

SMITHFIELD, N.C. — On May 18th the Ava Gardner Museum will open the “Hemingway’s Heroine” exhibit, showcasing Ava’s close friendship with Ernest Hemingway. This exhibit will feature, for the first, time a movie costume reproduction. Danielle Lynch, a fashion designer from Raleigh who has been inspired by Ava’s fashions, will recreate the iconic black satin, single- shoulder strapped dress Ava wore in *The Killers*. Guests for the opening event are invited to a “Little Black Dress” party which starts at 6:30 pm themed appropriately to pay tribute to the sultry and chic Ava. There will be hors d’ oeuvres, beverages, and a cash prize to be awarded at 8 pm for the top fashionista of the evening. Cost per person is \$35.00 or \$60.00 per couple with tickets available online or by calling the museum.

On Saturday, May 19th at 2 pm, the museum will show *The Killers* which, in 2008, was selected for preservation by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant". *The Killers*, a 1946 film, is an intense, hard-edged, stylish film noir of robbery, unrequited love, brutal betrayal, and double-cross. MGM loaned Ava to Universal Studios to play femme fatale Kitty Collins with newcomer Burt Lancaster, and critics and movie audiences alike took notice of Ava's performance. Her success in *The Killers* led to two more roles as Hemingway heroines, including Cynthia Street in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* and Lady Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*.

Ava would meet Hemingway through famed bullfighter, Luis Miguel Dominguin, and they remained close friends for the next decade. Ava called him Papa, he called her Daughter, and after starring in her second adaptation from one of Hemingway’s works, he would remark, “Ava, the only two good things in it (*Snows of Kilimanjaro*) were you and the hyena”.

“Fans of the film noir genre and Hemingway will enjoy the events planned for this new exhibit and the unique way the museum is recreating this iconic costume,” stated Museum Director, Lynell Seabold. “We strive to keep new and innovative exhibits rotating in the museum for visitors to return again and again to Smithfield and to continue to tell Ava’s story.”

The Ava Gardner Museum is a 501 C 3 non-profit museum that houses the original Tom Banks Collection and much more in Historic Downtown Smithfield. Located at 325 E. Market Street in Smithfield, NC, the museum’s hours are Monday-Saturday 9 am-5 pm and Sunday 2 pm-5 pm. To purchase tickets in advance, call the museum directly at 919-934-5830 or purchase online at ava-gardner-museum.myshopify.com.

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