

SMITHFIELD, N.C. — Some iconic movie artifacts are lost to the public forever, as many were not preserved by the studios. Others are in private collections not accessible to exhibitions. Over the years, the Ava Gardner Museum has been the fortunate recipient of several donations or loans of unique pieces from private collections.

In planning this year's new exhibit, the museum's board embarked on a new approach to honor one of the most loved film noir movies of all time, *The Killers*. This year's exhibit is entitled, "Hemingway's Heroine" and showcases the three movies Ava starred in adapted from Hemingway short stories and novels. Although the museum has costumes from *The Sun Also Rises*, there was very little from *The Killers* (1946) in the museum's archives.

The exhibit design committee reached out to a past board member and Ava-inspired designer, Danielle Wiggins, who held a fashion show at the museum some years ago. She stepped up to the challenge to recreate the stunning one-shoulder, black satin dress worn by Ava in the film.

"This re-creation of the dress that Ava wore as Kitty Collins in *The Killers*, is amazingly accurate and beautiful", stated museum director, Lynell Seabold, "and we were so thrilled to open this exhibit with Danielle as our guest."

Danielle Wiggins is a self-taught designer originally from California, but now calls Raleigh, North Carolina home. Danielle is the owner of Dani Oliva, and her other designs are displayed on www.danioliva.com.

Another new endeavor for this exhibit is the addition of artwork from London artist, McAlphine Miller, who has donated two pieces to the museum. Using subtle tones of paint Miller creates the illusion of transparencies within his works. Several of his pieces depicting iconic Hollywood stars currently hang in the Savoy Hotel. The canvas in the new exhibit is Ava in *The Killers* dress which fits into the exhibit wonderfully and brings a colorful backdrop to the black satin dress. Miller also sent the museum a piece featuring Frank Sinatra, which is the centerpiece of a new exhibit in the library at the museum.

For more information on the Ava Gardner Museum, visit www.avagardner.org or call 919-934-5830. The museum is located in downtown Smithfield, 325 E. Market St. and is open daily for visitors, Monday-Saturday, 9-5pm, and Sunday 2-5pm.

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CONTACT:

Lynell Seabold
lynell@avagardner.org
919-934-5830