

Kym Barrett

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At St Margaret's 1980-1982

(Photo courtesy of Kym Barrett Design)

Kym Barrett is an award-winning costume designer who works in film, theatre and opera.

A boarder at St Margaret's, after graduating Kym studied a Bachelor of Arts majoring in classical literature and theatre at University of New England in Armidale. Keen to learn more about the theatre, she went on to attend the National Institute Dramatic Arts (NIDA) in Sydney. She spent several years working for the Sydney Theatre Company and the Belvoir Street Theatre.

It was at NIDA that Kym first met Baz Lurhmann (he was two years ahead of Barrett at the school). Later, he would ask her to work on *Strictly Ballroom* as wardrobe assistant, a moment which led to her big break in Hollywood designing her first film costumes for Lurhmann's 1996 film, *Romeo and Juliet*.

Two years later she worked on David O. Russell's war movie *Three Kings* (George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg and Ice Cube). She created the revolutionary outfits for *The Matrix* (1999) that same year, and continued to work with the Wachowskis on *Matrix* sequels and many of their other films, like *Final Flight of Osiris*, *Speed Racer*, *Cloud Atlas* and *Jupiter Ascending*.

Kym also developed the costumes for several horror thrillers, such as the Hughes Brother's movie *From Hell* (2001, John Depp, Heather Graham), *Gothika* (2003 – Halle Berry, Robert Downey Jr., Penélope Cruz) and Jordan Peele's new picture (2018, Elisabeth Moss, Lupita Nyong'o).

Her other works include *Zero Effect* (Bill Pullman, Ben Stiller), the animated picture *Titan A.E.* (Matt Damon, Drew Barrymore), fantasy movie *Eragon*, Seth Rogan's comedy *The Green Hornet*, Columbia Picture's hero movie *The Amazing Spider-Man* (Andrew Garfield, Emma Stone), 70's action-comedy *The Nice Guys* (Russell Crowe, Ryan Gosling), thriller *The Shallow*, DC's new *Aquaman* (Jason Momoa, Amber Heard, Nicole Kidman, Willem Dafoe). Kym has also just completed work on new Sony production of *Charlie's Angels*.

Kym is also in demand to do costumes and styling on high-profile commercials for brands including Cadillac, Oreo, Nike and Prada. She also designed costumes for Cirque Du Soleil's *Toruk* as well as for the Metropolitan Opera's 2013 production *The Tempest*.

Her work on *The Matrix* earned her a nomination for a Costume Designers Guild Award for Excellence in Costume Design. In 2002, she won the Guild's award for Best Commercial Costume Design and was nominated for a Best Costume Design (Feature Film) Satellite Award for her work on *From Hell*. In 2007, she was nominated for Excellence in Costume Design for the fantasy movie *Eragon*.

In a 2005 article in *The Courier Mail's Q Weekend*, Barrett told of how her St Margaret's uniform was an inspiration for a costume for Claire Danes in *Romeo & Juliet* during a scene in which she is to be sent away to a strict school for nuns. "It was an unforgettable uniform and we used to wear white gloves, brown tights and a beret as well."



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