

Factsheet

The Dress Designers

Diana, Princess of Wales by Mario Testino

Catherine Walker

- Catherine Walker was born in France in 1945. A philosophy student, she is a self-taught designer and started her career in fashion selling children's clothes from a basket to shops on the Kings Road. She moved into couture, opening her own studio in 1977, where she worked with clients by day and taught herself pattern cutting and design by night.
- Catherine Walker's work is well known for the elongated line of her dresses, which celebrate the female figure. Her clothes incorporate highly complex pattern cutting and attention to detail. In 1990 she was *Designer of the Year for Couture*, and in 1991 she was awarded *Designer of the Year for Glamour*.
- Catherine Walker was a favourite designer of Diana, Princess of Wales. The Princess's custom consolidated the couturière's reputation and introduced her designs to the worldwide market.

Victor Edelstein

- Victor Edelstein was born in London. In 1962 he started as a trainee designer for Alexon, and then went on to work for Biba, Salvador and Dior, before setting up on his own in 1978. As well as being an established couturier, Edelstein also designed for the theatre and ballet.
- Since the early 1990s, Victor Edelstein has dedicated himself exclusively to painting and has mounted well-received shows throughout Europe and, more recently, the United States of America.
- Victor Edelstein designed many dresses for the Princess during the 1980's. The most well-known is probably the ink blue velvet evening gown the Princess wore in 1985 to a dinner at the White House when she famously danced with John Travolta. This dress took the highest bid at the sale of the Princess's dresses at Christie's New York where it fetched \$222500.

Bruce Oldfield

- Bruce Oldfield was brought up by a foster mother in County Durham, before moving to a Barnardo's home in Ripon, Yorkshire. He gained his first commission soon after studying at Ravensbourne College of Art and St Martin's College of Art. Bruce Oldfield held his first show in the US in 1973, before establishing his own fashion house in 1975.
- Bruce Oldfield designs high-fashion clothes for the domestic and overseas markets. He started to make couture garments for individual clients in 1981 but is also known for his ready-to-wear collections, opening his first retail shop in 1984.
- Bruce Oldfield and Diana, Princess of Wales both had a strong interest in charitable causes. Oldfield was particularly influential on the Princess's dress during the mid-eighties, when he encouraged Diana to wear more extravagant and daring styles.