iconic image ingrains itself in popular culture.

Work Cited

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Anchor, 1990. Print.



01:11:55

fig 3.29 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



01:16:13

fig 3.30 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA

(32) STEINER'S APARTMENT¹ - (EVENING)

Mrs. Steiner, a good-looking woman with a kind and intelligent face, is receiving her guests at the door. She turns and opens the doors. We see the living room of the apartment, a spacious room furnished comfortably, with bookcases running the length of the wall on either side of the fireplace. Steiner advances to welcome the guests.

ANNA STEINER

Good evening, I'm Mrs. Steiner. Please come in. We were waiting for you.

STEINER

Good evening, Marcello.

MARCELLO

Hello.

STEINER

How are you?

MARCELLO

Very well...What a beautiful apartment!²

As Marcello is brought forward by Steiner and Mrs. Steiner welcomes Emma, we see the other guests - writers, artists, intellectuals - seated around the room. Near the fireplace, an Indian girl sits on the floor, playing the guitar and singing.

- 1 Steiner's Apartment is located in the EUR (Exposizione Universale di Roma). This scene is before the murder-suicide that Steiner commits later in the film, so Fellini makes the district look like a cemetery for the living (Lamster, 201). Mussolini's post-war architects and city planners designed the district as a utopian city – a big departure from the chaotic labyrinth that is Rome's *centro storico*. In the film, however, the streets are destitute, vacuous, and hollow, unable to support any vibrant life in the idealized geometric spaces. The Fascist configuration of monuments was to reflect the totalitarian state. Fellini wanted to show that the regimented perspectives, the overbearing scale, the masses of concrete – in short, the 'not-Rome' of Rome – created a reality that repelled inhabitation (Penz, 91).

Works Cited

Lamster, Mark. *Architecture and Film*. New York: Princeton Architectural, 2000. Print.

Penz, Francois, and Maureen Thomas. *Cinema and Architecture: From Historical to Digital*. London: BFI (British Film Institute), 1997. Print.

- 2 Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady* (1881) exploits the differences between the Old World and the New World. The novel exposes the leisure class's unsightly underbelly through a descriptive account of trans-Atlantic lifestyles. It chronicles the class able to fully revel in luxury in great detail, particularly through manners and actions. The description of the character Ned Rosier exemplifies this:

He was a very gentle and gracious youth, with what are called cultivated tastes – an acquaintance with old china, with good wine, with the bindings of books, with the Almanach de Gotha, with the best shops, the best hotels, the hours of railway trains. He could order a dinner almost as well as Mr. Luce, and it was probably that as his experience accumulated he would be a worthy successor to that gentleman, whose rather grim politics he also advocated, in a soft and innocent voice. He had some charming rooms in Paris, decorated with old Spanish alter-lace, the envy of his female friends, who declared that his chimney-piece was better draped than many a duchess. (James, 10-11)

James's world of luxury is still very firmly within a space of manners. There is strong admiration for acquired objects, but it is in his behaviour that acknowledges true luxury.

Later, Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of a Leisure Class* (1899) analyzes the socio-economics of affluent American societies in provocative vernacular terms. The terms "conspicuous consumption" and "pecuniary emulation" are equally about the actions that surround the coveted items and the objects themselves. Veblen realizes that social institutions (such as banks, churches, and academies) exploit the consumption of unessential goods for the sake of profits and workmanship, but he goes on further to explain how this affects behaviour. He states that an object's value differs depending on whether the criteria examine its usefulness or its ability to impart prestige (Veblen, xvii). Even in his elaboration of "pecuniary emulation", he goes as far as to discuss male 'ownership' of women to affirm prerogatives. Other branches of his theory deal with ceremonial labour, superficial manners, discreet ostentation, extensive hospitality, cheap counterfeits, useless products, and empty brands. He asserts that ceremonial labour is for show, the corollary of which is the busy idleness of conspicuous leisure. Furthermore, he claims that the superficial display of good manners is a waste of time but is still a form of enhancement of one's social prestige. Just as feudal lords used to gnaw on beef bones at the head of a royal banquet, the gentlemen's gluttony (for say, caviar) is more discreet but still ever-present. He points out that the host displays expensive forms of hospitality to demonstrate one simply could not possibly enjoy it all by oneself. These acute observations about the spaces of luxury, against the objects of luxury themselves, begin to lose their relevancy by the 1960s.

For the character of Steiner and all his peers, bare survival is never an issue. Their material possessions are not for the basis of use. Instead, they are toys, distractions, and mere masks, for continual material accumulation (Lamster, 209). The reasons that create this air of depression, banality, and emptiness surround them – paintings, vases, trinkets, timepieces – and consumption erodes the faith in their own intellectualism (Lamster, 210).

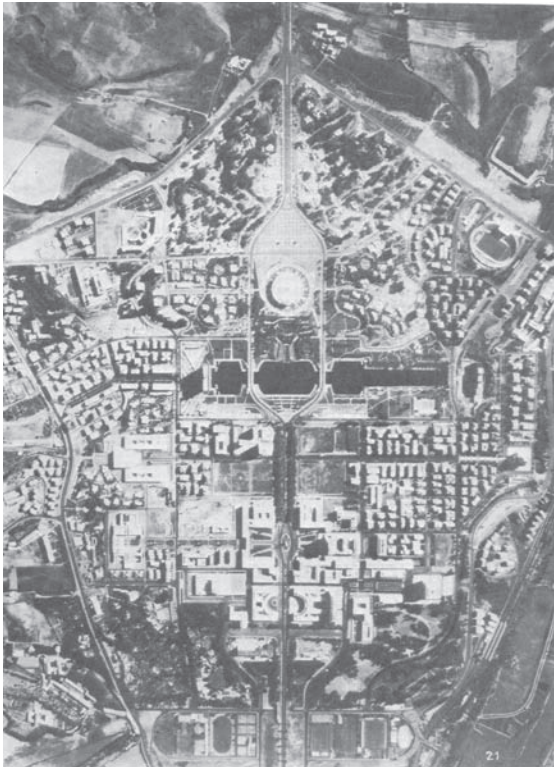


fig 3.31 Aerial rendering of EUR district.

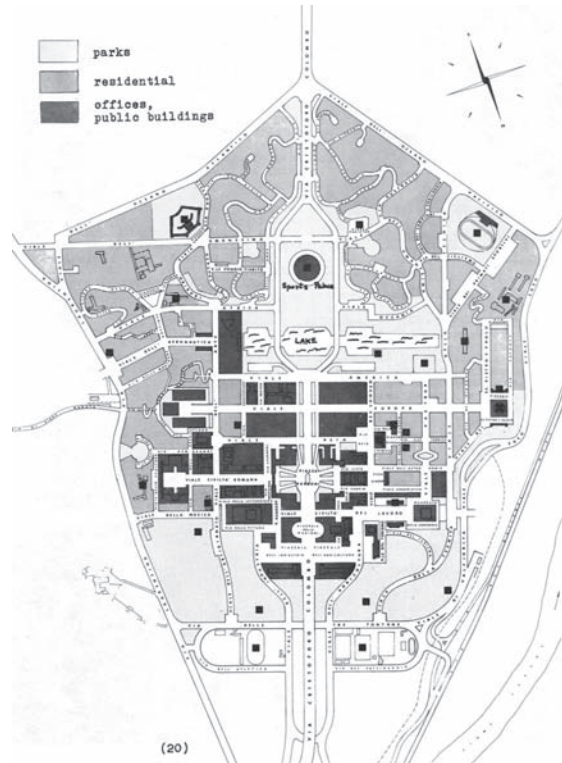


fig 3.32 Plan of EUR district.

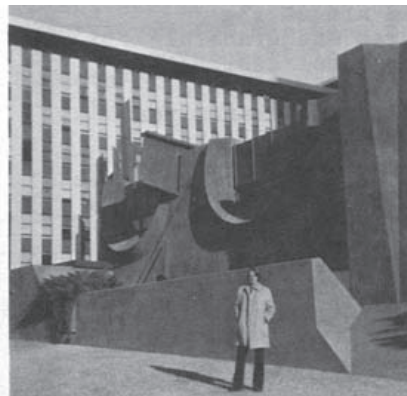


fig 3.33 Photographs of EUR district (1972).

Works Cited

- James, Henry. *The Portrait of a Lady*. New York, N.Y., U.S.A.: Viking, 1996. Print.
Lamster, Mark. *Architecture and Film*. New York: Princeton Architectural, 2000. Print.
Veblen, Thorstein. *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: Penguin, 1979. Print



01:53:11

fig 3.34 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA

(39) THE ROAD TO BASSANO DI SUTRI¹ - (NIGHT)

Massamilla is driving very fast. She stares at the road ahead, a cigarette drooping from her lips. Beside her, Oliviero is slumped down in his seat. He has a dog on his lap and appears to be almost asleep.

MASSAMILLA

Will there still be a lot of people at your father's place?

OLIVIERO

I hope not. So we can go to bed early. Anyway, at this hour there'll be nobody left but the old fossils². The parties at our house are like first-class funerals.

(cont'd)

The cars are climbing a steep, winding road up to the castle. Lady Rodd's car is still in the lead, then another car, then the Jaguar³ with Marcello and Nico. As the cars swing around the corner past an old well, the drivers toot their horns. Then they pass under the arched gate of the castle and are out of sight.

1 Historically, this 16th century villa was known as Palazzo Giustiniani, Bassano di Sutri. Today, it is called Palazzo Odiscalchi, Bassano Romano. As the Giustinianis were great patrons of the arts, the courtyard is frescoed with the allegories of Antonio Storm (from 1604) and antique statues decorate the niches. Bernard Castle's "Cupid and Psyche" (1605) covers the south wall. On the north wall are Paolo Guidotti Borghese's allegory "Felicitas Aeterna" (1610), Domenico Zampieri Domenichino's "History of Diana" (1609), and Francesco Albani's "Council of Gods" and "Fall of Phaeton" (1609). Later in the film, the characters will walk through the interior gardens at night, through the arches of the porch, up the ellipsoidal stairs, and through the shady avenues of firs, chestnuts, and oaks.

Work Cited

"Bassano Romano Terra Dei Guistiniani." *I Giustiniani Di Genova*. Ed. Enrico Giustiniani. Web.

2 If luxury balanced between spaces and things prior to the 1950's and this equilibrium was lost post-1950's, then there are two categorizes of luxury at hand today: "old luxury" and "new luxury". "Old luxury" is based on the patina of actual old age. Official records uphold notions of authenticity. They stem from traditional roots of aristocracy and are rare in provenance. That is not to say they should be valued more highly than other items, as it is all still based on socially constructed assumptions. "New luxury" is based on marketing and packaging

because a convincing story must be told in order to separate the product from the rest of the pack once production is by machines (Twitchell, 157). Every "new luxury" store attempts to manufacture desire through its invention of self in advertising.

Works Cited

O'Reilly, Terry. "Age of Persuasion." *The eh List Author Series*. Toronto Reference Library, Toronto. 05 Nov. 2009. Lecture.

Twitchell, James B. *Living It Up: Our Love Affair with Luxury*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002. Print.

3 Sir William Lyons, William Walmsley, and William Francis Tranter founded the company of Jaguar in September 1922, originally named the "Swallow Sidecar Company". After World War Two, however, they changed their name from SS Cars to Jaguar because of its unfortunate correlation to the Nazi paramilitary organization with the same initials. Because of its long-standing history and association with military innovation and racing pedigree, Jaguar has developed a cachet of Old World luxury of British upper class refinement.

Works Cited

"Jaguar Overview." *New Cars, Used Cars, Car Reviews and Pricing - Edmunds.com*. Web.

"Jaguar Cars." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 15 May 2010.

"Jaguar International: Heritage." *Jaguar International - Jaguar International*. Web.



fig 3.35 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)



01:54:42

fig 3.36 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA

(40) THE CASTLE OF BASSANO DI SUTRI - (NIGHT)

A square, high-ceilinged room with a great stone fireplace. Around the walls are massive busts¹ of ancient Roman senators and emperors. The party is almost dead. On the floor, sitting on cushions, are an aristocratic lady and two sons of Prince Mascalchi², don Giulio and his younger brother, Ivenda. The lady stares straight ahead, her eyes glazed with boredom. Giulio and Ivenda are asleep. Giulio holds a rope of pearls³ in his hand. Brofferio comes in, shouting.

BROFFERIO

A good time to all!

1



01:56:28

fig 3.37 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

2



01:55:23

fig 3.38 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

3



fig 3.39 A photograph of Mrs. George J. Gould, wearing the pearl parure from Tiffany's, similar to the Cartier strand.

During 1910 and 1920, pearl necklaces commanded prices that were on par with the works of Old Masters such as Rembrandt. This, combined with the fluctuating property market, led to the legendary Cartier flagship purchase. Pierre Cartier coveted the property of 653 Fifth Avenue in New York City, the six-story building of Morton F. Plant (built by Robert W. Gibson from 1903 to 1905 in the Renaissance style). Mrs. Plant was very eager to acquire Cartier's most valuable piece at the time: a two-strand pearl necklace consisting of 128 pearls and valued at one million US dollars. Thus, the famed exchange was made in 1917 – the building for the pearl necklace.

