

The Journal of Dress History

Volume 1, Issue 2, Autumn 2017

Front cover image: *September*, John June, 1749, print, 188 x 137mm, British Museum, London, England, 1850,1109.36.

The Journal of Dress History

Volume 1, Issue 2, Autumn 2017



Managing Editor

Jennifer Daley

Editor

Alison Fairhurst

Published by

The Association of Dress Historians

journal@dresshistorians.org

www.dresshistorians.org



The Journal of Dress History
Volume 1, Issue 2, Autumn 2017

ISSN 2515-0995

journal@dresshistorians.org
www.dresshistorians.org

Copyright © 2017 The Association of Dress Historians
Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) accession number: 988749854

The Association of Dress Historians (ADH) is Registered Charity #1014876 of The Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Association of Dress Historians supports and promotes the advancement of public knowledge and education in the history of dress and textiles.

The Journal of Dress History is the academic publication of The Association of Dress Historians through which scholars can articulate original research in a constructive, interdisciplinary, and peer-reviewed environment. The journal is published biannually, every spring and autumn.

The Journal of Dress History is copyrighted by the publisher, The Association of Dress Historians, while each published author within the journal holds the copyright to their individual article.

The Journal of Dress History is distributed completely free of charge, solely for academic purposes, and not for sale or profit.

The Journal of Dress History is published on an Open Access platform distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The editors of the journal encourage the cultivation of ideas for proposals. Please view the Submission Guidelines on the journal's website for more detailed information regarding the submission of articles, book reviews, and other pieces for publication consideration.

The graphic design of The Journal of Dress History utilises the font, Baskerville, a serif typeface designed in 1754 by John Baskerville (1706–1775) in Birmingham, England.

The logo of The Association of Dress Historians is a monogram of three letters, ADH, interwoven to represent the interdisciplinarity of our membership, committed to scholarship in dress history. The logo was designed in 2017 by Janet Mayo, longstanding ADH member.

The Journal of Dress History

Advisory Board

The editors of The Journal of Dress History gratefully acknowledge the support and expertise of the Advisory Board, the membership of which is as follows, in alphabetical order:

Sylvia Ayton, MBE, Independent Scholar

Cally Blackman, MA, Central Saint Martins

Penelope Byrde Ruddock, MA, FMA, Independent Scholar

Caroline de Guitaut, MA, Royal Collection Trust

Thomas P Gates, MA, MSLS, MAEd, Kent State University

Alex Kerr, PhD, FBS, The Burgon Society

Jenny Lister, MA, Victoria and Albert Museum

Timothy Long, MA, Museum of London

Jane Malcolm-Davies, PhD, University of Copenhagen

Scott Hughes Myerly, PhD, University of Southern Indiana

Susan North, PhD, Victoria and Albert Museum

Martin Pel, Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums

Anna Reynolds, MA, Royal Collection Trust

Aileen Ribeiro, PhD, Courtauld Institute of Art

Georgina Ripley, MA, National Museums Scotland

Gary Watt, MA, NTF, University of Warwick

Rainer Wenrich, PhD, Catholic University, Eichstaett-Ingolstadt

Contents

Welcome

Jennifer Daley 1

Articles

- Contemplating a Madame Grès Dress to Reflect on Time and Fashion
Anabela Becho 2
- Conceptual Parallels in Fashion Design Practices: A Comparison of Martin Margiela and John Galliano
Olga Dritsopoulou 14
- Women's Shoes of the Eighteenth Century: Style, Use, and Evolution
Alison Fairhurst 25
- Tina Leser Sketchbooks, 1942–1962: Crossing Continents and Interpreting Ethnic Dress for American Sportswear
Thomas P Gates 44
- Paris, 1982–1994: The Fashion Designs of Danish Couturier, Erik Mortensen, for Balmain and Jean-Louis Scherrer
Kirsten Toftegaard 60
- Living Garments: Exploring Objects in Modern Fashion Exhibitions
Emma Treleaven 70
- The Clothes Worn in 1785 for the Betrothal and Wedding of Carlota Joaquina of Spain and Dom João of Portugal
Fausto Viana 84
- Kimonos for Foreigners: Orientalism in Kimonos Made for the Western Market, 1900–1920
Allie Yamaguchi 100

Book Reviews

- Lydia Edwards, *How to Read a Dress: A Guide to Changing Fashion from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*
Alison Fairhurst 112
- Andrew Bolton, *Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between*
Alice Mackrell 114

Aileen Ribeiro, <i>Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion, 1600-1914</i> <i>Janet Mayo</i>	115
Geraldine Biddle-Perry, <i>Dressing for Austerity: Aspiration, Leisure and Fashion in Postwar Britain</i> <i>Marie McLoughlin</i>	117
Louise Coffey-Webb, <i>Managing Costume Collections: An Essential Primer</i> <i>Georgina Ripley</i>	119
Alison Matthews David, <i>Fashion Victims: The Dangers of Dress Past and Present</i> <i>Tara Tierney</i>	121
Timothy Godbold, <i>Military Style Invades Fashion</i> <i>Emma Treleaven</i>	123
Recent PhD Theses	125
Advisory Board	131

Welcome

Dear ADH Members and Friends,

This issue of *The Journal of Dress History* is particularly exciting as it features some of the cutting-edge research that is currently being conducted in the field. Thank you to all our authors who have published in this issue, as your effort in research and writing allows the greater community to partake and preview the depth and breadth of what our membership has to offer.

A portion of the articles in this issue was presented to the ADH membership at our annual New Research in Dress History Conference, which this year was generously hosted by the University of Brighton on 25 February 2017. I would like to sincerely thank Dr Marie McLoughlin and Prof Lou Taylor for their encouragement, support, and for enabling the ADH to hold our conference at their Brighton campus. Thank you.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge ADH member, Kimberley Foy, who assisted in the publication of this issue.

As ever, I encourage feedback, so please contact me at journal@dresshistorians.org. I look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,

Jennifer Daley
Chairman and Trustee, The Association of Dress Historians
Managing Editor, *The Journal of Dress History*

Contemplating a Madame Grès Dress to Reflect on Time and Fashion

Anabela Becho

Abstract

The relationship between fashion – materialised in a sartorial object, a dress – and time (or more concretely temporal closure) is one of the pivotal questions to be developed in the course of this article. In contrast with a chameleonic and transitory conception of fashion, it is my goal to show that precisely the opposite can be true, through the contemplation of a dress designed by the French couturière, Madame Grès (1903-1993), as an example of the suspension of time in fashion. The careful observation of this dress, of its evident materiality, raises a number of questions which transcend the physicality of the object itself.

Closely defined by its relationship with temporality, fashion is a phenomenon invented by humanity as the answer to an inherent appetite for change and newness, its genesis and development coinciding with the history of the modern Western world. The French sociologist, Gilles Lipovetsky, defends that, for millennia, collective life evolved without much adherence to the cult of fantasy and novelty, secluded from the “instability” and ephemeral temporality of fashion and that only since the decline of the Middle Ages is it possible to recognise it as a system, driven by metamorphosis and dynamic change. Notwithstanding the fact that fashion is broader than clothing, it is the history of apparel that has come to symbolise the privileged showcasing of fluctuations in taste:

But until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the fashion process was most obviously embodied by clothing. Dress was the theatre of the most accelerated, capricious, and spectacular formal innovations.¹

Let us consider the dialectical image presented by Walter Benjamin: “The eternal is in any case far more the ruffle on a dress than some idea.”² For Barbara Vinken this is, at first sight, an absurd provocation, for, asks the author in the article, “Eternity: A Frill on the Dress,” isn’t a ruffle on a dress a frivolous symbol of the futility and inconstant caprice of fashion?

The proverbial empire of fashion is the empire of the ephemeral, especially when compared with the profundity and serene beauty of ideas. The time of fashion is not eternity, but the moment. Fashion’s most intimate relationship is its relation with time.³

Fashion, in Benjamin’s paradoxical image, represents the dream of the new and the implications of this affirmation are, according to Vinken, that no other eternity exists in modern culture beyond the moment captured by fashion.

In contrast with this chameleonic and transitory conception, it is the goal of this article to show that precisely the opposite can be true, through the contemplation of a Madame Grès dress as an example of the suspension of time in fashion (Figure 1). The relationship between fashion – materialised in a



Figure 1
Madame Grès, Gown
with Peplum,
 George Platt Lynes,
 1940, gelatin silver
 print, 239 x 189mm,
 The Metropolitan
 Museum of Art,
 New York, United
 States, 41.65.2.

sartorial object, a dress – and time (and more concretely temporal closure), is one of the pivotal questions to be developed in the course of this article.

