

Closet Confidential: Rachel Dragony

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By Sue Mayfield Geiger



Photos by Jennifer Reynolds

Wearing a vintage 1950s cocktail dress, Rachel Dragony holds a photo of Vivien Leigh, whom she admires for her iconic fashion along with Rita Hayworth.

Rachel Dragony fell in love with law when she was in third grade.

“After I saw ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’ I was hooked,” Dragony said. She followed that dream and now has her own practice in Galveston, where she enjoys working with people to help them solve their problems. Born in Midwest City, Okla., Dragony grew up in Arizona and Texas, did some modeling as a teenager and worked as a paralegal before attending law school in San Antonio.

She landed in the Clear Lake area and cut her teeth at a law firm there before going into practice for herself. The lure of the water called to her, so she moved to Galveston about 18 months ago.

“I’ve always loved it here and spent time at the old courthouse when I was a law clerk, so I was pretty familiar with everyone in the system,” she said

Dragony is known for her vintage wardrobe. And she comes by it naturally. “My grandmother was my inspiration,” Dragony said. “I was enthralled by her old photos and I was intrigued with everything in her closet. I loved the coats, the hats, all the things people were no longer wearing from the 1940s and 1950s,” she said. Her own closet is packed with everything from polka-dot halter dresses to a pair of 1960 Tony Lama boots.

Dragony, a tall, green-eyed redhead, is divorced and the mother of 4-year-old Vincent. She manages to juggle her busy work schedule and to spend quality time with her son. When not wearing her lawyer hat, she enjoys swing dancing and can even do the Lindy Hop. And yes, she does collect dragon items as well as Elvis memorabilia. “I’m a big fan,” she said.

Q: What era of fashion do you like best?

A: From the mid-1940s to the early 1960s. I never miss an episode of “Mad Men.”

Q: What are some of your vintage likes and dislikes?

A: I like shrugs (cropped jackets), corsets, garter belts, stockings with seams, Capri pants, wiggle dresses (form-fitting) and I love shoes, especially wedges and peep toes. I don't like shoulder pads.



Rachel Dragony's Betsey Johnson bag and shrug with a fringed collar.

Q: Do you have some of those cool hats with veils?

A: Yes. I also have a lot of flowers with veils that I wear in my hair.



Q: What about vintage jewelry?

A: I wear a lot of pearls — my birthstone — and I like sparkly earrings and rhinestone brooches. I have an entire box of vintage jewelry that I got at an estate sale.

Q: Where do you find most of your vintage items?

A: Garage sales, thrift shops and places like Buffalo Exchange in Montrose. As a college student, I actually shopped at the original store in Tucson before they became a chain. Retropolis in The Heights and Baubles & Beads in League City are other good sources.

Q: How can you tell whether something is true vintage?

A: By the label, the feel of the material, the lining and metal zippers. I find most authentic items at estate sales and garage sales. Stores that specialize in real vintage clothing can be very expensive, but “vintage-inspired” items are affordable.

Q: Is it hard to find vintage clothing in small sizes?

A: No. Women were actually smaller back then.

Q: What about vintage swimwear?

A: I have a two-piece with skirted bottom that I wear for pinup photography.

Q: Evening wear?

A: I have a lot of gowns. I’m in a chapter of Beta Sigma Phi (Beta Kappa Nu) and at last year’s Sweetheart Ball, I wore my strapless green tulle lace-up-the-back gown with gold sequins along with black opera gloves. I’m also a member of a Mardi Gras krewe (Krewe of Saints).



Q: How do you wear your hair and makeup to conform to your vintage attire?

A: I like to wear my hair up in victory rolls and normally have on red lipstick by Revlon and red nail polish.

Q: Who are some iconic fashion women from the past that you admire?

A: Rita Hayworth and Vivien Leigh.

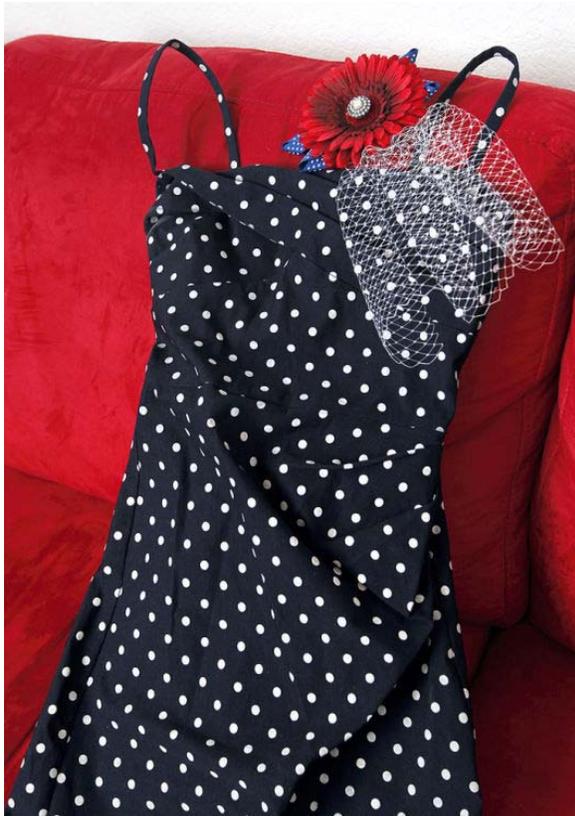


Houston artist Jessica Rios hand-painted a dragon on a pair of red satin heels for Rachel Dragony to wear for a photo shoot. Rios painted the dragons to match a dragon print corset also worn at the shoot.



A pair of vintage inspired polka dot, peep toe heels pair perfectly with one of Rachel Dragony's vintage dresses from the 1950s.

(Photos continued on next page)



flower and veil for the hair.

Rachel Dragony's polka dot wiggle dress (form-fitting) paired with a



A pair of peep toe heels are by one of Rachel Dragony's favorite designers, Betsey Johnson.



A vintage-inspired purse and a 1960s clutch are two accessories Rachel Dragony carries often.