Work Cited
Nadelhoffer, Hans. *Cartier*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle, 2007. Print.

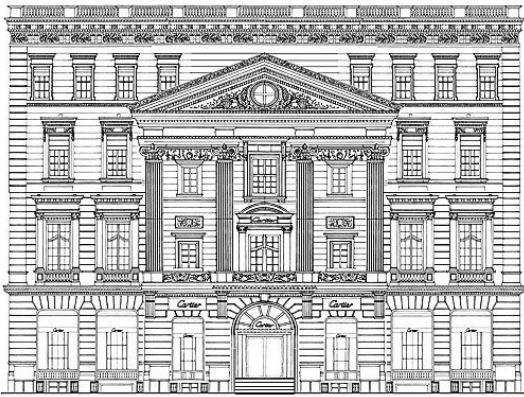


fig 3.40 653 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

1

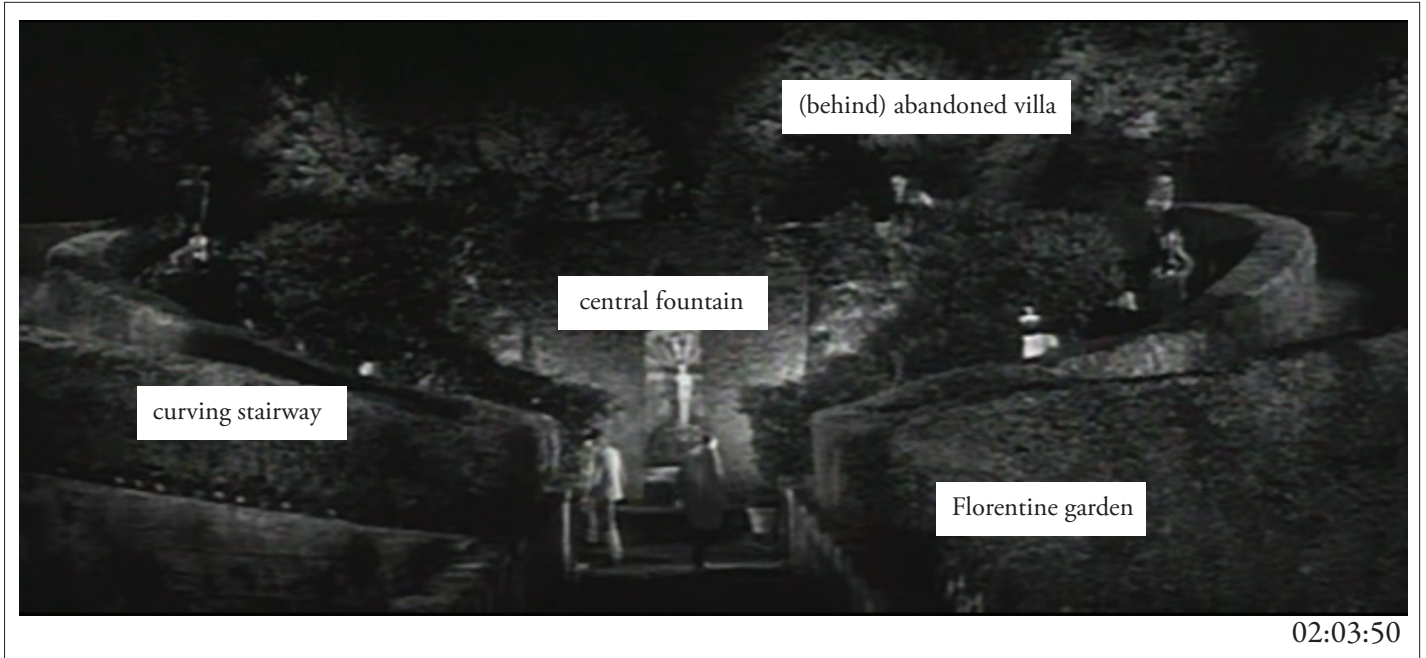


fig 3.41 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

2

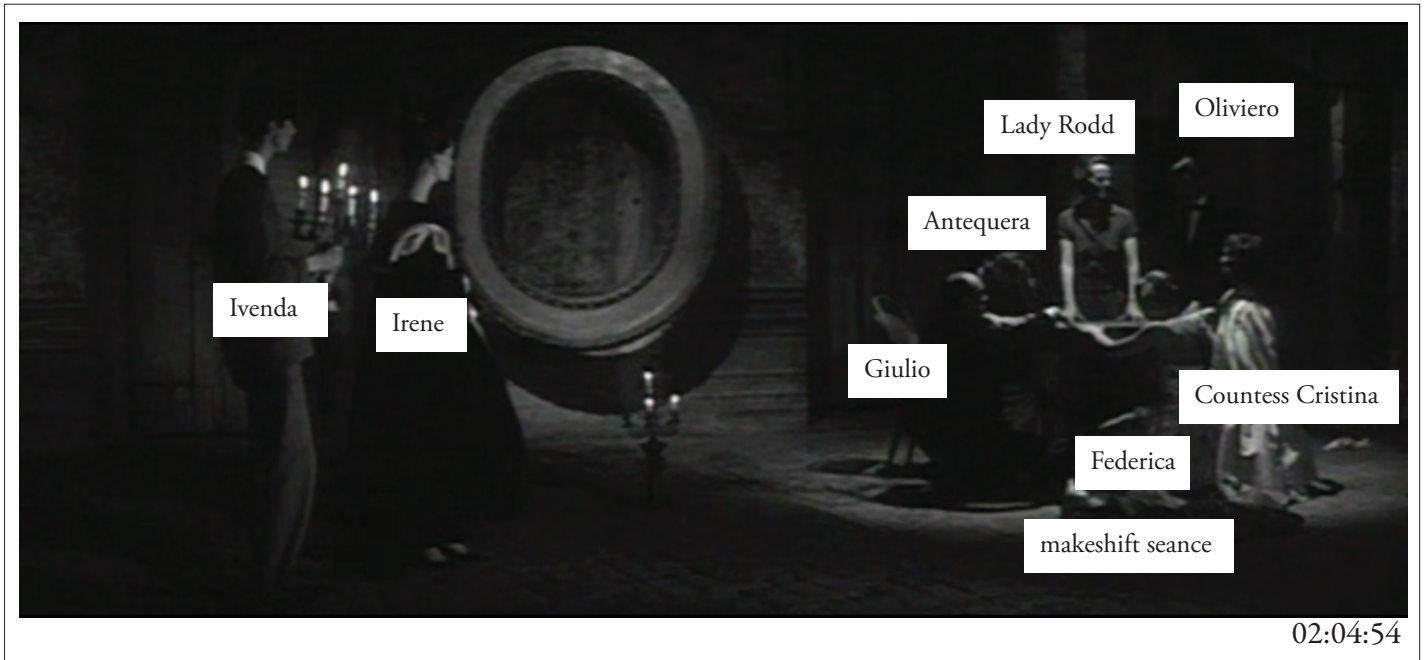


fig 3.42 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA(41) THE PARK LEADING TO THE OLD VILLA - (NIGHT)

Marcello opens a door and steps out onto the terrace. A strange procession is passing - the guests in their evening clothes and carrying lighted candelabra are following the American woman, Jane, on the way to the old villa. We see Giulio and Nico, Oliviero, Irene, the lawyer, Lady Rodd and Ivenda, and at the end, the prince.

(cont'd)

The guests pass across a stone bridge and into the beautiful formal gardens of the castle. On both sides of a central fountain, curving stairways bordered by tall trees mount up to the abandoned villa of Bassano di Sutri¹. The guest in their black and white evening clothes, and carrying heavy silver candlesticks, are climbing the stairs quite unconscious of the beauty of the scene. They call to one another drunkenly, exchanging jokes and obscene comments.

(cont'd)

They have reached the top of the stairs and are in the Florentine garden in front of the villa.

(42) THE OLD VILLA OF BASSANO DI SUTRI - (NIGHT)

A beautiful little villa in the Renaissance style, but now fallen sadly into decay. The rooms are dark and cobwebbed, with here and there a piece of neglected furniture or an old tapestry rotted with mildew². A thick layer of dust covers everything. Jane appears into one of the empty rooms and we see her face briefly in the eerie candlelight.

(cont'd)

Marcello seeks a girl to accompany him. On the stair he sees a woman who seems to be alone. She is strangely beautiful; in her black³ dress⁴ and enormous starched ruff she might have been seen in these rooms five centuries ago.

- 3 For a dress, the colour black eliminates the surprise-factor of bright hues. Without these distractions, distinctions of taste and quality depend solely on fabric and cut.

The following is an excerpt from the glossary of a book on American fashion from 1960:

- Basic: a simple black dress that costs more than \$50
Functional: referring to a simple black dress that costs more than \$100
Nothing: a simple black dress that costs more than \$200; as in “a little Nettie Rosenstein nothing.”
Understated: a simple black dress that costs more than \$300

The significance between the price and the verbal qualifier seems to be inversely proportional. The increase of money spent leads to further humility by name. Particularly in Europe, the use of black in the 1960s embodied a type of intellectual anti-fashion, aligned with Italian’s Neo-Realism cinema of the time. (Hollander, 386)

Work Cited
Hollander, Anne. *Seeing through Clothes*. New York: Viking, 1978. Print.



fig 3.43 Cristobal Balenciaga’s Sack Dress.

- 4 The costumes of *La Dolce Vita*, even in black and white, give this film its aura of glamour. Rumour has it that Cristobal Balenciaga’s “Sack Dress” (1957) inspired the storyline of *La Dolce Vita*. Brunello Rondi, Fellini’s co-screenwriter and long-time collaborator, confirmed the power of the “sack dress”: the “sense of luxurious butterflying out around a body that might be physically beautiful but not morally so. These sack dresses struck Fellini because they rendered a woman very gorgeous who could, instead, be a skeleton of squalor and solitude inside.” (Bondanella, 134). Balenciaga was an innovator of fabrics and his sculptural creations were the most celebrated of haute couture in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Beyond this initial inspiration through fashion, the tone continues throughout the movie with Anita Eckberg’s strapless black gown and Anouk Aimee’s simple black sheath dress. “The transparent mesh at the décolletage and the back makes it incredibly sexy and restrained,” says Jay Weissberg, *Variety*’s film critic based in Rome. “Roman women tend to love clothes that create an impression of strength as well as femininity.” However, apparel and guise cannot hold their own without a fitting environment to display them. The environments and locations must complement the clothes.

Work Cited
Bondanella, Peter E. *The Cinema of Federico Fellini*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1992. Print.
Corcoran, Monica. “Fashion important in Rome-set films: Looks of women have memorable place in pics”. *Showbiz Traveler: Rome*. *Variety*. 7 Oct 2009. Web. 27 May 2010.



fig 3.44 Compilation of costuming in *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