As we change from these brief but abstract remarks on time and fashion, which are theoretical in essence, to the tangible imminence of material artefacts, let us focus on a Grès evening dress, dated from 1968, which is now part of the rich textile collection held by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Figures 2 and 3).⁴ Featuring an anatomical and asymmetrical bodice, this is a dress made of a mouldable silk jersey, in a pearl white shade reminiscent of Grès' early career designs. Grès' use of intense shades becomes more common from the 1950s onwards, whereas the tonal range of the majority of her frocks and dresses from the 1930s tended to be neutral variations of white and pale tones, which she nonetheless maintained throughout her career.

The bodice of the dress has a wide, single shoulder strap with curved pleating, which crosses over to support the bodice, leaving the opposite shoulder bare – this belted waist with one shoulder is evocative of a classical silhouette. Technical virtuosity and aesthetic refinement can be seen in the pleating effect at the bodice, where three different directions coexist in one combined rhythmic pleating. Grès' dresses demand to be viewed from every angle, since they always reveal new details. This particular dress is no exception.

Finely pleated, the bodice is lined with a very light pearl beige silk crêpeline and comprises an interior corset which, in its structure, reveals the passing of time, in the perishability of its components and the marks of the body of the previous wearer, visible in the many signs of use. We can observe the application of satin ribbon and furry velvet to protect the body from the possible discomfort which the bra wire, the corset bones, the fasteners on the left side of the dress, the metal sewing hooks and eyes may introduce. No space is left between the bodice of the dress and the body of the wearer. In the case of Grès, the dress, through its bodice, becomes not only a representation of the body but also the "body" of the absent wearer. The skirt presents a fluid vertical draping, under which the air flows freely between body and dress, invoking the dance movements of an elapsed time.



Figure 2
Detail of evening dress with single
shoulder strap with curved pleating,
Madame Grès, 1968,
The Victoria and Albert Museum,
London, England, T.250&A-1974.
Image © Victoria and Albert Museum



Figure 3
Sketch of
Madame Grès' evening dress,
Anabela Becho, 2017,
ink and Japanese watercolour on paper,
145 x 210mm,
Private Collection, Lisbon, Portugal.



Figure 4
Madame Grès (1903-1993),
photography by
Crespi for *Femina*, 1949.

Born Germaine Emilie Krebs in 1903 in Paris, Madame Grès (Figure 4) worked (initially under the name of Alix) for six decades, creating clothes as if they were living sculptures, always in search of the *ideal* dress. Although a woman of her time, bound by a cultural context specific to her epoch, there is a deliberate quest for timelessness at the very heart of her work. “Perfection is one of the goals that I seek. For a dress to be able to survive from one period to the next, it has to be imbued with extreme purity. That is the great secret of the survival of a creation,” once claimed the French couturière.⁵

Even though her oeuvre was much wider than the so-called “goddess dresses,” the long draped gowns, reminiscent of eternal time, inevitably became her archetype. And although they remained almost unchanged and timeless in appearance, Grès did introduce variations to her sartorial paradigm over the decades, in accordance with the *l’air du temps* and namely in the construction methods. Grès was not immune to the rise of the postwar New Look silhouette, a trend consisting of a fitted bodice with a fluid skirt. Grès created for the first time in her designs, clothes with inner reinforcements or corseting (which were always made by the Parisian lingerie and haute-couture atelier, Alice Cadolle).

According to the author, Patricia Mears, this proves that Grès followed fashion and trends, and the rebirth of the corset:

Although her clothing was less rigid and restrictive than that of other couturiers, the fact that she used corseting at all dispels the myth that her designs were created without reference to the continuous changes and developments that are a vital component of both haute couture and Western fashion.⁶

This construction detail, which reveals an openness to the insidious ephemerality of fashion, does not shake the quest for timelessness inherent to Madame Grès’ oeuvre, which, I argue, can be perceived in her meticulous pleating technique.

The material power of cloth has been evident since the beginning of civilisation, and in its sartorial expression lay its metaphorical nature. As the historian, Anne Hollander, points out, “Clothes, then, are objects made of fabric that convey messages beyond the power of the cloth itself to convey....”⁷ The association of drapery with a more elevated form of perfection came to us through the stone folds arrested by time in classical sculpture. Although there is no such thing as a clear and absolute thread that links drapery and nobility, according to Hollander, “...the association of the idea of drapery with

the idea of a better and more beautiful life flourished, fed by the accumulated art of the past with its thousands of persuasive and compelling folds.”⁸

The expressive use of pleating and drapery, in all its limitless variation and fluidity along the outside (although from the 1940s onwards, as I have already pointed out, the French couturière’s gowns began to be anchored in a solid internal structure, invisible to the eye, that firmly delineated the body) is rightly considered to be Grès’ hallmark. Each draping, rib, or pleat is worked minutely, actively taking part in the construction of the garment’s final shape.

Grès was a precursor of minimalism. She pursued the simplification of lines and shapes, in a path from the neoclassical-inspired gowns to the abstraction that we can observe in her later years – refusing any ornamentation that did not result from the shaping of the fabric itself. Grès had a profound respect for the textile material, honouring its integrity, preferring not to cut it. In the beginning of her career, with restrictions imposed by the Second World War, this was not always possible, as exemplified by the dress in Figure 1. By reducing the dress size through successive pleats, the amplitude of the skirts could occasionally reach 20 metres in diameter.

Some fabrics were made exclusively for her; modern materials like the silk jersey that became her favourite textile, given its malleability and lightness. She remarked:

You can know the soul and nature of a fabric, of a silk, from its touch. When I drape a mannequin in silk, it reacts between my hands and I try to understand and judge its reactions. Thus, I give the dress that I’m creating a line and a form that the fabric itself would like to have.⁹

It was the lack of formal knowledge in cutting and sewing that led Grès to a sculptural approach to fabric, a more intuitive process than the methods used by her contemporaries of the 1930s, such as Madeleine Vionnet and Cristóbal Balenciaga, who relied on and tended to emphasise the geometry of the cut. Using her hands, Grès carved the cloth as if it were stone. The initial width of the fabric, averaging almost three metres, could be reduced to a few centimetres by an exquisite pleating technique, a succession of folds created in the grain, following a depth of three centimetres and a relief of no more than two millimetres. They were sewn at the back, two by two, after being patiently fixed by a myriad of pins on a dressmaker’s dummy covered with craft paper.

The first step of the process took place in the solitude of her workspace. She claimed to only use pins to sculpt the toile on a wooden mannequin, never sewing, and employing only scissors. Once the toile was ready, she transmitted her idea to the *première d’atelier*, providing them with the pattern, the croquis and the elected fabric. After receiving the directives, the *première* interpreted her indications, translating them onto the required measurements, replacing the provisional pins with permanent stitches. The patterns were thus ready to be replicated on the final fabric, where the border, the grain, and the bias were marked. The network of folds were pleated directly on the bust at the top of the corset, fixed with pins and later sewn.

The skirt, in free-falling jersey, was made from the remainder of the fabric used for the corsage. In the case of this dress, the skirt was composed of several panels of pleated fabric, with a perimeter of about nine and a half metres. The skirt’s real dimension, however, is well concealed by the narrow silhouette of the gown, a hemline width that does not appear to measure more than 90 centimetres. Almost all of her long, draped dresses of the 1930s required an average of 11 to 13 metres of silk jersey. This obsessive pleating, fold after fold, in a repetitive, manual, and meditative process, which Laurence Benaïm claims required “up to 300 hours of work,” freezes the minutes and hours in a dimension that seems to suspend time.¹⁰

Fashion has a transhistorical nature, despite the fact that it is always associated with the quest for novelty. The “new,” when it comes to fashion, is a fallacious concept, for, according to Ulrich Lehmann, in the world of clothing, there is no such thing as progressive evolution, nor is there a temporal narrative:



Figure 5

The expressive use of pleating and drapery visible in the personal croquis of Madame Grès, 1943, The Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France, in storage, restricted access.

