**Dr Julie Ripley**

# Proposal: 'The Darkness Within' , Eupop 2023

Abstract

Consciousness, Capitalism and Costume in Ruben Östland’s Triangle of Sadness (2023)

Crime and violence have appeared in films that explore the fashion industry for many decades, from Mario Bava’s *Blood and Black Lace* (1964), in which a killer stalks models in an Italian fashion house, to *The Neon Demon* (Nicolas Winding Refn, 2016) which ends with murder and cannibalism. In Ruben Östland’s *Triangle of Sadness* (2023) two fashion models spend much of a luxury cruise documenting their experience on social media until a catastrophic storm and an attack by pirates reduces marauders, crew and the urban sophisticates aboard to savagery.

This paper will argue, following Slavoj Žižek’s analysis of the films of Alfred Hitchcock, (2010), that in its critique of late capitalist values, this film is structured around the Freudian notions of superego, ego and id on a macro level in respect of its narrative, and on a micro level in respect of its *mise en scene* including its use of costume. In the first part of the film, governed by the superego, *Triangle*’s protagonists eat in restaurants, attend model castings and embark on the luxury vessel, attending at all times to the likely reactions of their followers and peers as they curate their appearance online. Here, capitalism is at its most effective and enacted on the bodies of the characters, clothed and unclothed. The tempest, the attack and the shipwreck require the abandonment of social niceties as the film explores the ego. Here, capitalism and status begin to break down along with costume, and self preservation becomes the primary motive of the characters. The paper will establish that as the film enters its third phase, the id, judgement is abandoned and capitalism can longer operate. By the close of the film, material culture becomes meaningless and the body worthless.

Dr Julie Ripley

Course Leader, BA(hons) Costume Design For Film & TV

Julie.ripley@falmouth.ac.uk

Falmouth University

Fashion and Textiles Institute

Tremough Campus

Treliever Road

Penryn

TR10 9FE