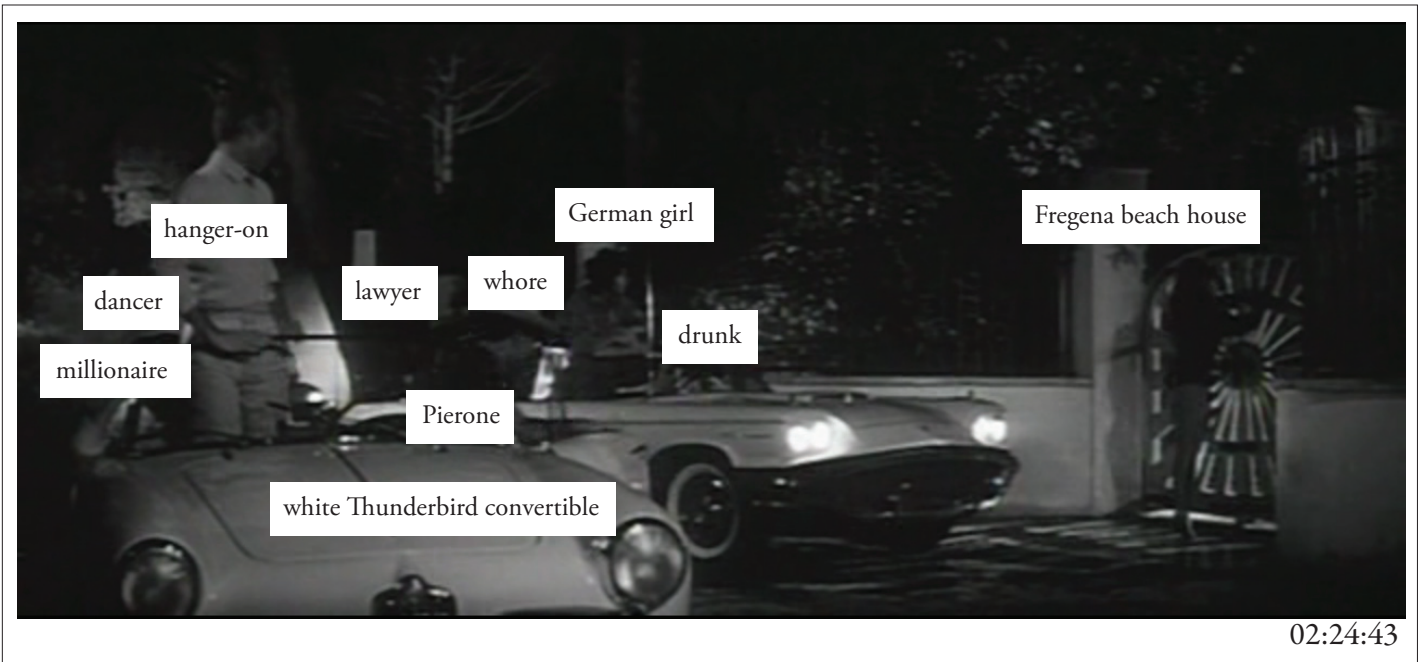


fig 3.45 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

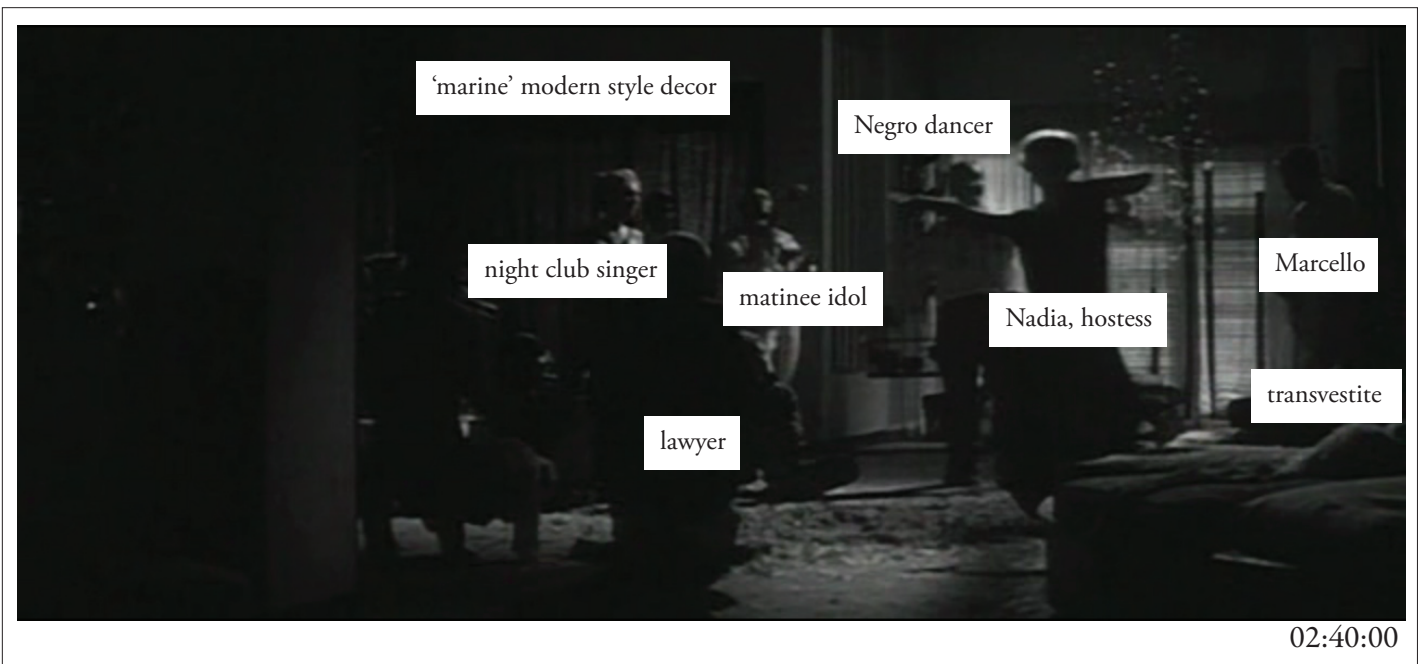


fig 3.46 Film Still from *La Dolce Vita* (1960)

LA DOLCE VITA(48) ROAD TO THE VILLA AND EXTERIOR OF THE VILLA - (LATE NIGHT)

A narrow, two-lane road outside Rome. A pack of five or six cars are racing through the night. Now a white Thunderbird convertible pulls into the oncoming lane and races abreast of the lead car. The driver swings in close and the cars almost sideswipe, swerve aside, and comes together again. The drivers shout and blow their horns as the first Ferrari comes up on the outside and passes the whole string. The cars are going very fast, and the drivers are drunk. Lawyers, dancers, millionaires, transvestites, hangers-on and whores, they are racing down to Fregena for an all-night orgy in a beach villa. Among them is Marcello.

It is perhaps two o'clock in the morning. The first car draws up by a high concrete wall. Behind it, the other cars wait on the road. The drivers blast their horns and gun the motors. A man gets out and stands in the light of the headlamps, trying to open a high wooden gate.

VOICE

Lis-a-a-a!

(49) INSIDE THE VILLA - (LATE NIGHT)

The party is in full swing. Some of the guests are dancing; others sit around the walls, clapping their hands, drinking, talking. The villa is done up in "marine" modern style: low furniture, hanging staircase, a large interior fishpond. Nadia, the hostess, is celebrating the annulment of her marriage; she is a woman of 35, with a mature, beautifully formed body that expresses a thorough experience of the more intimate and meaningful moments of carnal love. Her guests are a strange lot: two lawyers, middle-aged and paunchy, one of them almost bald; a lesbian dancer and her companion, the pig-tailed blonde girl; a slim, sinister man in sharp clothes and sunglasses; two transvestite fairies; a night club singer with a petulant china-doll face; a Negro dancer and his white girlfriend; a matinee idol and her German girl; a muscle king; Nadia's hard-faced lover; Marcello and Pierone. In their daily life these people would scarcely speak to one another; but now it is night, and boredom, sex, the Via Veneto, have brought them together.

Marcello pours himself another whisky and proposes a toast.

Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961)



fig 4.1 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

BEFORE TITLES¹:

FADE IN:

(a) EXT. FIFTH AVENUE² - (DAWN)

There is a magic about Fifth Avenue at this hour. An emptiness. A quiet. A moment of limbo as the street lamps fade in the face of the purple onrush of dawn. Presently, on this morning in early September, a lone taxi-cab³ speeds up in the Avenue. It slows down briefly as it passes the International Building⁴ with its many airline windows⁵, then picks up speed again and continues on to the corner of 57th Street⁶ where it pulls to the curb and stops.

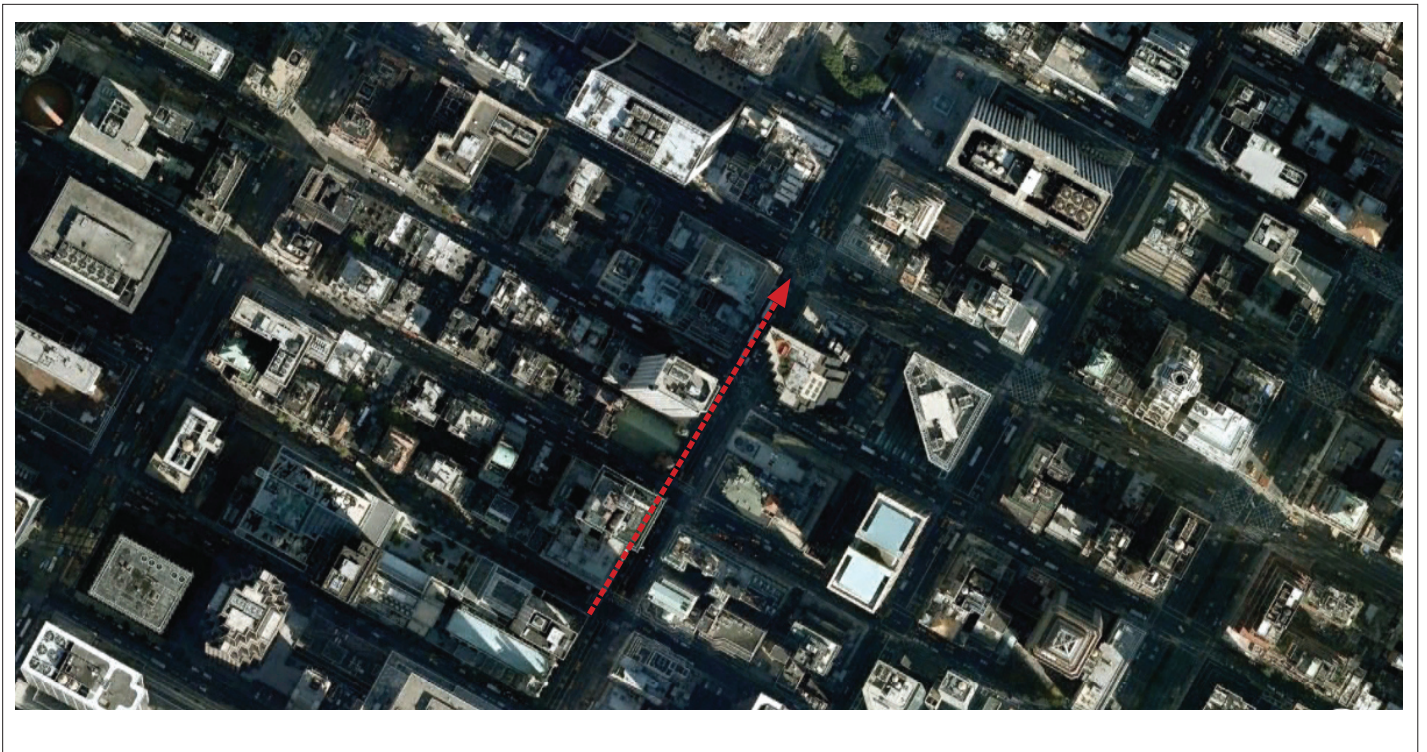


fig 4.2 5th Avenue & 57th Street, Manhattan, New York, U.S.A

1 The opening and closing minutes of a film reveal a lot. In the early films of the 1920's, lettering artists rendered the credits with the name of the studio, film title, director, and stars, which scrolled unceremoniously at the start and end of a feature (Lamster, 130). However, by the mid-1950's, the crisis and re-evaluation of Hollywood to trump television pushed the studios to establish a uniquely cinematic experience. The film title really came of age in Otto Preminger's *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1955) with Saul Bass's unprecedented monochromatic graphics and Elmer Bernstein's composition. The film title for a movie is like a billboard for a building – it sets the aesthetic aim for the rest of the film (Lamster, 129). *To Catch a Thief's* cheerful opening sequence is cheekily juxtaposed with a lady's scream as she realizes all her jewels are stolen. The forceful and slightly erratic score against a black screen and white lettering of *La Dolce Vita* foreshadows the drawn-out and unconventional narrative of the film. *Breakfast at Tiffany's* long and lyrical opening with Henry Mancini's "Moon River" acoustics emphasizes the lonely calm Holly Golightly seeks at the Tiffany & Co. window displays at dawn.

Work Cited

Lamster, Mark. *Architecture and Film*. New York: Princeton Architectural, 2000. Print.

2 Fifth Avenue ranks among the most expensive retail streets in the world. Many landmarks line the avenue, including the New York Public Library, the Rockefeller Centre, and the Empire State Building. From 82nd Street to 105th Street, Fifth Avenue is aptly dubbed "Museum Mile" – the highlights include the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. In the early 20th century, that section was also known as "Millionaire's Row". Many of the richest New Yorkers at the turn of the century built their residences off of Central Park (including the Vanderbilt mansions). Flagship luxury shops line Fifth Avenue further south, between 34th Street and 60th Street. This is where we find our heroine, Holly Golightly, in the opening sequence of the film.

3 "Taxicab" comes from the contraction of *taximeter cab*. *Taximeter* is an adaptation of a German word – a combination of the Medieval Latin word *taxa*, meaning tax or charge, with the Greek word *metron*, meaning measure. Cab is from the Latin *capreolus* meaning "wild goat, roebuck" which gave the horse-drawn carriages the name of *cabriolet* (1763) because they had springy suspensions. This later extended to other locomotives (1859) and finally to automobiles-for-hire (1899).

Taxicabs of New York are one of the most recognizable icons of the city. In 1967, New York City ordered all "medallion taxis" to be painted yellow so that official cabs would be easily recognizable as the only type of for-hire vehicles that can pick up passengers commissioned by a street hail. In the 1960's, cab fare was a considerably higher ratio to the average salary than today. Our main protagonist does not skimp on transportation costs.

Works Cited

"Taxi History". *Taxi Dreams*. PBS Programs. Thirteen/WNET New York. Educational Broadcasting Corporation. 2001. Web. 28 May 2010.
 "Taxicab." *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Web.