Fashion works erratically through its method of quotation. It wilfully cites any style from the past in a novel incarnation or present rendition. Clothing types may be retained, yet their appearance is renewed by using past elements. Fashion thus constitutes an aesthetic structuring of history. Therefore it also provides a fitting support for a dialectical philosophy of history, in which ideas and concepts are pursued, rather than a chronological following of events.¹¹

According to Lehmann, through the *Tigersprung*, or “tiger’s leap,” which assails historical linearity, fashion is capable of jumping from now into the past and back into the present, without getting tangled up in temporal moments or aesthetic configurations, fusing the eternal or “classical” ideal with the contemporary.¹²

History repeats itself, reinventing the past under a new light, and fashion takes this to a higher level. The plurality of meanings of the word, pattern, shows this clearly, simultaneously signifying an example to copy, a repetition of motifs, a particular technique, or a drawing or shape used as a scheme to make something. The pattern, an ideal of the past to be copied as a model, is reinvented through new insights and techniques – new patterns – that will, in turn, generate another patterns that will be copied in the future. And so the cycle of fashion continues.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Paris was the centre of many avantgarde artistic movements, such as cubism and surrealism. Paris was a place of freedom and creativity, where, simultaneously, an urge for classicism began to emerge, similar to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century neoclassical trend. As stated by Patricia Mears,

The renewal of classicism appears to have had its strongest impact on Mediterranean cultures – specifically those of France, Italy, and Spain – where the classical tradition was viewed as the root of their respective heritages.¹³

In the 1920s and 1930s, sculptors like Antoine Bourdelle and Charles Despiau attempted to preserve and purify the classical ideal. Mears argues that there is a strong possibility that Grès was directly influenced by these artists when she was studying fine arts and that this influence may well have been at the root of her own classically orientated fashion. Grès' predecessors from earlier in the twentieth century, Paul Poiret with his high-waisted dresses that bear the direct influence of neoclassicism, the Directoire style, and Mariano Fortuny with his Delphos pleated silk gowns or Peplos (two-piece gown), laid the seeds for classically inspired fashion.

In the 1930s, Madeleine Vionnet reinterpreted the potential for (re)construction of the classical ideal through the exploration of geometry, focusing on form and composition, draping garments at an oblique angle, on the bias, to create more feminine silhouettes (a break from the straight lines of the previous decade). Augusta Bernard also followed the neoclassical aesthetic of the period, privileging fluidity and simplicity, such that decoration was achieved by the material itself. Always looking ahead, Grès took, as a basis for her aesthetic identity, a method of classical inspiration. In a "tiger's leap" to classical antiquity, she reinvented for modernity a model of Hellenistic inspiration, based upon the clothing techniques of the period – *chiton*, *peplos*, and *himation* – making use of painstakingly dainty fabric.

In 1935, Alix created Hellenistic inspired costumes for the play, *La Guerre de Troie n'Aura pas Lieu*, directed by Jean Giraudoux. This play was set in classical antiquity as a Utopian vision of "purity" (even though this term has a dangerous connotation with what would take place in history...); stability and unity in a time of political and social instability: the period between the two world wars. Antiquity as an ideal: an ideal of the ideal, a chimera, a stable but intangible model, straight to the bone in search of an aesthetic that translated the aim for unity, stability, order; something with a clear structure that offered confidence and faith.

The Paris World Fair of 1937, Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques dans la Vie Moderne, which was inaugurated in May, saw the rising of buildings of monumental dimensions and ambitions, an architecture that reflected a vision of classicism and unity. Between the two world wars, these neoclassicist visions of monumental scale, like the Palais de Tokyo or the Palais de Chaillot, revealed a desire to return to a form of order into something reassuring and well grounded. Diaphanous versions of the statues were found in the buildings *en vogue*, and Alix's dresses were shown at the Pavillon de L'Elegance, on two statues by the sculptor, Robert Couturier (Figure 6). One of the dresses was



Figure 6
Pavillon de l'Elegance, Exposition
Internationale des Arts et Techniques
dans la Vie Moderne, 1937,
photography by Dell and Wainwright,
Paris, France.



Figure 7
Madame Grès dress at the
Pavillon de l'Elegance,
photography Otto Wols, 1937, Paris, France.



Figure 8
Trying on a Grès Design,
Willy Maywald, 1959,
unknown location.

draped as in the classical period (Figure 7). From that moment on, it became clear that this kind of dress would be the core of Alix's oeuvre en route to becoming Madame Grès, a metamorphosis that would take place over the following decade.

Very soon, the neoclassical gown, iterated in every exquisite shade, became her formal identity. At the New York World Fair of 1939, the couturière displayed an unfinished toile of an antiquity inspired dress in a bas-relief that would be revisited in 1959, worn by a model with a bare left breast and photographed by Willy Maywald (Figure 8). This image can be seen as the *pattern* of her work.

Far from being an extraneous abstract concept that we can apply to the sartorial object, time is woven into this dress together with the warp and the weft (the dress is here considered in a broad sense, as a meta-dress that contains all other dresses). Museological practice allows for the closest encounter between practitioner and artefact, one that transcends the latter's cultural, historical, and material dimensions. The body of this dress, through the careful observation of its evident materiality, has raised a number of issues – some of which are philosophical in nature, that cut across the physicality of the object itself. As Jean Baudrillard points out, commodities are not characterised merely by use-value and exchange-value; they are legitimate containers of signs.

With this in mind, the meticulous technique and time-consuming practice that is evident in this dress, and which involves a contemplative dimension as it unfolds in the dynamics of the gesture, leads us to assume that the design wants to transmit to the wearer or spectator this same contemplative dimension. In the draping of the fabric, we become conscious of the physical dimension of the hand that created the sculptural object, that carved the cloth as if it were stone, involving the body, in a game of hide and seek, concealing and revealing its contours, emphasising its movements. It is this tension between the body and the fabric that brings the clothes alive, even when the body is absent (not only the body of the wearer but also the maker's).



Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12
Detail, Grès dress, 1968,
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, T.250&A-1974,
photography by Anabela Becho, 2017.

Within the practice of haute couture, perfection is an ideal that is expressed following the Western canons of beauty and symmetry, and which entails certain gestural mechanics. However, according to the high standards of couture, the gesture must be accomplished by the human hand, which cannot, in its own essence, achieve mechanical perfection. Imperfect and somewhat detached from the perfect outside, it is the inside of the dress, its reverse, that more clearly reveals the manual process, such as in the rhythm of the irregular stitches that hold the pleats to the corsage and in the handwritten labels that usually display the item number and the name of the *première main d'atelier* (even though this particular dress does not exhibit any). It is in the tension between this desire for perfection and the poignant signs pointing to the presence of the human hand (imperfection) and in the game of hide and seek of the bodies (both wearer and maker's) that we can glimpse the sublime through a Madame Grès dress (Figures 9–12).

The day-to-day job of a fashion conservator/curator in a museum entails dealing with concrete and practical matters. One of the main challenges when clothes enter the museum as artefacts to be preserved is to be able to prevent deterioration through the use of conservation techniques. The materials used in clothing construction suffer irreversible damage even under normal use and careful handling. With time, certain fibres even acquire the capacity to self-destruct. This is why, when becoming an artefact in a museum, clothes can no longer be worn and are protected from environmental factors, such as sunlight, dirt, stains, and sweat.

Notwithstanding all this technical preservation work that aims to suspend the adverse effects of the passing of time, there is a certain level of selfish pleasure in the privilege of handling and storing objects that are not accessible to the majority of people. It is not only the object itself, with all its historical and cultural weight that you want to preserve; there is also a certain degree of fetishisation that surpasses materiality and its adjacent aspects. With respect to more metaphysical issues, museum practice raises more questions than it supplies answers.

When fashion enters the museum, a suspension of the primordial function of garments takes place: protection or ornamentation, or everyday use. A whole new (after)life begins for the fashion artefact. Its primal function – to be worn – is cancelled, but its value as a signifier is far from ending. Furthermore, exhibiting fashion in a museum is a disquieting challenge. How do you show a garment without a body, without its movement and demeanour? How does the display of items of clothing contribute to suspension of time, thus permitting a novel phenomenological and aesthetic apprehension of fashion?

The viewer, through observation, intuition, and the senses – through his or her experience – is able to create an idea/essence of the object in the mind and, therefore, experience emotions and acquire knowledge. The idea of the fashion artefact, captured by the viewer, mixes with his or her own memory, thus allowing one to perceive the absent body. The experience and the memory of the viewer allows for the crossing of different times: the present, when looking at the object; the past, the previous life of the object; and the future, in which a new idea of the object is projected.

A new sensation arises at this particular moment. Time, thereby, seems to be suspended. Within the museum, fashion commodities become contemplative objects capable of creating emotional experiences and historical narratives. In order to be able to read the signs inscribed in the object, attention to material detail – fabric, techniques, signs of use – is absolutely vital. The main challenge is how to combine the material evidence with more abstract and philosophical concepts. No absolute answer can be given to this problem, but we should attempt a new approach: a more poetic and holistic approach.

Acknowledgements

This article was written under the supervision of Dr Ulrich Lehmann (Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, The New School, New York, United States) and Dr Fernando Moreira da Silva (Faculty of Architecture, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal).

