

GILL EVANS

Moseley Road Secondary Art School 1957 - 1960

Style Icon, Dress Designer & Birmingham's Mary Quant

"I found it very exciting when people stared at my outfits and passed remarks about them, even if they weren't complimentary. I wasn't bothered as I have always been very confident and believed my ideas were right."



Gill comes from a family of designers and makers from furniture to clothing and this was demonstrated by her love of drawing and painting from an early age.

At Junior School, Gill illicitly used her reading books to draw dress designs in the white borders

Her mother insisted that she should take the three day Art Examination and as a result entered the School at the age of 13, where she studied Dress Design and Dressmaking, Pattern Cutting and the History of Costume.

One of the original creators of the modernist style

She and her husband Del Evans were known as The Continentalists. They met in the jazz club and cafe scene of Birmingham, their mutual obsession with style sparking the attraction between them.

"When I left Art School in 1960 and started designing and making clothes the word Mod had not been heard of. Originally Del and I called ourselves Continentalists because I had been interested in French and Italian styling whilst at Art School."

"Everything was new and exciting for us as we spent many hours designing and making clothes together in my bedroom at home, we were captivated with what we were creating. Fashion and music were our life and all we lived for."

Long before Twiggy broke onto the scene Gill created the first mini-skirt in 1959

So short that stockings were out of the question, she created the first pair of tights by sewing thick black stockings to matching black knickers, a throwback to doublet and hose of Elizabethan times.

Her personal style focusses on simplicity and classic tailoring. In suits, there are deep side vents on the jackets, flap pockets, narrow trousers, leather covered buttons. Dresses are immaculately cut, the apparent simplicity belying the underlying detail of the design.

Her talent continues today with her own business called ModTogs, designing and supplying boutiques with Mod inspired women's clothing and accessories.