4 At 630 Fifth Avenue, the International building (built in 1935) is south of 57th Street. Today, a taxicab could not drive the same path it does in this scene, as it is now a southbound one-way-only avenue at this section.

5 Airline windows are an antiquated term for regular small fenestration openings in a plain but heavy façade of a high-rise. The steel structure is hidden by a masonry exterior before the inception of glass skyscrapers that gained popularity later in the decade.

6 The original Tiffany and Company building was at 401 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan. Completed in 1905, it served as the flagship until 1940, after which they relocated to the corner of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street.



fig 4.3 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(1) EXT. SIDE STREET. EAST 60'S¹ - (DAWN)

A tree-lined residential block of converted brownstones between Lexington and Third. The girl (MOVING TOWARD THE CAMERA for the first time) walks briskly up the block in her low cut evening dress². We get a look at her now for the first time. For all her chic thinness she has an almost breakfast-cereal air of health³. Her mouth is large, her nose upturned. Her sun-glasses blot out her eyes. She could be anywhere from sixteen to thirty. As it happens she is two months short of nineteen. Her name (as we will soon discover) is HOLLY GOLIGHTLY⁴.

1 Blake Edwards' *Breakfast at Tiffany's* portrays the "city as a package". The city can take on a more latent role, where its importance lies neither in the landmarks nor the neighbourhoods but simply as packages of space concerned with verticality, interiority, and circulatory infrastructure (stairwells, foyers). The city is reduced to a framework where things happen unself-consciously. The protagonists are not concerned with the district nor significant buildings around them. Their surroundings are just their stomping grounds (Penz, 89). The camera's eye is either cramped and looking down onto a crowded landing of a stairwell or panning up in awe at the height of a skyscraper. Casual meetings and deliberate avoidances at thresholds, landings, stairs, street corners, storefronts, all become internalized *tableaux*. The characters inhabit the city without ever pointing out true particulars, not because they are ignorant, but because they have been wholly acclimatized. The events that take place do not necessarily have to have a strong relation to the place. Instead, it is through an awareness of customs, institutions, and heritage that affect actions and reactions. It is only through a character's recognition to know their circumstances of luxury rather than clues in the architecture.

To be sure, the essence of New York City saturates the film, with a very heavy dose of the East Sixties – dubbed in that era as "Capote-land" (Mordden, 25). However, besides the exception of the Tiffany & Co. flagship store, the neighbourhood simply reduces to scenery. The fire-escape stairs, apartment interiors, sidewalks, and entrance foyers become ubiquitous. Because the entire atmosphere of the film feeds on a knowing "upscale Manhattan hip" with inter-character relationships bordering platonic-erotic tension, the city only serves as the exhibition space for the unfolding of it all.

Works Cited

- Mordden, Ethan. *Medium Cool: the Movies of the 1960s*. New York: Knopf, 1990. Print.
 Penz, Francois, and Maureen Thomas. *Cinema and Architecture: From Historical to Digital*. London: BFI (British Film Institute), 1997. Print.

2 Wardrobe is a major clue to notions of luxury presented in a film. Roland Barthes wrote in *The Language of Fashion* that mankind invented clothing for four reasons:

1. as protection against harsh weather
2. out of modesty for hiding nudity
3. for ornamentation to get noticed
4. the function of meaning, in order to carry out a signifying activity; a profoundly social act right at the heart of the dialectic of society (beyond modesty, ornamentation, and protection)

Certain types of dress are linked to certain professions, social classes, religions, towns, etc. This conscious coding in clothing is why great writers such as Baudelaire, Edgar Poe, Michelet, and Proust, have always been preoccupied with clothing in their works. They understood clothing as an element that "involved the whole of being" (Barthes, 96). Therefore, costume design plays one of the most significant roles in creating a film character. Audrey Hepburn praised Hubert Givenchy as "a personality-maker and a psychiatrist..." providing her with a look that gave her the confidence to act (Chierichetti, 136-138). Audrey Hepburn's iconic wardrobe in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* elevates the film's status to a classic. Although Edith Head was the main designer, Givenchy designed the gowns exclusively for Hepburn. The credits ran: "Miss Hepburn's wardrobe principally by Hubert de Givenchy, Miss Neal's wardrobe principally by Pauline Trigère, costume supervision by Edith Head." Grace Kelly and Cary Grant's clothing in *To Catch a Thief* reinforce Edith Head's epic reign at Paramount Studios as Head Costume Designer for many decades. As both films were from Paramount Studios, there are several other overlaps of behind-the-scenes auteurs besides Costuming – mainly in Art Direction by Hal Pereira, Set Decoration by Sam Comer, and Makeup by Wally Westmore. See Fig.4.4.

Works Cited

- Barthes, Roland, and Andy Stafford. *The Language of Fashion*. Oxford: Berg, 2006. Print.
 Chierichetti, David, and Edith Head. *Edith Head: The Life and Times of Hollywood's Celebrated Costume Designer*. New York: Harper Collins, 2003. Print.

fig 4.4 Comparison Chart of Films

	To Catch a Thief	La Dolce Vita	Breakfast at Tiffany's
Release Date	1955 (Sept)	1960 (April)	1961 (Oct)
Studio	Paramount	Cinecitta	Paramount
Director	Alfred Hitchcock	Federico Fellini	Blake Edwards
Writers	David Dodge (novel) John M. Hayes (screenplay)	Federico Fellini Ennio Flaiano Tullio Pinelli Brunello Rondi	Truman Capote (novel) George Axelrod (screenplay)
Actors	Cary Grant - John Robie Grace Kelly - Frances Stevens Jessie Royce Landis - Jessie Stevens Brigitte Auber - Danielle Foussard	Marcello Mastroianni - Marcello Rubini Anita Ekberg - Sylvia Anouk Aimee* - Maddalena Yvonne Furneaux* - Emma Alain Cuny* - Steiner Walter Santesso - Paparazzo *voice dubbed	Audrey Hepburn - Holly Golightly George Peppard - Paul 'Fred' Varjak Patricia Neal - 2E (Mrs. Failenson) Buddy Ebsen - Doc Golightly
IMDB Rating	7.5	8.1	7.8
Runtime	106 min	174 min (117 GER, 180 USA)	115 min
Colour	Technicolor	black and white	Technicolor
Aspect Ratio	1.85:1	2.35:1	1.85:1
Film neg. format	35mm	35mm	35mm
Cinematography process	VistaVision	Totalscope	Spherical (PCS)
Sound Mix	Mono (Western Electric Recording)	Mono	Mono
Original Music	Lyn Murray	Nino Rota	Henry Mancini
Cinematography	Robert Burks	Otello Martelli	Franz Planer Philip H. Lathrop
Art Direction	Joseph MacMillan Johnson Hal Pereira	Brunello Rondi	Roland Anderson Hal Pereira
Set Decoration	Arthur Krams Sam Comer	Italo Tomassi	Ray Moyer Sam Comer
Makeup & Hair	Wally Westmore	Otello Fava (makeup) Renata Magnanti (hair)	Wally Westmore (makeup) Nellie Marley (hair)
Costumes & Wardrobe	Edith Head	Piero Gherardi Lucia Mirisola	Hubert Givenchy (Hepburn only) Edith Head (Supervisor) Pauline Trigere (Neal only)
Estimated Budget	\$2,500,000 US	undisclosed	\$2,500,000 US



fig. 4.5 & 4.6
Marilyn Monroe and Audrey Hepburn in their prime.



fig 4.7 to 4.10
Clockwise from top left:
Gloria Vanderbilt, Oona Chaplin, Truman Capote, and Carol
Grace.

3 Many critics who discuss this film note that Truman Capote had actually wanted Marilyn Monroe rather than Audrey Hepburn to be cast as Holly Golightly. The iconic images of Hepburn linked to this film we know in popular culture today would suggest this notion to be absurd. However, Hepburn may actually have been ill cast as Holly – a runaway from a west Texan farm whose real name is Lulamae Barnes. Monroe actually *is* a Depression-era orphan that changed her name from Norma Jeane to reinvent herself. Hepburn is a European movie star with aristocratic heritage and a physique that exudes high society. Monroe would much sooner be labeled with “an almost breakfast-cereal air of health”. However, the novella is a very different animal than the film. The softer adaptation by film speaks to a more optimistic perspective. Hepburn embodies authenticity rather than imitation; she never seems to try too hard. In this way, the film takes on a culturally divergent existence than the novella – one Capote had never intended.

Churchwell, Sarah. “Breakfast at Tiffany’s: When Audrey Hepburn Won Marilyn Monroe’s Role.” *The Guardian* [London] 5 Sept. 2009. Guardian News and Media Limited 2010. Web.

4 The name of the protagonist in Capote’s early drafts of the novella was Connie Gustafson. However, it was later changed to Holiday Golightly. It is said that this character is based on several women Capote associated with: Gloria Vanderbilt (the socialite), Oona Chaplin (the fourth wife of Charlie Chaplin), and Carol Grace (the actress).

Clarke, Gerald. *Capote a Biography*. New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005. Print.

GENERAL NOTE

Except the end scene, when Holly Golightly looks for Cat in the alleyway, all the exterior scenes were filmed on location. Except for the scene inside the flagship of Tiffany & Co., all the interior scenes were shot in the Paramount Studios in Hollywood. The scenes on the fire escape stairs were shot in the studio since Upper East Side brownstones do not actually have tenement fire escape stairs like the one on which Holly strums her guitar.

- (A) 1. 727 5th Ave, New York, NY 10022 (Tiffany & Co)
- (A/D) 2. 169 E. 71st st, New York (Golightly's apt)
- (D) 3. Sing-Sing Prison, Ossining, New York
- (D) 4. 11 West 40 Street, NY 10018-2668 (New York Public Library)
- (D) 5. 438 8th Ave, New York, NY 10001 (New York Penn Station-Greyhound)
- (A) 6. Central Park, The Mall (by the neo-classical amphitheatre)
- (A) 7. 5th Ave, New York (along Central Park)
- (A) 8. Seagram Building, 375 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022
- (D) 9. Manhattan North Precinct 19, 153 East 67th Street



fig 4.11 Map of Manhattan, New York City. Scene Locations.



fig 4.12 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(2) EXT. BROWNSTONE — (DAWN)

Holly approaches the brownstone. Parked in front of it is a large, black, chauffeur-driven Cadillac¹. Holly notices it and quickens her pace, up the steps and into the vestibule of the building. As she does so the rear door of the Cadillac opens and a gentleman, MR. SID ARBUCK emerges. He is short, vast, sun-lamped² and pomaded³, a man in buttressed pin-stripe suit with a red carnation⁴ wilting in its lapel. Mr. Arbuck, moving as rapidly as it is possible for him to move, follows her up the steps.

1 The Cadillac car owes its name to Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac (1658-1730), a French explorer of New France (an area of North America stretching from Eastern Canada to Louisiana). The company cites the moniker as an homage to his pioneering and roving spirit. The following images demonstrate the typical evolution of a brand logo – from the authentic start to the simulated end.



Actual coat of arms of Lord of Lamothe at Bardigues to whom de la Mothe Cadillac was not related



The fabricated de la Mothe Cadillac family crest



The Cadillac Automobile Company's trademarked logo from 1906

fig 4.13 Coat of Arms, an evolution

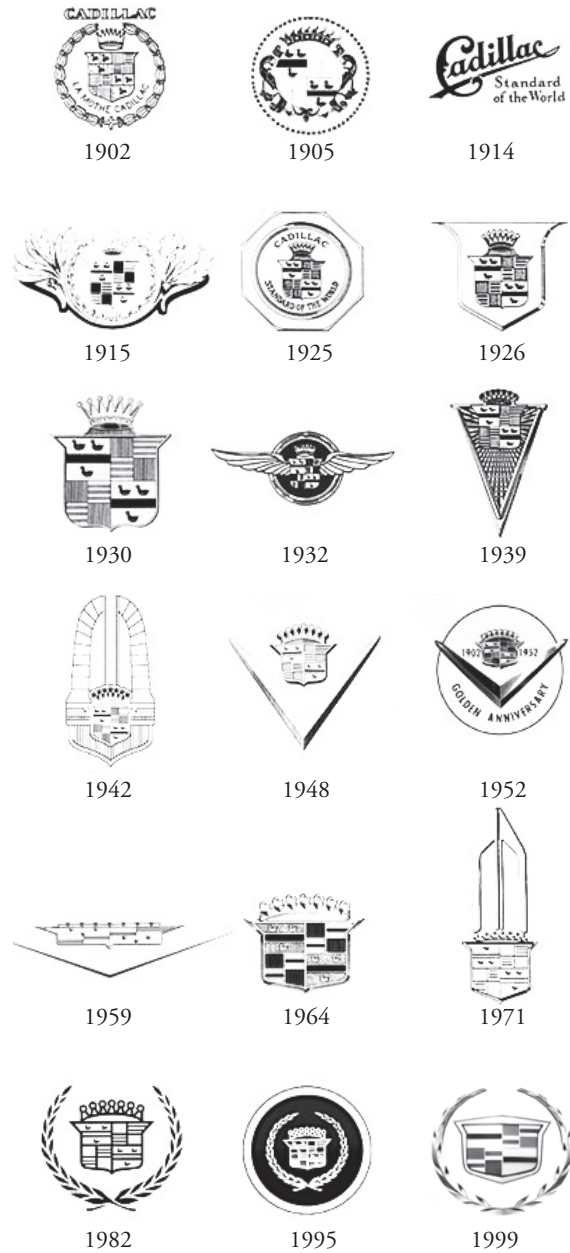


fig 4.14 Cadillac logo over the years

- 2 Tanning – as a trend amongst the wealthy and jetset – signaled that one had the finances and time to travel to hot and exotic locations. People began to artificially tan their skin to attain the same effect. This is a big reversal from the turn-of-the-century preference of alabaster skin that signified the absence of hard manual labour. In the 1920's, Coco Chanel accidentally sunburned herself while vacationing in the French Riviera and her admirers adopted the tanned look on themselves. This also coincided with the rise in popularity of Josephine Baker, the “Bronze Venus” of the 1920's and 1930's. These two influential women and the advent of commercial air travel resulted in the establishment of tanned skin as stylish, healthy, and luxurious (even if by artificial means). However, current backlash has coined a new derogatory term for over-tanning: “tanorexic.”