Endnotes

- ¹ Gilles Lipovetsky, *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, United States, 2002, p 16.
- ² Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project (1927-1940)*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, United States, 2002, p 69.
- ³ Barbara Vinken, "Eternity: A Frill on the Dress," *The Power of Fashion: About Design and Meaning*, Jan Brand, et al, eds, Uitgeverij Terra and ArtEZ Press, Arnhem, Netherlands, 2006, p 29.
- ⁴ The dress was donated to the museum by Princess Stanislaus Radziwill, Caroline Lee Bouvier (born New York, United States in 1933).
- ⁵ Sahoko Hata, *L'Art de Madame Grès*, Bunka Publishing Bureau, Tokyo, Japan, 1980, p 255.
- ⁶ Patricia Mears, *Madame Grès: Sphinx of Fashion*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2008, p 46.
- ⁷ Anne Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, The Viking Press, New York, United States, 1978, p 2.
- ⁸ Ibid, p 3.
- ⁹ Hata, op cit, p 256.
- ¹⁰ Laurence Benaïm, *Grès*, Assouline Publishing, New York, United States, 2004, p 13.
- ¹¹ Ulrich Lehmann, "Tigersprung: Fashioning History," *The Power of Fashion: About Design and Meaning*, Jan Brand, et al, eds, Uitgeverij Terra and ArtEZ Press, Arnhem, Netherlands, 2006, p 47.
- ¹² *Tigersprung*, the tiger's leap, is a "dialectical image," used by Walter Benjamin towards the end of the 1930s as a means to challenge canonical visions in the evaluation of cultural objects from the past, as well as a contemporary philosophy of history.
- ¹³ Mears, op cit, p 32.

Bibliography

Published Sources

- Benaïm, Laurence, *Grès*, Assouline Publishing, New York, United States, 2004.
- Benjamin, Walter, *The Arcades Project (1927-1940)*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, United States, 2002.
- Hata, Sahoko, *L'Art de Madame Grès*, Bunka Publishing Bureau, Tokyo, Japan, 1980.
- Hollander, Anne, *Seeing through Clothes*, The Viking Press, New York, United States, 1978.
- Koda, Harold, *Goddess - The Classical Mode*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2003.
- Lehmann, Ulrich, *Tigersprung: Fashion in Modernity*, MIT Press, Cambridge, United States, 2002.
- Lehmann, Ulrich, "Tigersprung: Fashioning History," *The Power of Fashion: About Design and Meaning*, Jan Brand, et al, eds, Uitgeverij Terra and ArtEZ Press, Arnhem, Netherlands, 2006.
- Lipovetsky, Gilles, *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, United States, 2002.
- Madame Grès, Entre Ombre et Lumière* (Catalogue of the exhibition at Musée de Bourgoin-Jallieu), Musée de Bourgoin- Jallieu, Bourgoin-Jallieu, France, 2007.
- Martin, Richard, and Koda, Harold, *Madame Grès*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States, 1994.

Mears, Patricia, *Madame Grès: Sphinx of Fashion*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2008.

Saillard, Olivier, et al, *Madame Grès: Sculptural Fashion*, Hannibal Publishing, Lichtervelde, Belgium, 2012.

Vinken, Barbara, “Eternity: A Frill on the Dress,” *The Power of Fashion: About Design and Meaning*, Jan Brand, et al, eds, Uitgeverij Terra and ArtEZ Press, Arnhem, Netherlands, 2006.

Internet Sources

Kellner, Douglas, “Jean Baudrillard,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N Zalta, ed, Winter 2015, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/ baudrillard/>, 2015. Accessed 30 January 2017.

Copyright © 2017 Anabela Becho

Email: anabelabecho@gmail.com

Anabela Becho is a Fashion Researcher at the Research Center in Architecture, Urbanism and Design (CIAUD) at the University of Lisbon, Portugal. Anabela is also a PhD candidate and guest lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Lisbon (FAUL). Since 2011, she has held the position of Fashion Conservator at the Museum of Design and Fashion (MUDE), Lisbon, and holds a BA and a Master’s in Painting (FBAUL). She is the author of the chapter, “Kindred Spirits: The Radical Poetry of Japanese and Belgian Designers,” in *Fashion Game Changers* (Bloomsbury, 2016). In 2017, she presented *Suspending Time in Fashion: On Madame Grès (1903-1993), Contemplating Dress and Glimpses of the Sublime* at The Association of Dress Historians’ conference at the University of Brighton, England.

Conceptual Parallels in Fashion Design Practices: A Comparison of Martin Margiela and John Galliano

Olga Dritsopoulou

Abstract

In 2014, Martin Margiela departed Maison Martin Margiela and his successor, John Galliano, was appointed as the new creative director. The aim of this article is to examine, compare, and contrast the design practices of Margiela and Galliano in conceptual terms. This article will discuss the relationship between Margiela's "ragpicker" and Galliano's nineteenth-century "woman of fashion," the catwalk spectacles that bring life to their collections, as well as the practice of their deconstructionist ideologies. The abstract meaning of the past and how it is incorporated into their collections is also examined, along with their similarities on an aesthetic as well as a conceptual level, resonating with Derrida's deconstructionist theory and the writings of Baudelaire.

Introduction

The fashion world was startled upon the appointment of John Galliano as the new creative director of Maison Margiela. The reason why is fairly obvious: Galliano, with his "over the top" designs and presentations, creating fashion outrageousness, an excess of luxury, colour, and fairytale-like collections, has fundamentally constituted himself as the opposite of the minimal, nihilistic Martin Margiela. Galliano's thought-provoking, extravagant presence has established him as a distinct fashion persona that has nothing to do with the mysterious phantom that is Martin Margiela. There has only been one photograph of Margiela recorded, as he does not allow himself to be photographed, and he remains backstage during catwalk shows.

Catwalk Spectacle

Within contemporary fashion discourse, the catwalk show itself is considered as important as the collection, and thus exists as an integral part of design practice. The catwalk show plays a crucial role as to whether the collection will lead to a profitable future and thus it is built with such nurturance and meticulousness that the catwalk show ends up being a commodity in the end. As Nathalie Khan in her 2001 essay "Catwalk Politics" mentions, "The catwalk show has one purpose and one purpose only, which is to be noticed. The clothes themselves are now often not enough to grasp the necessary media attention, which has led designers [...] to turn their attention to the catwalk show itself."¹ Similarly, fashion historian, Caroline Evans, wrote that "Couture clothing will never appear in the shops. Its appearance to us is phantasmagoric. And, appropriately, the role of the fashion show has changed with its increasing public visibility."²

Margiela and Galliano have been extraordinarily inventive with regards to the presentation of their collections, by challenging showcase preconceptions, and committing with passion to the spectacle in which their designs come to life. While in the 1990s it was common for the fashion show to be staged in an empty space with a catwalk in the middle, Margiela and Galliano rejected this notion and opted for more unusual spaces instead, blurring the boundaries between fashion show and performance in a

radical manner. Khan describes the “radical catwalk” as, “An event that not only seeks to attract the attention of the media, but which is in itself reflective, if not critical, of the mechanisms it utilises.”³ Galliano has been fascinated by the theatricality and sense of narrative that he is able to manifest through his showcases, from turning a Parisian sports stadium into an enchanted forest, to transforming the Paris Opera into a garden tea party.⁴

Galliano’s catwalk shows emerge from the juxtaposition of historical and cultural elements that constitute a bewitching view. In a recent interview with Alexandra Schulman, Galliano stressed the importance of the narrative, mentioning his habit of giving the models a story to relate to before they hit the catwalk, in order for the models to provide life to the clothes.⁵ His shows reflect the nineteenth-century Paris department store phantasmagoria, mimicking the enticing “dream worlds” of the past and the infinite flow of lavishness that defined them.⁶ These visually alluring spaces of the past encompassed excess crosscultural ornamentations, historical scenery, and opulent goods in a similar way to that which Galliano has been doing in his collections, and thus merged the commodity of fashion with theatrical spectacle. However, this can be interpreted as a technique to disguise the utterly commercial nucleus of the catwalk show. It is turned into a mesmerizing performance in order to distract the crowds and camouflage its fundamental mercantile purpose. According to Rosalind Williams, as cited by Evans, “The seduction of the commodity in the nineteenth-century department store and world fair lay precisely in the way the real, commercial nature of the transaction was veiled with seductive dream worlds in which the consumer lost him or herself in fantasy and reverie.”⁷

Similarly to Galliano, vast innovation and ingenuity in fashion shows have been invested by Margiela in his fashion shows for Maison Martin Margiela. Faithful to the doctrine of anonymity, he has often chosen nonprofessional models for his shows, covering their faces with masks, veils, or printed strips, in order to oppose the notion of models as a means of causing media hype. With an appreciation of urban space, Margiela has challenged and subtly criticized the fashion industry’s fundamental notions by selecting unconventional locations for his shows, which, accommodated with theatrical features, resemble highly conceptualised performances rather than the mundane parading of models on a catwalk.