“Sun Tanning.” *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web.

- 3 Pomade was the default hair product of the gentlemen from the early to mid-20th century. The word is originally from the French *pommade* (“an ointment”, 1562), derived from the Latin *pomum* (“fruit, apple”), due to its original ointment recipe containing mashed apples. Later, pomade was made out of petroleum jelly, beeswax, or lard, and some sort of perfume. Used to produce a slick and recognizable hairstyle, the Cohen brother's film *O Brother Where Art Thou?* (2000) exaggerates this with the character of Ulysses and his obsessive use of the pomade brand “Dapper Dan.”

O Brother Where Art Thou? Dir. Joel Coen. By Joel Coen and Ethan Coen. Perf. George Clooney, John Turturro, and Tim Blake Nelson. Momentum Pictures, 2001.

- 4 In the Victorian era, carnations symbolized a fascination or love for a woman and the specific colour of one embodied a particular meaning. Red meant “I admire you” or “my heart aches for you” and indicated love, passion, and respect. White meant innocence, a sweet and pure love, and given as a good luck gift to a woman. Pink indicated thankfulness and happiness. Purple alluded to whimsy and quirkiness.

“Carnation Meaning.” *AA-Florist*. Web.



fig 4.15 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(17) INT. HOLLY'S LIVING ROOM - (DAWN)

The living room of a two-room apartment. Doors to kitchenette and bedroom¹. The living room has a 'camping out' look. Suitcases and packing case² are the only furnishings. There is a lamp on one case. Gin and vermouth³ on another. A record player and a stack of records on the floor. A wall of empty book shelves.

Holly locks the door and turns into the room. A large red cat⁴ comes up and rubs against her legs. She bends down to stroke him.

- 1 Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) exposes New York's upper class of the 1870's. She condemned the emerging Manhattan apartment as immoral:

...characteristic independence she had made her reception rooms upstairs and established herself (in flagrant violation of all the New York proprieties) on the ground floor of her house; so that as you sat in her sitting-room window with her, you caught (through a door that was always open and a looped-back yellow damask portiere) the unexpected vista of a bedroom with a huge low bed upholstered like a sofa, and a toilet-table with frivolous lace flounces and a gilt-framed mirror. Her visitors were startled and fascinated by the foreignness of this arrangement, which recalled scenes in French fiction, and architectural incentives to immorality such as the simple American had never dreamed of. That was how women with lovers lived in the wicked old societies, in apartments with all the rooms on one floor, and all the indecent propinquities that their novels described.

(Wharton, 23)

The apartment of Holly Golightly is exactly the condition Wharton describes. After World War Two, kitchens became smaller and more utilitarian, the bedrooms shrank, and the bathroom lost daylight. The standard size for a building lot in Manhattan was 25 feet by 100 feet. However, there were also many larger luxury apartments being built at the same time. Most notable are the ones by Richard Morris Hunt, architect to the Vanderbilt family, that take the apartment-house concept from Paris's *École des Beaux-Arts*.

Alpern, Andrew. *New York's Fabulous Luxury Apartments: with Original Floor Plans from the Dakota, River House, Olympic Tower, and Other Great Buildings*. New York: Dover Publications, 1987. Print.

- 2 Suitcases are one of the most pivotal of luxury items in terms of successful business. The entire LVMH empire could not have existed without the simple "trunk". As a specialist in fine luggage, Louis Vuitton started his business on the creation of trunks after being the official *layetier* to Empress Eugénie, the

wife of Napoleon III of France. There, he observed what made a good travelling case. Establishing his first store in 1854, his flat-bottom trunks were an improvement from the traditional rounded-top trunks that could not be stacked. A traveller used to journey for months at a time, with fifty trunks in tow, filled with a range of items from porcelain jars to hunting gear. Vuitton's trunks of *trianon* canvas were relatively airtight and compact. Its structure is made out of *okoumé* (a hard, lightweight wood from Africa). The bulky metal brackets of the period were replaced by a canvas hinge that created a flat surface on the back of the trunk. The brass corners were shaped by hot and cold pressure in a mould and the edge trims (*lozine*) were made of many layers of paper and cloth pressed together and soaked in zinc solution. Today, the method of production for this particular trunk is debatable. Like most designer products of today, production involves automated and engineered technologies. In late May 2010, controversy over this exact issue prompted the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) of the UK to ban a particular Louis Vuitton advertisement for misleading consumers to interpret that their products were hand-made. The advertisement depicts a model seamstress hand-stitching the handle of a bag while a caption underneath read: "A needle, linen thread, beeswax and infinite patience protect each over-stitch from humidity and the passage of time." After Louis Vuitton representatives were unable to provide sufficient evidence that their products were handmade, the ASA prohibited further use of the advertisement. See Fig. 4.16.

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- Timeline. *Louis Vuitton*. <http://www.louisvuitton.com/web/> Retrieved 2010 April.

- 3 Besides jewellery or couture, alcohol is the other major department of luxury goods. After all, the “MH” of the mega-conglomerate LVMH is Moët-Hennessy (brands of champagne and cognac respectively). In this scene, Holly has other types of alcohol in her cabinet: gin and vermouth – ingredients to make a classic martini.

According to the US Laws, Codes, Statutes and Cases on Standards of Identity for Distilled Spirits:

Gin is a product obtained by original distillation from mash, or by redistillation of distilled spirits, or by mixing neutral spirits, with or over juniper berries and other aromatics, or with or over extracts derived from infusions, percolations, or maceration of such materials, and includes mixtures of gin and neutral spirits. It shall derive its main characteristic flavour from juniper berries and be bottled at not less than 80° proof.

Vermouth is made from a dry white wine flavoured with herbs – cardamom, cinnamon, marjoram, and chamomile – roots and barks, and fortified with a grape spirit. In 1869, the “Vermouth Cocktail” (chilled vermouth with a twist of lemon peel and a dash of maraschino liqueur) ensured ample consumption of vermouth in the following decades – the drink of the 19th century dandy. However, by the mid-20th century, the trend tended towards drier martinis. It was said that when Winston Churchill made a martini, he merely glanced at a bottle of vermouth (or at least, in the direction of France).

Works Cited

- Clarke, Paul. “The Truth About Vermouth: The Secret Ingredient in Today’s Top Cocktails Remains Misunderstood.” *San Francisco Chronicle*. Hearst Communications Inc., 15 Aug. 2008. Web.
 “Justia :: 27 C.F.R. Subpart C Standards of Identity for Distilled Spirits.” *US Laws, Codes, Statutes & Cases – Justia*. Web.

- 4 Historically, cats have longstanding associations with gods, omens, or spiritual guardians. All three films have the presence of this creature. In *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*, Holly Golightly has a stray cat that she refuses to name for fear of domestication, yet cannot bear to part with at the end. In *La Dolce Vita*, scene 23, Sylvia (Anita Ekberg’s character) has special affection for a stray alley cat she comes across while exploring the narrow streets around Trevi Fountain. In *To Catch a Thief*, John Robie’s character is nicknamed ‘the Cat’, for his prowess for navigating rooftops stealthily and owns a black cat himself (scene 19).

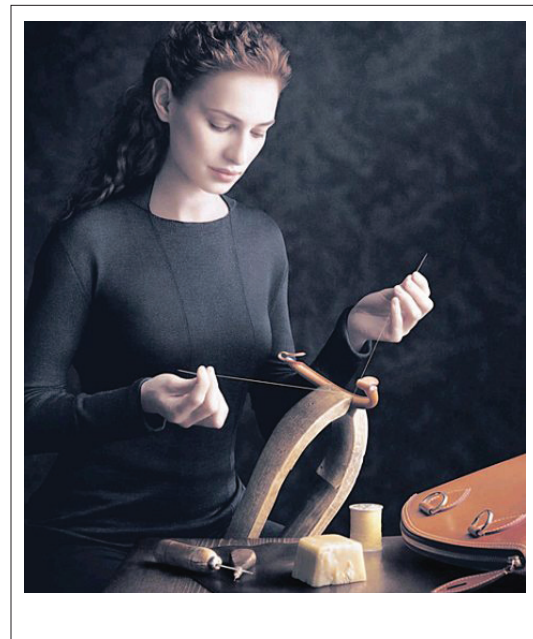


fig 4.16 ASA-banned Louis Vuitton handbag advertisement from May 2010.



fig 4.17 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(60) INT. HOLLY'S LIVING ROOM - (LATE AFTERNOON)

(Cont'd)

O.J.

Well, you're wrong! She is a phony! But on the other hand, you're right. Because she's a real phony.¹ You know why? Because she honestly believes all this phony junk she believes²!

PAUL

Have you known her long?

O.J.

Known her long? Me...O.J. Berman... I'm the one who discovered her! On the coast, a couple of years ago, out at Santa Anita. She's hanging around the track³. The kid's just fifteen. But stylish. Even though when she opens her mouth, you don't know if she's a hill-billy or an okie or what. One year it took to smooth out that accent⁴. How we finally did it, we give her French lessons. After that she gradually learns to imitate English.

- 1 A “real phoney” is a true paradox. Rolling Stones coined the phrase “perception *is* reality” because value resides in the *perception* of the object. A lot of branding companies realize proximity generates worth. The Stendhal Syndrome is an effect on an individual when exposed to something particularly beautiful, like an abundance of art. It was named after the 19th century French author Henri-Marie Beyle, better known as Stendhal, when he wrote *A Journey from Milan to Reggio* (1817):

On leaving the Santa Croce church, I felt a pulsating in my heart. Life was draining out of me, while I walked fearing a fall.

The modern equivalent to this condition is the visceral reaction Holly Golightly has to luxury items. There is emotional attachment even to the most confected displays of luxury.

Guy, Melinda. “The Shock of the Old.” *Frieze Magazine*. Jan.-Feb. 2003. Web.

- 2 We view ourselves in relation to depictions of characters in art and film. Here, the characters conform to a set of conventions and prototypes of that era that have been internalized, appropriated, and idealized. Holly Golightly creates her own matrix of conventions she foolishly yet passionately acts within.

Hollander, Anne. *Seeing through Clothes*. New York: Viking, 1978. Print.

- 3 The city of the 20th century had unprecedented ease of social and geographic mobility. The age of debutante balls and established aristocratic order rapidly faded, while at the same time, the inclusion of outsiders became easier and more common (Gundle, 370). Money, merit, and beauty – rather than birth – were now the criteria for power. Fluid travel and a growing economy allowed for fresh new personalities, fashions, and places to inspire new stories. The press and media took advantage of this and devoured the heterogeneous mix. Many routes of self-transformation were possible in this

capitalist, distinctly bourgeois scene primed to seduce the public.

Gundle, Stephen. *Glamour a History*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.

- 4 Accents are usually encountered with some sort of perceived prestige or lack thereof. When a certain accent carries more esteem than another, it is due to its association with an elite class of society, region, or ethnic group. In the United Kingdom, the “received pronunciation” of English is affiliated with the traditional upper class. Yet, that is the native accent of less than 10% of the English population. Most North Americans believe it to be the true British accent as it is spoken by the Royal Family, recent Prime Ministers, and most BBC announcers. Lulamae Barnes’ original “hill-billy” accent could not have allowed her to achieve the life she had dreamed of, so she had to modify it completely.

Holly Golightly’s “cultural lessons” were an attempt to jump from her “low brow” origins to a “high brow” existence. The cartoons of Russell Lynes are a perfect illustration of this. His article in *Harper’s* of February 1949 discussed the notion that people’s taste could not be based on their wealth, education, breeding, or background any longer. Instead, a new type of social stratification was developing – one that was mostly based on personal ambition and self-created opportunities. At the same time, there were clear enough distinctions between each hierarchy that made the divisions obvious. See Fig. 4.18 and Fig 4.19.

Works Cited

“HLW: Word Forms: Processes: English Accents.” *Indiana University*. Web.

Lynes, Russell. “Highbrow, Lowbrow, Middlebrow.” *Harper’s Magazine* Feb. 1949. Print.



fig 4.18 "Highbrow, Lowbrow, Middlebrow" by Russell Lynes. *Harper's Magazine* Feb. 1949.

EVERYDAY TASTES FROM HIGH-BROW TO

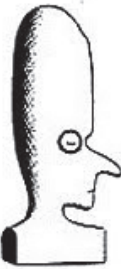























	CLOTHES	FURNITURE	USEFUL OBJECTS	ENTERTAINMENT	SALADS
HIGH-BROW 	 <p>TOWN Fuzzy Harris tweed suit, no hat</p> <p>COUNTRY Fuzzy Harris tweed suit, no hat</p>	 <p>Eames chair, Kurt Versen lamp</p>	 <p>Decanter and ash tray from chemical supply company</p>	 <p>Ballet</p>	 <p>Greens, olive oil, wine vinegar, ground salt, ground pepper, garlic, unwashed salad bowl</p>
UPPER MIDDLE-BROW 	 <p>TOWN Brooks suit, regimental tie, felt hat</p> <p>COUNTRY Quiet tweed jacket, knitted tie</p>	 <p>Empire chair, converted sculpture lamp</p>	 <p>Silver cigaret box with wedding ushers' signatures</p>	 <p>Theater</p>	 <p>Same as high-brow but with tomatoes, avocado, Roquefort cheese added</p>
LOWER MIDDLE-BROW 	 <p>TOWN Splashy necktie, double-breasted suit</p> <p>COUNTRY Sport shirt, colored socks</p>	 <p>Grand Rapids Chippendale chair, bridge lamp</p>	 <p>His and Hers towels</p>	 <p>Musical extravaganza films</p>	 <p>Quartered iceberg lettuce and store dressing</p>
LOW-BROW  <p><i>too much</i></p>	 <p>TOWN Loafer jacket, woven shoes</p> <p>COUNTRY Old Army clothes</p>	 <p>Mail order overstuffed chair, fringed lamp</p>	 <p>Babam-stuffed pillow</p>	 <p>Western movies</p>	 <p>Coleslaw</p>

fig 4.19 "Everyday Tastes from Highbrow to Lowbrow" by Russell Lynes. *Life* 11 Apr. 1949: 100-101.

LOW-BROW ARE CLASSIFIED ON CHART



DRINKS	READING	SCULPTURE	RECORDS	GAMES	CAUSES
 <p>A glass of "adequate little" red wine</p>	 <p>"Little magazines," criticism of criticism, avant garde literature</p>	 <p>Calder</p>	 <p>Both and before, Ives and after</p>	 <p>Go</p>	 <p>Art</p>
 <p>A very dry Martini with lemon peel</p>	 <p>Solid nonfiction, the better novels, quality magazines</p>	 <p>Maillol</p>	 <p>Symphonies, concertos, operas</p>	 <p>The Game</p>	 <p>Planned parenthood</p>
 <p>Bourbon and ginger ale</p>	 <p>Book club selections, mass circulation magazines</p>	 <p>Front yard sculpture</p>	 <p>Light opera, popular favorites</p>	 <p>Bridge</p>	 <p>P. T. A.</p>
 <p>Beer</p>	 <p>Pulp, comic books</p>	 <p>Parlor sculpture</p>	 <p>Jukebox</p>	 <p>Crocs</p>	 <p>The Lodge</p>



fig 4.20 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(62) INT. DOORWAY — PAUL & HOLLY'S POV¹ (LATE AFTERNOON)

Mag Wildwood, the owner of the voice, is a fashion model, well over six feet tall in her spiked heels². With her are two gentlemen: Jose Ybarra-Jaegar, a wildly handsome Latin with the look of a shy bull fighter; and Rusty Trawler, a middle-aged child who has never quite shed his baby fat. There is not a suspicion of a bone in his body. Mag is shouting greetings³ to one and all.



fig 4.21 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

1 The camera angle is a major indication of ideas, subtext, or moods of a scene. By looking at a film shot by shot, a certain convention begins to surface. A scene shot from a low angle exaggerates an object's height and size. This is useful for underlining the status of a character or the relation of one character to another. It is particularly effective at highlighting tall skyscrapers in the downtown core of a city – to exaggerate their heights to create a sense of grandeur (if positive) or belittlement (if negative). Scenes from a high angle usually emphasize vertigo or give the impression of a cramped space. Used metaphorically, it can be utilized to look down condescendingly from one character onto another. A campier but effective angle is a point-of-view (P.O.V.) shot. This is when the camera assumes the eyes of a character and records what the character sees. Here, Holly and Paul are both looking in the direction of the doorway, both surprised by the next arrival at the party. These camera angles work within a field of view: panoramic, wide, medium, close-up, and extreme close-up. Common to most movies, the compositional “rule of thirds” applies. Often, the horizon or focus will fall on one of the lines that trisect the screen horizontally or vertically as thirds. It is pleasing to the eye and makes focal objects or actions easily digestible.

McMinn, Rob. *At Tiffany's – Shot by Shot*. SlideShare. 2006. Web Slideshow. 28 May 2010.

2 Louis XIV was a shoe fetishist. The curve-heeled mule was the most glamorous shoe of his time, still known as the “Louis” today. Ever since then, heels have been the focus of the design of a glamorous shoe. Today, Christian Louboutin is one of the few luxury fashion companies that purposely remain small and designer-owned-and-run. While designing shoes for the Parisian *Folies Bergères* at the age of sixteen, he learned that “the most important part of the shoe is the body and the heel. Like good bone structure, if you get that right, the rest is makeup.” (Thomas, 328)

Thomas, Dana. *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster*. New York: Penguin, 2007. Print.

3 In *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics, and at Home* (1922), Post writes:

Manners are made up of trivialities of deportment which can be easily learned if one does not happen to know them; manner is personality—the outward manifestation of one's innate character and attitude toward life.

Her serious conviction in very specific actions in a given situation seems absurd by today's standards. Some chapter headings sound entirely dated, such as “Ch. 5: One's Position in the Community”, “Ch. 12: The Well-Appointed House”, “Ch. 18: The Debutante”, “Ch. 25: The Country House and Its Hospitality”, “Ch. 29: The Fundamentals of Good Behaviour,” and “Ch. 30: Clubs and Club Etiquette.” They all point to a proper action only suitable for a certain situation. Post's last chapter, called “Ch. 38: The Growth of Good Taste in America” firmly equates good taste and prestige with proper manners:

Good taste or bad is revealed in everything we are, do, have. Our speech, manners, dress, and household goods—and even our friends—are evidences of the propriety of our taste, and all these have been the subject of this book. Rules of etiquette are nothing more than sign-posts by which we are guided to the goal of good taste.

However, she is not entirely naïve, and questions the future of this paradigm:

To be sure, manners seem to have grown lax, and many of the amenities apparently have vanished. But do these things merely seem so to us because young men of fashion do not pay party calls nowadays and the young woman of fashion is informal?

She is correct in her anticipation. The luxury to have this education and to execute these manners began to fade soon thereafter.



fig 4.22 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(126) INT. TIFFANY'S - (DAY)

They are, in spite of themselves, if not exactly awed, at least impressed. They lower their voices slightly¹.

HOLLY

Don't you just love it?

PAUL

Love what?

HOLLY

Tiffany's²! Isn't it wonderful? You see what I mean...how nothing bad could ever happen in a place like this. And it's not that I give a hoot about jewelry. Except diamonds of course

(She points at a diamond necklace in
the window)³

Like that.

A salesman who could pass as an ambassador to the Court of St. James⁴, comes up.

- 1 The decibel level of a shop is usually inversely proportional to the price. Think of the noises within a bazaar or a flea market compared with that of an expensive boutique. This is one of the strategies cited by Rem Koolhaas in his ideas about the Prada 'epicentre' in New York City – the end of indefinite expansion, treating the store as a creative enterprise instead of a purely financial one. He proclaims that luxury requires focus, composure, intelligence, excess, and stability.

Koolhaas, Rem, Jens Hommert, and Michael Kubo. *Prada*. Milano: Fondazione Prada, 2001. Print.

- 2 In pilgrimages to retail cathedrals and luxury galleries, one expects to find secular salvation. The ecclesiastical relic, much like the luxury object, supposes that attributed values to the object trumps all original intrinsic values. Both the relic and the coveted luxury product involve the motifs of myth, sacrifice, ritual, ecstasy, and community. If there is a sense of the ineffable, the sacrifice is of full worth. Those who participate know the rules of engagement well and have a sense of belonging. The ultimate goal is, even if only momentarily, to transcend the here and now, to appreciate the incredible, and to able to associate the self with a higher purpose (Twitchell, 263).

A historical legacy of traditional craftsmanship or longstanding service to royalty gives a product or place an air of legitimacy. But today's luxury business needs more than just an authentic lineage to survive. Listing in the world's stock exchanges raises capital, elevates the brand's status, creates management incentives, and makes the company more transparent, thereby attracting a higher calibre of executive management. The only downside – and though there is only one, it is devastatingly close to the core – is that quality is compromised in order to keep investors satisfied by profit growth (Thomas, 10). The three largest luxury conglomerates today, Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton (LVMH), Pinault-Printemps-Redoute (PPR), and Compagnie Financière Richemont, profit in the billions of dollars, each owning an average of 10 to

15 luxury brands. They swap head designers like pawns – albeit talented ones. As the late designer Alexander McQueen had once said, “You're only a commodity and a product to them and only as good as your last collection.” (Thomas, 322)

See Fig. 4.23 Designer Family Tree.

LVMH, by far the leader of today, has an uncanny resemblance to another company known to be at the top of its game: McDonald's. They both boast about their millions of products sold, their stores are monotonous (no matter how large the arch or how shiny the *fleur*), are at all the popular tourist sites (often meters apart from one another) and have unmistakable logos (Thomas, 18). This saturation of the market creates an atmosphere of pecuniary emulation, first noted by Thorstein Veblen in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*: “To a great extent this emulation shapes the methods and selects the objects of expenditure for personal comfort and decent livelihood.” (Veblen, 32).

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- 3 Jean Baudrillard's *The System of Objects* (1968) and *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (1970) discuss the effects of this shift in terms of the political economy and semiotics. He asserts that mass media is responsible for an expansion in the coding of objects through a system of signs. The regime of “sign-value” has completely overridden “use-value” and the manipulation of these signs is now the only way to express wealth. Much like Bourdieu's *The Uses of Distinction* (1979), previously fixed social strata were a large component of our construction of identity. However, in the age of mass-production, there is little upon which to base distinction concerning property and belongings. So,

luxury is the fetishization of material goods. Luxury expressed in actions and behaviours still exist and will remain for some time longer. However, post-1950's, there is no longer balance. The prevailing mode that luxury now affirms itself is through the agent of tangible things.

- 4 The description of a salesman's apparel of a luxury store equates to that of an ambassador to the Royal Court of the United Kingdom. Many luxury brands founded in the 18th and 19th century by skilled artisans were the ones who made the most beautiful wares and articles for the Royal Court. They sustained in their niche market because they had steady clientele.

Thomas, Dana. *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster*. New York: Penguin, 2007. Print.