For the Autumn/Winter 1997 show, Margiela dispatched the models dressed with the house’s distinct deconstructed outfits around Paris neighbourhoods, to intermingle with the people walking by who turned their heads in bafflement and surprise.⁸ In Spring/Summer 1999, the models came down the runway wearing sandwich boards with pictures of the clothes instead of actual garments, in an ironic display of the power of the photographic image and its role within fashion. This has been paralleled with Guy Debord’s concept of “*detournement*, the act of turning something back on itself” while it can be argued that Margiela has not been rejecting current notions, but simply relaunching them in an original way.⁹ For Autumn/Winter 1998–1999, models were replaced with human-size wooden puppets handled by puppeteers. The purpose of this allegorical performance could have been to discuss the inner motives of those involved in the fashion industry, along with providing the crowd with some food for thought as to who pulls the strings.¹⁰ In this case, Margiela created the spectacle in order to comment in a reflective manner not only on his own practice but on the amplitude of fashion. Like Galliano, he has engaged in the individual interpretation of the spectacle, intertwining literal and metaphoric elements in an almost philosophic staging of idiosyncratic thought. Although Margiela’s shows are famous for being utterly minimalistic and devoid of drama (abiding by the label’s ideology), it can be argued that this enforced negativity is even more dramatic as a view, following its own kind of theatricality.

Although, at first glance, the fashion show images of Galliano and Margiela depict dissimilar environments, from Galliano’s phantasmagoric visuals to Margiela’s minimalistic dereliction, significant common axes can be derived. The contrast of light and dark, the sense of spirituality, the bewitching scenery that almost summons the viewer to take part in a journey, are all evident in both images, indicating the subtle, yet powerful, similarities between the two designers. Although their approaches to the catwalk could be counted in contrast to each other, it is evident that the same point of reference emerges: dealing with the catwalk show as a vital part of the creative process that demands originality, a performance whose ultimate goal is to examine deeper issues regarding the absurd relationship between creative

thinking and commodity culture while, at the same time, questioning and reforming the meaning of luxury. The catwalk spectacles of Galliano and Margiela are also similar with regards to the escapism and disconnection of reality. Margiela's shows resemble a minimalistic fairytale, a parallel universe as equally surreal and detached from the present as Galliano's dream worlds.

Drawing Inspiration from the Past: Historical Futurism

The relationship between fashion and the past is a complicated one, rooted in paradox and irony, since fashion from its very definition is the opposite of the past. The product of fashion is condemned to exist due to its novelty, distinguishing itself from the past, but soon to become part of it. The contradiction lays within the limits between old and new. The modern of today is the old of tomorrow in a process where the commodity is being constantly reinvented, while at the same time its expiration is encouraged, in an endless cycle doomed to repeat itself. Dr Ulrich Lehman, author of *Tigersprung: Fashioning History*, notes that "the past is activated for the present and significantly, in fashion design the present very quickly aligns itself with its own past."¹¹

History does not exist on its own, but is rather interpreted in a subjective manner and in a wider context, where notions and beliefs of the time are determining factors. It has been utilised in fashion design in order to contemplate and demonstrate the issues of the present, but it remains a contemporary product. Historical elements and periods are filtered through current mentality and incorporated into collections and thus are not to be issued for the analysis of the past, but rather for the discussion of the present.¹² According to Lehman, "Fashion constitutes an aesthetic rewriting of history."¹³ The past has played a significant role in the design practice of Margiela and Galliano and it has been a constant point of reference for the production of their collections. History has been used not necessarily within the boundaries of its conventional definition, but rather with the sense of "what has already happened" and how it can occur again through a new prism.

Galliano composed romantic pastiches, drawing stimuli from ancient and contemporary eras, tribal and oriental features, Eastern and Western civilisations along with subcultural styles, and joining them together. Galliano has pointed out that "it's a dialogue between past and present. The starting point is usually factual, but we allow our imaginations to run riot."¹⁴ Colin McDowell, in his book, *Galliano*, points out, "Revisitations almost always show the designer's skill by the way he takes elements of the past and by mixing them with the present, makes them entirely modern."¹⁵ Galliano's Autumn/Winter 1998 couture collection for Dior, *A Voyage in the Diorient Express*, reflected the fusion of Princess Pocahontas-inspired imagery with sixteenth-century European dress formations, resulting in an amalgam of vividly native American patterns on crinolines and heavily beaded corsets.¹⁶

A trip to Egypt was the inspiration for the Spring/Summer 2004 Dior couture show. Ancient Egyptian motifs, gold and silver foils, and hieroglyphics constituted Galliano's fantasy of the glorious Egyptian past, along with ancient gods and pharaohs impersonated by the models parading down the catwalk. Couture neglects the linear progression of time by interrelating historical fragments in order to build its own contemporariness that echoes the spectrum of the past.¹⁷ For the Spring/Summer 2007 couture collection for Dior, Galliano comprised elements of Japonisme, "the assimilation of Japanese aesthetic principles on European painting and decorative arts," with references to the traditional New Look silhouettes such as peplum suits.¹⁸

Margiela relates to the past by integrating designs from earlier collections into more recent ones, whilst turning second-hand garments sourced from thrift stores and army excess clothing shops into high fashion. Hence, clothes and accessories keep reappearing throughout the seasons, reintroduced and reworked. The Spring/Summer 1989 collection for Maison Martin Margiela evolved around selected looks from the previous ten collections, recreated and dyed in grey, while Spring/Summer 1999 was a revisitation of the maison's work over the past ten years. Interviewed by Susannah Frankel for the Independent's *Saturday Magazine*, the Margiela design team pointed out, "We have always had garments that we continue to propose for many seasons in a row (sometimes twelve!)."¹⁹ Through the manipulation

of already-used materials and garments, the history and age of fabrics are acknowledged, embraced, and celebrated.

The Spring/Summer 2001 collection presented halter tops made from vintage leather gloves, while the Autumn/Winter Artisanal 2001 collection featured dresses, jackets, and skirts made from bandages, and tops and collars made from wigs. Other examples of this revolutionary use of second-hand items include: a jumper sewn from a stock of old army socks, a jacket made from Christmas garlands, a waistcoat constructed from playing cards ironed together, and a jacket made from vintage leather belts. In an interview organised by the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, Netherlands, when asked to explain the intricacy of old clothes that a completely new garment does not acquire, Margiela replied, “the silent testament of its past life.”²⁰

Using second-hand clothes, stripping them from the socio-economic morals of traditional recycling, and taking a literal approach of bringing the time into fashion, fosters, in an almost ironic way, a process where the past intertwines with the present and functions as a time-reflecting mirror.²¹ The unfinished clothes, the hanging hems, the visible seams and zippers, the toiles that turn into actual garments, all stress Margiela’s intricate and philosophical relationship with time. The process of production is part of the garment’s very own history, as it is a necessary prerequisite for its birth and thus it is a trace of time that Margiela brings back to life, exposing its real nature.

The Autumn/Winter 1997–1998 collection consisted of garments capturing the different stages of production. As Barbara Vinken suggests, “At the centre of fashion lies the art of producing an effect without revealing the manner in which it is produced. Like a magician, fashion conceals its tricks.”²² Margiela inverts this notion and integrates the well-hidden process into the final result, encapsulating those transient moments.