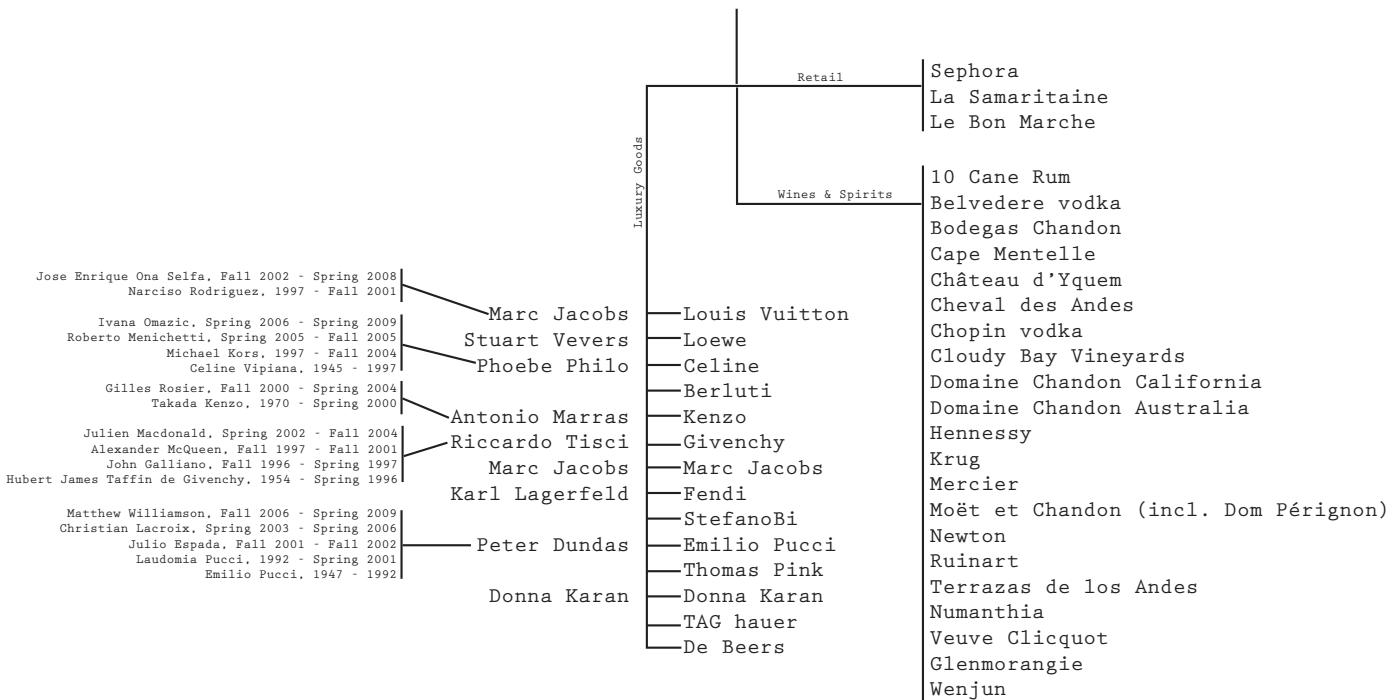
fig 4.23 Designer Family Tree

LVMH

Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton

Revenue €17.19 billion (2008)
 Operating income €3.485 billion (2008)
 Profit €2.026 billion (2008)

Shares: 54.40 Euros (01 July 2009)



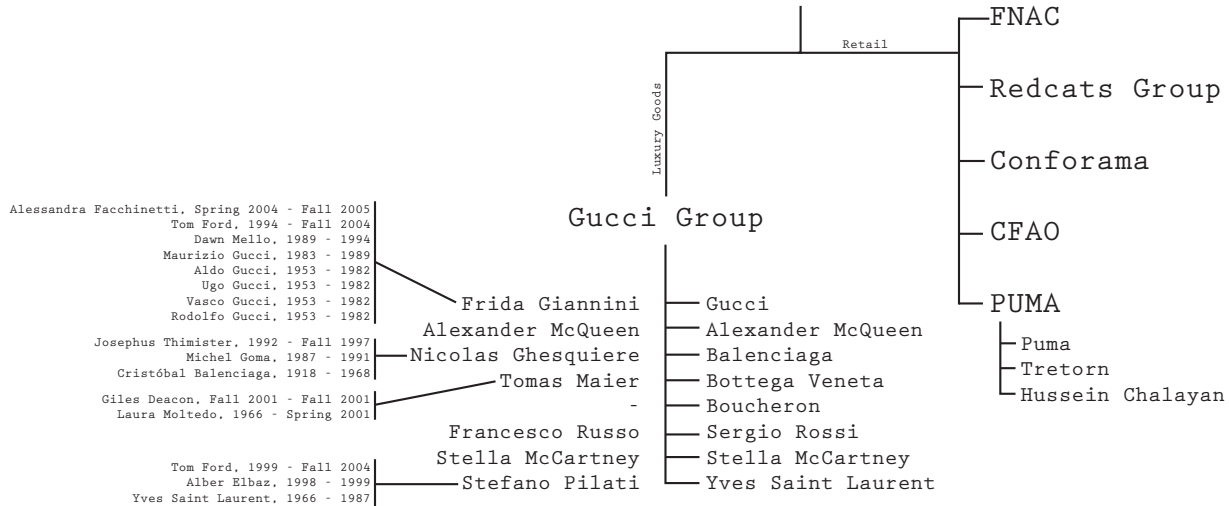
2,300 stores worldwide

PPR

Pinault-Printemps-Redoute

Revenue €20.20 billion (2008)
 Operating income €1.360 billion (2008)
 Profit €537.4 million (2008)

Shares: 58.16 Euros (01 July 2009)



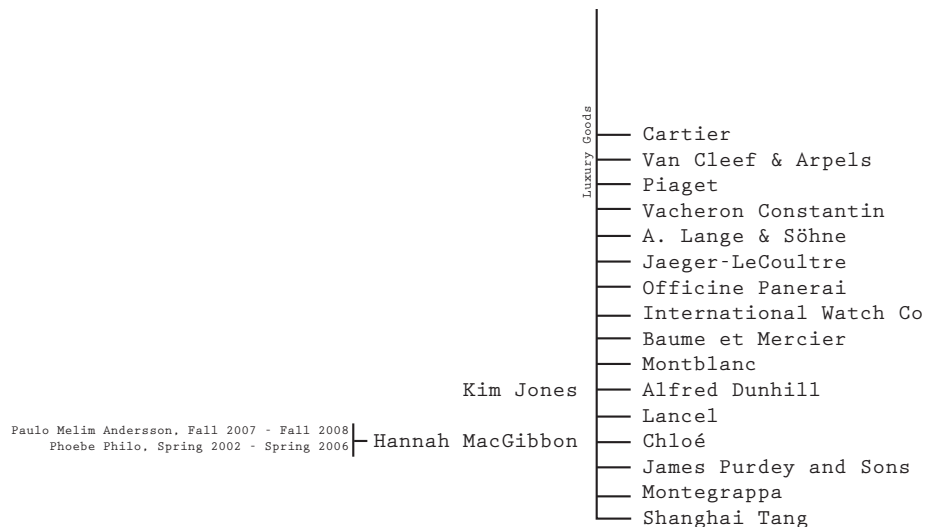
560 stores worldwide

Richemont

Compagnie Financière Richemont

Revenue €5.302 billion (2008)
 Operating income €1.108 billion (2008)
 Profit €1.571 billion (2008)

Shares: 22.58 CHF (01 July 2009)





01:33:50

fig 4.24 Film Still from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

(173) PARK AVENUE — (AFTERNOON)

They walk down Park Avenue¹ and sit in front of the Seagram Building plaza². Holly lights a smoke.

HOLLY

Years from now, years and years, I'll be back. Me and my nine Brazilian brats...they'll be dark like Jose, of course... but with bright green beautiful eyes...I'll bring them back all right...because they must see this...Oh I love New York³!

PAUL

When why are you leaving it? What's in it for you anyway?

Holly's face tightens. The mood is broken.

- 1 Formerly called Fourth Avenue, Park Avenue runs parallel to Madison Avenue. Along with Fifth Avenue, they make up New York's premier luxury shopping strip. The further north along Fifth and Madison Ave you go, the swankier the stores become. From the potential Top Shop at 53rd St, to Abercrombie at 57th St, to Bergdorf Goodman at 58th St, to Jimmy Choo at 63rd St, to Bulgari at 66th St, and to Cartier at 69th St – it acts like a hierarchical stratum of luxury in urban retail planning.

Most of the designer brands found on this strip are owned by one of the three major luxury conglomerates: LVMH, PPR, or Richemont. Products from different brands of the same parent company are often made in the same factory and even from the same materials.

Though an actor or actress may play the part of a designer-clad individual, their clothes are most likely not officially *haute couture* (high fashion). The *Chambre syndicale de la haute couture* (created in 1868) has strict criteria regarding couture house status. In 1946, there were 106 couture houses. By 1952, that number dropped down to 60. This is more of a reflection of the loss of craftsmanship and a rise in mass consumerism rather than a tightening of rules. As of 2010, there are 11 couture houses left.

- 2 Designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson, this 38-storey building in the International style was built in 1958, just several years before the making of this film. This location demonstrates the vibrancy and forward-thinking of the New York City that Holly would miss when she left for Argentina. The decision to film at the Seagram Building is a departure from the second working draft of the screenplay by George Axelrod, where he originally scripted this scene to take place by the Brooklyn Bridge. The Seagram Building will go on to become one of the most influential and copied office buildings in the world. The plaza has no formal seating, but the two main characters casually perch on the polished granite of the south wall by 52nd Street.

"Blog Archive: Remix Mies." *Eikongraphia*. Web.

- 3 The Manhattan street grid presents a very different condition than the winding cliffside roads of the French Riviera and the congested streets of Rome. As Rem Koolhaas wrote in *Delirious New York*, the grid imposes an:

indifference to topography, to what exists, it claims the superiority of mental construction over reality. Through the plotting of its streets and blocks it announces that the subjugation, if not obliteration, of nature is its true ambition. All blocks are the same; their equivalence invalidates, at once, all the systems of articulation and differentiation that have guided the design of traditional cities. The Grid makes the history of architecture and all previous lessons of urbanism irrelevant. It forces Manhattan's builders to develop a new system of formal values, to invent strategies for the distinction of one block from another. (15-16)

Since Manhattan is a finite 2028 blocks, the city and each specific experience within it becomes a mosaic of episodes superimposed upon this grid. The grid starts to collect meaning and cachet in certain areas that are by no means static, but carry hierarchies among themselves. Golightly understood this on the subtlest levels, yet exhibited them in the most overt ways. Her obsession over the Tiffany & Co. flagship store and her weekly visits up to Sing-Sing Prison in Ossining, New York gave her the full spectrum of this dynamic at work. As a "real phoney", she believed in the power of the fashionable milieu of the city to transform her from an impoverished Texan farm girl into a perceptive metropolitan socialite.

Koolhaas, Rem. *Delirious New York: a Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*. New York: Oxford UP, 1978.
Print.

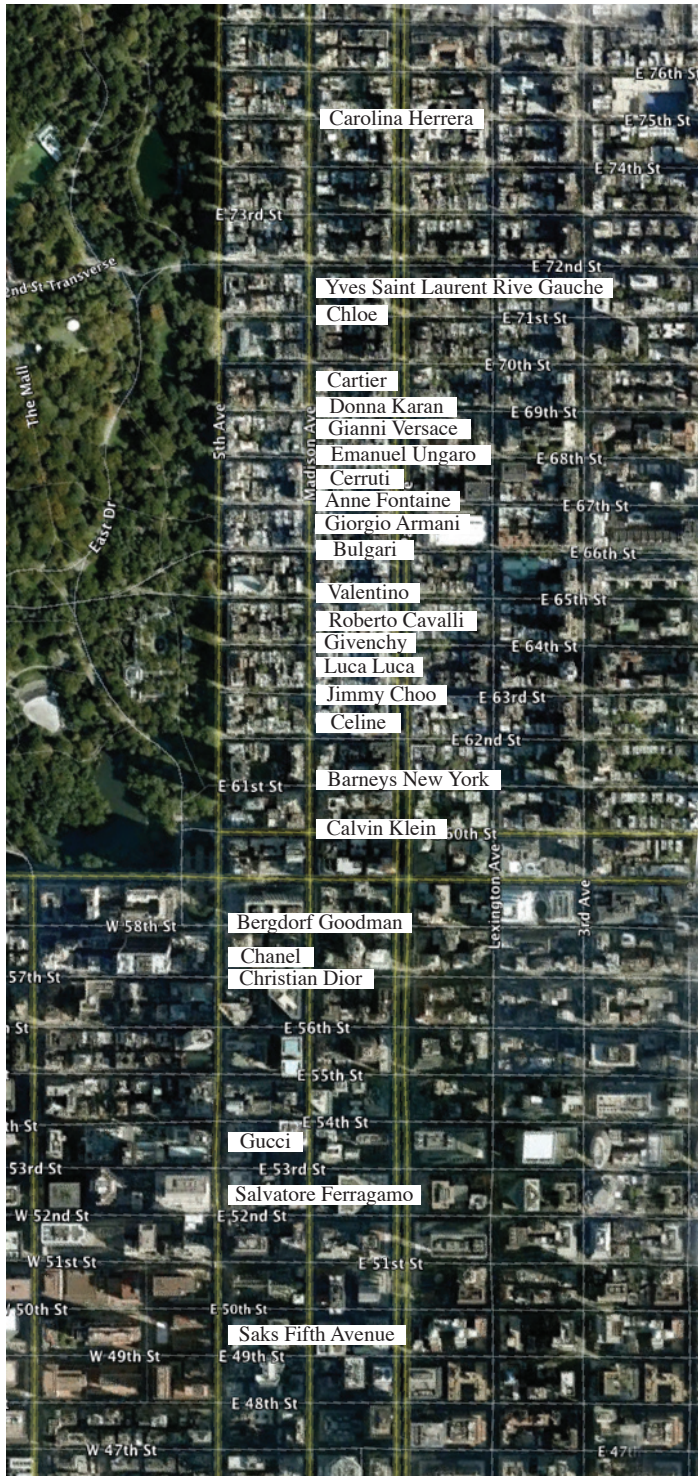


fig 4.25 Hierarchical stratum of luxury in urban retail



fig 4.26 The Seagram Building.

Epilogue

Epilogue

Today, branding is an inescapable element of luxury. Fifty years ago, almost before the fact, Alfred Hitchcock, Federico Fellini, and Blake Edwards understood branding. Although their roles put them behind the scenes, Hitchcock and Fellini carefully constructed distinct public personas to sell their movies. Hitchcock's film cameos, and his repeated use of certain oddball motifs (such as birds and eggs) garnered him a mysterious presence inseparable from his actual self. His promotional work with Paramount during the 1950's, for *Time*, *Life*, and *Newsweek* magazines, reinforced this image. In *Look* magazine's photo essay "Hitchcock's World" (1957), photographs of him doing ordinary things in ordinary settings had the caption: "all he has to do is look and act natural for you to imagine that the world is filled with evil."¹ For Fellini, it was a matter of loosely portraying his entire creative life onscreen in the film *8 ½* that gave him the reputation as a master craftsman. Though the plot of *8 ½* is considered roughly autobiographical, the imaginative rewriting of major events of his life portrays the subconscious better than any biopic. Fellini projected this whimsical, rather self-indulgent persona to the public.

This effect is even stronger for onscreen icons. Cary Grant had to be persuaded to film *To Catch a Thief*, just as his onscreen character, the retired jewel thief, was reluctant to return to the business. But by the third film he did with Hitchcock – he would go on to complete four – he and the director had created a brand for themselves. Grace Kelly, another onscreen icon, was also making her third film for Hitchcock, and her ice-queen persona, with its subdued sensuality, preceded her. Similarly, Federico Fellini had a very strong relationship with Marcello Mastroianni, calling him his "alter ego."² Mastroianni always embodied the quintessential modern European man facing existential conflict in a decadent world, solidified by his roles in both *La Dolce Vita* and *8 ½*. His part in *La Dolce Vita* is so renowned in Italian pop culture that on the night of the actor's death in 1996, the city of Rome dimmed its lights and shut the waters to the Trevi Fountain in honour of the iconic scene between Mastroianni and Anita Eckberg, where they embraced there in the fountain's basin.³ Blake Edwards cast Audrey Hepburn over

Marilyn Monroe because he knew that with a film like *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Monroe's overt sexuality could not have sidestepped the censor. Luxury is more convincing when there is no hint of vulgarity. By that time, Hepburn had an immaculate reputation; with her reserved elegance, starring in *Tiffany's* only enhanced the brand. And although each film is hopeful, ending positively, each of the protagonists take a different route to achieve contentment amongst luxury. As loose reflections of the main characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, each of these characters sells a particular idea of luxury to the public.

However, branding has its limits. In *How Pleasure Works: The New Science of Why We Like What We Like*, Paul Bloom makes it clear: despite packaging and marketing, some wines just taste better than others. Whether by Leon's or Le Corbusier, some chairs are just more comfortable. No matter which over-photoshopped celebrity is hawking the bottle, some perfumes are just more fragrant. The pleasure we get from objects and places we love is often determined by sensory properties and not the praise of others. However, that is not to say that pleasure is beyond cultural construction. Even the concept of an "original" is still heavily dependent on established societal notions. It was not up until the 18th century that the concept of "originality" was viewed as a completely positive ideal. Before then, writers, artists, and composers actively copied the masters as closely as they could. It was a blasphemous assumption to even think one could invent *their own* new idea. Shakespeare "evinced a marked propensity for avoiding unnecessary invention", often plagiarizing complete passages of speeches from history books.⁴ Perhaps the turning point was Edward Young's *Conjectures Concerning Original Composition* (1759) – a precursor to the discussions on "intellectual property" – where he applauded novelty and denounced duplication: "Originals are, and ought to be, great Favourites, for they are great Benefactors; they extend the Republic of Letters, and add a new province to its dominion: Imitators only give us a sort of Duplicates of what we had, possibly much better, before."⁵ Since then, we have looked past qualities in search of unique essences – the *original* holds value for us.⁶ That is why self-referential luxury poses a problem: when luxury refers only to itself, without a clear *raison d'être*, there

seems to be no authenticity. Luxury based purely on phenomenological pleasures alone is not enough. Creating a sense of authenticity in a luxury product is a tricky endeavour today; no advertising campaign – the epitome of persuasion – can call itself authentic.

Consider the commercial by director Jean-Pierre Jeunet for Chanel No. 5. Released in May 2009, it features the actress Audrey Tautou and the model Travis Davenport. The narrative alludes to the era of Coco Chanel, making reference to the Orient-Express and its Art Deco aesthetics. The intimate space of each passenger-car, the refined old-fashioned elegance, and the grandiose scenery all contribute to the myth of the brand. Tautou walks through Istanbul's grand bazaar, evoking the Eurasian mystique with its architecture and streetscapes. Tautou is dressed out of time, in tune with Chanel's casual style and taste for sailor trousers. The image of "5" is sprinkled through the scenes. While Billie Holiday croons "I'm a Fool to Want You", the commercial closes focused on the mosaic tiles on the central train station floor embedded with Chanel's famous intertwined C's. It is a wistful homage to times past. This reflective approach is seen even in Chanel's business model; it is one of the few designer houses that have refused to sell out to luxury conglomerates like LVMH.

But the issue of authenticity still stands. Commercials are mini-films. Inherently, directors, actors, set designers, makeup artists, and lighting technicians, all work toward complete artifice. There is a fine balance required quoting an authentic past while understanding today's marketplace.

Designers often falsify history, taking inspiration throughout the eras. Historical references of the past are scavenged and looped back into the present to give the products contemporary meaning. Even though innovation and novelty are prized in design, many luxury brands exist as a "network of historical constellations in which past and present are telescoped together."⁷ Sometimes this effort results in a brand simulating yet another brand. It no longer matters if the reference is sloppy, or so loose it does not exist, except as a fiction. In William Gibson's *Pattern Recognition*, the protagonist criticizes Tommy Hilfiger:

This stuff is simulacra of simulacra of simulacra. A diluted tincture of Ralph Lauren, who

had himself diluted the glory days of Brooks Brothers, who themselves had stepped on the product of Jermyn Street and Savile Row, flavouring their ready-to-wear with liberal lashings of polo knit and regimental stripes. But Tommy surely is the null point, the black hole. There must be some Tommy Hilfiger event horizon, beyond which it is impossible to be more derivative, more removed from the source, more devoid of soul.⁸

This pillaging is much more a reinterpretation of the range of ideas about spectacle and lifestyle, than it is a proper re-visiting of a previous aesthetic. In *To Catch a Thief* the Cote d'Azur is the "city as postcard", with the film portraying iconic places in a city as isolated entities, free from their context, self-sufficient, self-referential: brands. The pretty picture skims the surface; the balance between real and fake oscillates today because a concocted narrative is just as effective in selling a tale as a genuine one.

Sometimes, simulated luxury is straight counterfeiting, feeding on any scraps of the leftover cachet "luxury" once bore. This is one of the ugliest sides of the luxury trade, where unfortunate people suffer in the face of conspicuous consumption; amongst the exaggerated production of aesthetic goods lies the grotesque consequence. In Roberto Saviano's non-fiction novel *Gomorra: Italy's Other Mafia*, it is a distressing fact: the only bottom line is profit, not value. As a brave exposé on the lesser-known but more prevalent mafia of Naples, the Camorra, true stories of organized crime and brutality extend into the manufacturing and shipment of luxury products. So much of this ugly world is not isolated, but seeps into these seemingly immaculate products, making the term "luxury" a very relative expression.

The mechanisms of this at work are both swift and complex. First, the main bulk of shipments from factories in China come through the port of Naples – 1.6 million tons of registered merchandise annually. But at least another million tons pass through without leaving a trace, meaning 60% of goods arriving in Naples escape official customs inspections, resulting in 20% of bills of entry unchecked and 200 million euros of taxes evaded each year.⁹ So all of this merchandise – genuine, fake, semi-fake, partly authentic – arrive silently. But beyond what is *shipped* to Naples, there is also the portion of merchandise that is *made* in Naples. There is a monopoly the Camorra has over top-quality garments with the official "Made in Italy" tags. Working illegally, their system is very different than regular manufacturers. There are auctions where the number of

garments needed to be made is listed with the quality and type of fabric to various bidders. These underground auctions held for designer Italian brands do not involve winners or losers of contracts; instead, only those who enter or those who do not. A contender states the time and price as an offer. Others try to match it. All who want to enter receive the required fabric, but only one will be paid: the one who delivers with top-quality merchandise first. This guarantees speed, the pace of fashion never slows down. The others can keep the fabric but will not receive a single cent. If contractors start to take advantage of the system by hoarding the free fabric but failing to deliver, they are excluded from future bidding wars. For the other contractors who entered the designer bid but did not meet the requirements, they turn to the Camorra with their merchandise to sell their rejected products on the counterfeit market.¹⁰ Fake or real is a very fine line.

Nostalgic tendencies and profit-driven circumstances can make for cautionary tales. A calmer, but no less pervasive occurrence is the designer combination of fashion houses working with ‘starchitects’ for a new *status quo* in luxury: Renzo Piano for Hermes, Jun Aoki for Louis Vuitton in Omotesando, Sejima and Nishizawa for Christian Dior, Massimiliano Fuksas for Armani, and both Herzog & deMeuron and OMA for Prada. Designer brands began building larger-than-life flagship stores in the early 2000’s that flaunted their merchandise and, more importantly, their image. As the designer Tom Ford said, brands had to “build a fantasy world for those clothes and accessories – create the life that your customers aspire to.”¹¹ But instead of evoking subtle cultured luxury, the main purpose to hire internationally-famed architects was for the conspicuous publicity it attracted. The individualism and the history each fashion house tried to convey through these epicentres were ironically negated by the sheer fact of the complete redesign of their original flagship stores. Peter Marino’s renovation of Christian Dior’s original Parisian store on avenue Montaigne is unrecognizable as the same boutique. Marino’s loud glamour drowned out the original store’s quiet refinement.¹² What’s more, these flagship stores have already, by the decade’s end, lost their novelty. Luxury brand sales have decreased, with several big couture names filing for bankruptcy since 2009, including Christian Lacroix, Escada, Yohji Yamamoto, and Gianfranco Ferré. With the late-2000’s recession, most designer items are too expensive for the average consumer.

People reach for affordable luxuries instead. Estée Lauder chairman Leonard Lauder coined the phrase “lipstick index” after observing significant sales increases during the 9/11 downturns: “The idea is that, during a recession, women substitute small, feel-good items like lipstick for more expensive items like clothing and jewelry.”¹³

The recent off-Broadway play *The Bilbao Effect*, written by Oren Safdie, pokes fun at what seems to be the extreme state of this -- the role of the ‘starchitect’ in designing an icon building to validate a city’s worth, as if one exceptional building could revitalize an entire district.¹⁴ In the play, an internationally renowned architect named Erhardt Shlaminger is caught in a scandal. One of his extreme building designs allegedly drives a woman to suicide. He is on trial, as prosecutors call upon witnesses who provide colourful anecdotes. The play questions the boundary between art and architecture as professions, locating the threshold between the principles of art versus violating the ethics of profession. This darkly-comedic reflection points to a renewed value for more responsible design – something the current luxury market can take note of – design where complexity and quality win over promotion and spectacle.

Luxury will never do without a pinnacle. It is human to compare, and it is inevitable. The metric will shift and the objects at the pinnacle will change, but differentiation will persist. People are often too easily chastised for being enraptured with matters of luxury. Living for “the finer things in life” is often seen as frivolous. But life at either extreme ends of this spectrum misses the point. Luxury does not necessarily guarantee pleasure. But it is a confident step towards it. Society is richer for it. The ambition for better conditions and more beautiful things is at the real heart of the matter; the rest is just icing on the cake.

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2 Celestine Bohlen. “Marcello Mastroianni, Self-Deprecating Charmer of Italian Film, Is Dead at 72.” *The New York Times*. 20 Dec 1996. Web. 19 Aug 2010. <<http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/20/movies/marcello-mastroianni-self-deprecating-charmer-of-italian-film-is-dead-at-72.html>>

3 Ibid.

4 Jack Lynch. “The Perfectly Acceptable Practice of Literary Theft: Plagiarism, Copyright, and the

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5 Ibid.

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7 Caroline Evans. *Fashion at the Edge Spectacle, Modernity and Deathliness*. (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007), 22.

8 William Gibson. *Pattern Recognition*. (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2003), 17-18.

9 Roberto Saviano. *Gomorrah*. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 15.

10 Ibid, 29.

11 Dana Thomas. *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster*. (New York: Penguin, 2007), 87.

12 Ibid, 90.

13 Norm Scheiber. “Replacement Killers.” *The New Republic*. 7 Jan 2002.

14 Cathleen McGuigan. “Starchitecture: A Modest Proposal.” *Newsweek*. 11 June 2010. Web. 15 July 2010. <<http://www.newsweek.com/2010/06/11/starchitecture-a-modest-proposal.html>>

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