The Nineteenth-Century “Ragpicker” Versus the “Woman of Fashion”

Significant parallels between the work of Margiela and Galliano are drawn through Walter Benjamin’s images of the nineteenth-century “ragpicker” and the “woman of fashion” of the same period, as discussed in context to each other in Evans’s book *Fashion at the Edge*. It is interesting how the work of two designers who appear so dissimilar to each other at first glance, revolves around the common axis of late nineteenth-century capitalism and the prevalence of a laissez-faire economic policy.²³ The industrialisation of urban areas that occurred at the time and the gradual proselytisation of societies to capitalism popularised the figure of the “ragpicker” in big cities.²⁴

Ragpickers, submerged in impoverishment, scavenged through piles of industrial waste, in search of items of value, like modern treasure hunters. This ability to recognise the merits of items that others have neglected echoes Margiela’s fascination with second-hand materials, and thus constitutes him as a modern, avant garde ragpicker. Evans has depicted him as *The Golden Dustman*, someone who transforms the “unwanted” or the “leftover” into gold.²⁵

The image of the ragpicker of Paris has been greatly lyricised by Charles Baudelaire, who in his poem *The Ragpickers’ Wine* refers to him as “stumbling like a poet lost in his dreams; He pours his heart out in stupendous schemes.”²⁶ Baudelaire’s idea of the ragpicker is a melancholic, romanticised rebel that opposes society in his own way.²⁷ Margiela’s opposition to the dictated novelty of fashion through his passion for the “derelict” and the “forgotten” makes him a “poetic ragpicker” of fashion. Baudelaire wrote:

Here we have a man who has to gather the day’s refuse in the capital city. Everything that the big city threw away, everything it lost, everything it despised, everything it crushed underfoot, he catalogues and collects. [...] He sorts things out and makes a wise choice; he collects, like a miser guarding a treasure, the refuse which will assume the shape of useful or gratifying objects between the jaws of the goddess of the Industry.²⁸

Baudelaire described the ragpicker almost like a sage guard, treating the refuse of commodity culture with reverence, nonetheless remaining ultimately subservient to the “Goddess of Industry,” ie, the capitalist system. Likewise, Margiela’s label is a business and thus acquires a commercial nature, with profit-making as purpose. Being indebted to capitalism is as unavoidable for the ragpicker, since he is utterly a part of it.

On the opposite side lies another symbol of nineteenth-century Parisian commodity culture, that of the “woman of fashion,” awakened by Galliano’s designs. Galliano has honoured the Belle Epoque through his collections, evoking the opulence of the late nineteenth century by working with sumptuous textiles, intricate embroidery and embellishment, striking fabric manipulation, and splashes of vivid colour. Edwardian silhouettes, exoticism, peacock feathers, frilled sleeves and collars along with intricate lacework decorated the clothes of the late nineteenth-century upper classes.²⁹

Galliano’s designs reflect this splendour of the past and opposition to modesty in a very similar way, by their excellence of craftsmanship and excessive adornment. Galliano has mentioned that his goal is to make women in his clothes desirable to men.³⁰ His feminine ideal is that of the fetishised seductress whose decadent but enticing soul is materialised through her clothing. Therefore, her sexual nature instead of being veiled by her artificial attire, is further enhanced through it, just as Walter Benjamin describes, “These landscapes are traversed by paths which lead sexuality into the world of the inorganic. Fashion itself is only another medium enticing it still more deeply into the universe of matter.”³¹

The “woman of fashion” is to the “ragpicker” the opposite side of the same coin, belonging to the same fashion system established by capitalist norms.³² Galliano’s “woman of fashion” is admired and celebrated, floating in a haze of materialistic lavishness characterised by the richness of her attire. On the other hand, Margiela’s ragpicker demonstrates desolate but unavoidable disintegration. Evans observes, “Although Margiela’s aesthetic of dereliction is avant garde, his experimentation does not take him outside a capitalist paradigm, it simply fixes him more firmly inside it as the antithesis of Galliano.”³³ Being completely in contrast to each other, they exist along the same spectrum. This proclaims how Galliano and Margiela have contemplated from the same points of reference, but through different perspectives, which indicates a common mindset.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction is the term used in the fashion industry to vaguely describe clothes that look undone, unpolished, or taken apart.³⁴ Deconstruction aims to challenge the way that modern clothing is perceived, and by this exposure puts it in an intellectual, subtractive spectrum of reversing preconceptions. It is not just an unconventional aesthetic manoeuvre but also rather a highly conceptual practice that aims to examine in depth the nature of garment making, by being critical and inquisitive of the status quo.

Margiela is considered a pioneer in the introduction of deconstructionist fashion, by revealing the interior microcosm of a garment, creating clothes that look like they are worn inside out. Tights are worn over shoes; unfinished hems, exposed seams and darts, a duvet worn as an oversized coat, all indicate Margiela’s literal and metaphoric deconstructive thought, not only taking apart but also analysing the very meaning of fashion. Susannah Frankel has described him as “the man who put deconstruction on the fashion map.”³⁵ He has an extraordinary talent for seeing what is already there through a unique prism, and thus reintroduces the way we think about fashion from its very fundamentals. What would otherwise be lost in the subconscious is captured, what would be disregarded with the passage of time as a shadow of assumptions made, is now recorded, acknowledged, and honoured.

The tailor’s dummy, or what Vinken refers to as the *mannekin*, has been a central point of focus for Margiela.³⁶ In an attempt to investigate the relationship between the wearer and the worn, the tailor’s dummy itself is transformed into a garment. Representing the ideal, yet manmade proportions, the dummy traditionally acts as an artificial wearer while a garment is adjusted to it during production. During Margiela’s Autumn/Winter 1992–1993 show, the plastic bags used to store the garments were cast with

adhesive on the dummies and worn as dresses. Margiela reversed the notion by transforming the wearer (the dummy) into a worn garment that will dress another wearer (the model) in an ambiguous interrelation between the artificial and the living body. Alistair O'Neill explains that "Margiela points to the slippage between seeing an outfit and wearing it, by showing how something is lost and something poetic is found in the translation."³⁷ Margiela's Spring/Summer 1997 show featured dummies worn as waistcoats, with shoulder pads and trimmings pinned on them.

Although deconstruction has rarely been associated with Galliano, his work over the years has indeed demonstrated a deconstructive mindset, even from his early steps in the industry. His 1984 graduate collection at Central St Martins, London, titled *Les Incroyables*, introduced distorted forms, overblown proportions, over-the-top layering and dresses worn over trousers. Frankel mentions, "There were jackets worn upside down and inside-out. This was 1984. Deconstruction wasn't even part of the fashion lexicon."³⁸ Galliano's Spring/Summer 1986 show, titled *Fallen Angels*, featured layered and tucked fabrics along with slashed and sewn-together garments. Galliano himself has commented on the deconstructive nature of that collection. He stated, "It was all to do with deconstruction. Removing the mystique and showing the reality. I piped the seams on the outside with gaffer tape."³⁹

Arguably, parallels could be drawn between this deconstructive thinking and Galliano's historicism, with regards to the fragmentary nature of both. Borrowing traits from different cultures and eras, Galliano has been "breaking down" presumed concepts in a similar way that Margiela has, utilizing the principles of fracture and exposure. Paris' homeless inspired Galliano's Spring/Summer 2000 couture collection, titled *Clochard*, for Dior. The models strolled down the runway dressed in layers of fishnet material, with frayed and stretched fabrics attached to each other while nautical ropes replaced belts. The collection, as stated by Alexander Fury for the *Independent*, "had roots in Margiela's deconstruction."⁴⁰

Allison Gill has expressed deconstruction as a form of anti-fashion, due to the juxtaposition of counter cultural elements in fashion design, and hence associated it with Galliano's practices.⁴¹ Gill mentions of Margiela, "His trace will always carry the past traits of fashion," evoking immediate connotations with Galliano's historicism as a form of deconstructive thought that carries the traces of past eras.⁴²

Galliano's deconstructionist thought has been further enhanced by his recent collections for Maison Margiela couture, where he transformed a man's coat into a red wedding dress, embellished with vintage costume jewelry from his personal collection. A white version of the same dress was sewn from actual toiles joined together, while a bright red coat with Arcimboldo-like, grotesque-embroidered seashells complemented this hybrid Margiela/Galliano collection, symbolising the latter's return to couture.⁴³

Galliano and Margiela as Baudelaire's Dandies

Dandyism was a sartorial movement during the nineteenth century that amalgamated British country dress of the previous century with Gallic features.⁴⁴ Dandyism grew, however, to represent a wider lifestyle rather than a fashion trend. In *The Painter of Modern Life*, Baudelaire idolised and glorified the dandy as a symbol of a pure aristocratic mentality, a passionate insurgent in pursuit of the individual absolute of beauty. Baudelaire's dandy was associated with the rejection of conformity, the constant state of rebellion towards a decadent society, which was expressed through self-refinement and intellectual exploration.⁴⁵

Margiela, despite his purposeful alienation from the public world, has been admired by the crowd, just like Byron as a dandy heir described by Baudelaire.⁴⁶ Baudelaire mentions, "Thus, in his eyes, enamoured as he is above all of distinction, perfection in dress consists in absolute simplicity, which is, indeed, the best way of being distinguished."⁴⁷ Baudelaire's statement perfectly summarises Margiela's dandy-like persona, epitomising the perfection of simplicity. A dandy theorist himself, Margiela always dressed in the colour black, advocating his notion of perfectionist minimalism.⁴⁸

Galliano's constant preoccupation with his appearance in a bohemian yet aristocratic manner is what constitutes him as a modern-day dandy. The creativity that he enlists in order to build his external

presence evokes what Valerie Steele has called “an artistic presentation of the body related to the single-minded pursuit of bohemian individuality.”⁴⁹ Steele also associates dandyism with the decadent figure of Oscar Wilde, pointing out that he called attention to himself and his writings through his public appearance.⁵⁰

Galliano has risen to become a distinct and immediately recognisable public persona linked with intriguing aesthetics and an original overall eccentricity. His appearance is an indispensable part of his brand, corresponding to a contemporary continuation of dandyism. It is important to mention that the title of his 1984 graduate collection, *Les Incroyables*, refers to the French youth movement of *Incroyables*, who adopted dandy elements.⁵¹ *Incroyables*, translated from the French as *Unbelievables*, were a youth movement that rose to prominence during the French Revolution, 1789–1799.

Conclusion

Despite appearing unrelated on the surface, Galliano and Margiela share fundamental similarities that position the former as an intriguing yet suitable successor of the latter. It may not be directly obvious, but a deeper investigation of their design practice proves the two share fundamental conceptual and philosophical parallels that establish them as more consistent than adverse. The escapist reverie of their catwalk shows, the great significance attributed to the creation of an allegorical spectacle, the treatment of the show as an entity rather than just a means of demonstrating the collection, determine and raise both designers as builders of dreamy, alternate realities, calling on the spectator to get carried away in them. The selection of unconventional spaces, attentive and thoughtful staging, the treatment of models as mediums to enhance the relationship between garment and wearer instead of letting them parade as “moving hangers,” all verify Galliano’s and Margiela’s conceptual approach of the fashion show.

The interpretation of the meaning of time and its substantial role in the design of a collection has been a determining factor for both designers. Galliano, a “pasticheur” of historical and cultural elements of the past, intersects with Margiela, an avid adaptor of designs from previous collections and reworked vintage items, advocating a timeless aesthetic contrary to the ephemerality of fashion. Regardless of the different prisms through which the two designers view and utilise the past, the primary nature of their work with regards to it is common; the past is intriguing, there is no present if there is no past, the past is inspiration to be taken under consideration. It is recycled yet always reintroduced. A constant resonance between past and present, an inquisitive interaction of old and new, Galliano recreates images from the past in a novel manner, while Margiela uses the tangible past itself, in the form of already used items that are transformed to acquire new forms and uses.

Baudelaire’s writings have been used to draw further conceptual parallels between the two designers. Evoking the two contrasting images of *laissez-faire* economic policy, Margiela’s work is representative of the nineteenth-century “ragpicker” while Galliano’s opulent designs summon the “woman of fashion” of the same period. These are the two extreme counterparts that emerged from the prevalence of capitalism and industrialisation. They may be contrasting to each other, but are nonetheless parts of the very same system and Margiela and Galliano become parts of the same system as a consequence. Their portrayal as Baudelaire’s dandies and the similarities that they both exhibit with regards to dandyism bring them even closer, defining them as different aspects of a common principle.

Margiela’s name is commonly affiliated with deconstruction though the exposure of production stages and construction elements, along with incorporating the dummy as an actual design component. Galliano, rather falsely has not been considered a deconstructionist but his work proves the opposite. Not only has he dealt with torn apart and re-sewn-together garments, but also his historicism is indeed another method of metaphorical deconstruction. As the creative director of *Maison Margiela*, Galliano has taken a further interest in maintaining and exploring the deconstructionist ideology of the label, which is demonstrated in his recent designs for the *Maison*. His ability and eagerness to take up deconstruction and also develop it, indicates to a greater extent that his idiosyncrasy, and consequently his work, has been predisposed towards deconstructive methods.

This investigation has dealt with abstract ideas, philosophical and literal parallelisms, selfpresentation and promotion, as well as fashion shows, themes, and construction techniques of Galliano and Margiela. This article has enquired into these designers' thoughts and concepts in an in-depth way, reaching the nucleus of their overall practices rather than discussing superficial similarities of their designs. John Galliano and Martin Margiela are excitingly different and surprisingly similar at the same time. Where one's practice begins, the other one ends, and vice versa. Galliano may have appeared initially as an unexpected successor, but taking a closer look, it is obvious that Galliano and Margiela are related in an imaginative and thoughtful manner. The way in which Galliano continues Margiela's legacy is yet to be further discovered with anticipation in future collections.

Endnotes

- 1 Natalie Khan, "Catwalk Politics," *Fashion Cultures Revisited: Theories, Explorations and Analysis*, Stella Bruzzi and Pamela Church Gibson, eds, Routledge, New York, United States, 2001, p 117.
- 2 Caroline Evans, "John Galliano: Spectacle and Modernity," *The Fashion Business: Theory, Practice Image*, Ian Griffiths and Nicola White, eds, Berg Publishers, New York, United States, 2000, p 164.
- 3 Khan, op cit, p 117.
- 4 Susanah Frankel, ed, *Visionaries: Interviews with Fashion Designers*, V&A Publications, London, England, 2001, p 172.
- 5 *John Galliano at the Vogue Festival 2015*, London, England, 27 April 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=en2SSRm5AHw>. Accessed 4 January 2017.
- 6 Caroline Evans, *Fashion at the Edge: Spectacle, Modernity and Deathliness*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2003, p 90.
- 7 Ibid, p 67.
- 8 Frankel, op cit, p 34.
- 9 Caroline Evans, "A Shop of Images and Signs." *Fashion as Photograph: Viewing and Reviewing Images of Fashion*, Eugenie Shinkle, ed, IB Tauris, London, England, 2008, pp 25-26.
- 10 Ginger Gregg Duggan, "The Greatest Show on Earth: A Look at Contemporary Fashion Shows and Their Relationship to Performance Art," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 5, Issue 3, Taylor and Francis, London, England, 2001, p 262.
- 11 Ulrich Lehmann, "Tigersprung: Fashioning History," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 3, Issue 3, Taylor and Francis, London, England, 1999, pp 308-309.
- 12 Evans, 2003, op cit, p 10.
- 13 Lehmann, op cit, p 301.
- 14 Colin McDowell, *Galliano*, Weidenfeld Nicolson Illustrated, London, England, 2000, p 151.
- 15 Ibid, p 119.
- 16 Evans, 2000, op cit, p 144.
- 17 Alison Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, IB Tauris, New York, United States, 2012, p 80.
- 18 Valerie Steele, ed, *The Berg Companion to Fashion*, Berg Publishers, New York, United States, 2010, p 440.
- 19 Frankel, op cit, pp 34-35.
- 20 Jose Teunissen and Vivienne Westwood, *Woman by Vivienne Westwood, Christian Dior Couture, Maison Martin Margiela, Junya Watanabe, Ann Demeulemeester, Veronique Leroy, Bernhard Wilhelm, Viktor and Rolf, Hussein Chalayan*, Centraal Museum Utrecht, Utrecht, Netherlands, 2003, p 53.
- 21 Barbara Vinken and Mark Hewson, *Fashion Zeitgeist: Trends and Cycles in the Fashion System*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, England, 2004, p 144.
- 22 Ibid, p 149.
- 23 Evans, 2003, op cit, pp 35-37.
- 24 Walter Benjamin and Harry Zohn, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism (Verso Classics Series)*, Verso Books, London, England, 1997, p 19.
- 25 Caroline Evans, "The Golden Dustman: A Critical Evaluation of the Work of Martin Margiela and a Review of Martin Margiela: Exhibition (9/4/1615)," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 2, Issue 1, Taylor and Francis, London, England, February 1998, p 85.

- ²⁶ Benjamin and Zohn, op cit, p 19.
- ²⁷ Ibid, p 20.
- ²⁸ Ibid, p 79.
- ²⁹ N J Stevenson, *The Chronology of Fashion: From Empire Dress to Ethical Design*, A & C Black Publishers, London, England, 2011, p 64.
- ³⁰ Dana Thomas, *Gods and Kings: The Rise and Fall of Alexander McQueen and John Galliano*, Allen Lane, London, England, 2015, p 327.
- ³¹ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, United States, 1999, p 70.
- ³² Evans, 2003, op cit, p 37.
- ³³ Ibid, p 295.
- ³⁴ Alison Gill, "Deconstruction Fashion: The Making of Unfinished, Decomposing and Re-Assembled Clothes," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture* Volume 2, Issue 1, 1998, pp 25-26.
- ³⁵ Susannah Frankel, "Women's Fashion: Galliano," *The Independent*, 18 March 2004, pp 12-13.
- ³⁶ Vinken and Hewson, op cit, pp 140-141.
- ³⁷ Allistair O'Neil, "Imagining Fashion: Helmut Lang and Maison Martin Margiela," *Radical Fashion*, Claire Wilcox, ed, V&A Publications, London, England, 2001, p 43.
- ³⁸ Frankel, 2001, op cit, p 177.
- ³⁹ McDowell, op cit, p 97.
- ⁴⁰ Alexander Fury, "The Empire Strikes Back as Ex-Dior Designer John Galliano Makes His Return to Fashion at Margiela," *The Independent*, 6 October 2014.
- ⁴¹ Gill, op cit, p 32.
- ⁴² Ibid, p 31.
- ⁴³ *John Galliano at the Vogue Festival 2015*, op cit.
- ⁴⁴ Steele, op cit, p 199.
- ⁴⁵ Charles Baudelaire and P E Charvet, *The Painter of Modern Life*, Penguin Classics, London, England, 2010, pp 36-40.
- ⁴⁶ Vicki Karaminas, "Vampire Dandies: Fashionable Masculine Identities and Style in Popular Culture," *Fashion Cultures Revisited: Theories, Explorations and Analysis*, Stella Bruzzi and Pamela Church Gibson, eds, Routledge, New York, United States, 2013, p 370.
- ⁴⁷ Baudelaire and Charvet, op cit, p 37.
- ⁴⁸ James Laver, *Dandies (Pageant of History)*, Weidenfield and Nicolson, London, England, 1968, p 73.
- ⁴⁹ Steele, op cit, p 201.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, IB Tauris & Co, London, England, 2003, p 182.

Bibliography

Published Sources

- Bancroft, Alison, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, IB Tauris, New York, United States, 2012.
- Baudelaire, Charles, and Charvet, P E, *The Painter of Modern Life*, Penguin Classics, London, England, 2010.
- Benjamin, Walter, and Zohn, Harry, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism (the Verso Classics Series)*, Verso Books, London, England, 1997.
- Benjamin, Walter, *The Arcades Project*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, United States, 1999.

- Brunette, Peter, and Wills, David, eds, *Deconstruction and the Visual Arts: Art, Media, Architecture (Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism)*, Cambridge University Press, New York, United States, 1993.
- Clark, Hazel, "Conceptual Fashion," *Fashion and Art*, Adam Geczy and Vicki Karaminas, eds, Berg Publishers, London, England, 2012.
- Duggan, Ginger Gregg, "The Greatest Show on Earth: A Look at Contemporary Fashion Shows and Their Relationship to Performance Art," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 5, Issue 3, Taylor and Francis, London, England, August 2001, pp 243-270.
- Evans, Caroline, "The Golden Dustman: A Critical Evaluation of the Work of Martin Margiela and a Review of Martin Margiela: Exhibition (9/4/1615)," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 2, Issue 1, Taylor and Francis, London, England, February 1998, pp 73-93.
- Evans, Caroline, "John Galliano: Spectacle and Modernity," *The Fashion Business: Theory, Practice Image*, Ian Griffiths and Nicola White, eds, Berg Publishers, New York, United States, 2000.
- Evans, Caroline, *Fashion at the Edge: Spectacle, Modernity and Deathliness*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2003.
- Evans, Caroline, "A Shop of Images and Signs," *Fashion as Photograph: Viewing and Reviewing Images of Fashion*, Eugenie Shinkle, ed, IB Tauris, London, England, 2008.
- Frankel, Susannah, ed, *Visionaries: Interviews with Fashion Designers*, V&A Publications, London, England, 2001.
- Frankel, Susannah, "Women's Fashion: Galliano," *The Independent*, 18 March 2004.
- Fury, Alexander, "The Empire Strikes Back as Ex-Dior Designer John Galliano Makes His Return to Fashion at Margiela," *The Independent*, London, England, 6 October 2014.
- Geczy, Adam, and Karaminas, Vicki, eds, *Fashion and Art*, Berg Publishers, London, England, 2012.
- Gill, Alison, "Deconstruction Fashion: The Making of Unfinished, Decomposing and Re-Assembled Clothes," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture* Volume 2, Issue 1, February 1998, pp 25-49.
- Howells, Christina, *Derrida: Deconstruction from Phenomenology to Ethics (Key Contemporary Thinkers)*, Wiley, John, & Sons, Malden, England, 1998.
- Karaminas, Vicki, "Vampire Dandies: Fashionable Masculine Identities and Style in Popular Culture," *Fashion Cultures Revisited: Theories, Explorations and Analysis*, Bruzzi, Stella, and Church Gibson, Pamela, eds, Routledge, New York, United States, 2013, pp 366-376.
- Khan, Natalie, "Catwalk Politics," *Fashion Cultures: Theories, Explorations and Analysis*, Bruzzi, Stella, and Church Gibson, Pamela, eds, Routledge, New York, United States, 2001, pp 114-127.
- Koda, Harold, *Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed; [Published in Conjunction with the Exhibition "Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed," Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York from 6 December 2001 through 3 March 2002]*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States, 2001.

- Laver, James, *Dandies (Pageant of History)*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, England, 1968.
- Lehmann, Ulrich, "Tigersprung: Fashioning History," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 3, Issue 3, August 1999, pp 297-321.
- Margiela, M M, *Maison Martin Margiela*, Rizzoli, New York, United States, 2009.
- McDowell, Colin, *Galliano*, Weidenfeld Nicolson Illustrated, England, 2001.
- Müller, Florence, et al, *Inspiration Dior*, Abrams, New York, United States, 2011.
- O'Neil, Allistair, "Imagining Fashion: Helmut Lang and Maison Martin Margiela," *Radical Fashion*, Claire Wilcox, ed, V&A Publications, London, England, 2001.
- Quinn, Bradley, *Techno Fashion*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, England, 2002.
- Steele, Valerie, ed, *The Berg Companion to Fashion*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, England, 2010.
- Stevenson, N J, *The Chronology of Fashion: From Empire Dress to Ethical Design*, A & C Black Publishers, London, England, 2011.
- Teunissen, Jose, and Westwood, Vivienne, *Woman by Vivienne Westwood, Christian Dior Couture, Maison Martin Margiela, Junya Watanabe, Ann Demeulemeester, Veronique Leroy, Bernhard Wilhelm, Viktor and Rolf, Hussein Chalayan*, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, Netherlands, 2003.
- Thomas, Dana, *Gods and Kings: The Rise and Fall of Alexander McQueen and John Galliano*, Allen Lane, London, England, 2015.
- Vinken, Barbara, and Hewson, Mark, *Fashion Zeitgeist: Trends and Cycles in the Fashion System*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, England, 2004.
- Wilson, Elizabeth, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, I B Tauris & Co, London, England, 2003.

Internet Sources

John Galliano at the Vogue Festival 2015, London, England, 27 April 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=en2SSRm5AHw>. Accessed 4 January 2017.

Copyright © 2017 Olga Dritsopoulou
Email: olga.dri@hotmail.com

A recent graduate from the University of Brighton with a degree in Textile Design with Business Studies, Olga Dritsopoulou is currently focusing on the further development of her undergraduate research, revolving around the analysis of contemporary conceptual fashion in an interdisciplinary manner with regards to philosophy and literature. Having worked for companies such as DKNY in New York and Jonathan Saunders in London, she is a stylist and independent scholar aspiring to contribute constructively to the further evolution of fashion as an academic field.

Women's Shoes of the Eighteenth Century: Style, Use, and Evolution

Alison Fairhurst

Abstract

This paper explores the evolution of women's shoes throughout the eighteenth century by analysing how various parts of the shoe developed. It will illustrate how both the visual appearance and the various components altered over time reflecting social, cultural, and political changes within society. The analysis is based on a close examination carried out on a significant sample of extant shoes in British museums and is supported by both primary and secondary literature as well as contemporary images.

Since remotest antiquity, nearly every man, woman and child has necessarily worn footwear of some sort, and those who worked in shoemaking and its allied trades have formed a larger percentage of the skilled workforce than many other trades. ... Not an accessory and not merely a garment reflecting the vagaries of fashion, the shoe is both an important, functional piece of technology and an icon of personal style, ceremony and status.¹

Saguto states that "today, thousands of eighteenth-century shoes survive and more are found every year."² Over 900 shoes have been located in the United Kingdom as part of this research and there are likely to be many more awaiting discovery. A close examination was carried out of more than 100 shoes revealing the parts of a shoe that can provide more specific details and suppositions on life in the eighteenth century. This paper will look more closely at these features and the results that the survey provided.

Virtually all women's shoes of the eighteenth century were made as straights, ie, no differentiation between the left and right foot. The overall shape of shoes varies throughout the period. The first half of the century is largely distinguished by shoes with latches, chunky Louis heels, and by brocades and damasks with heavy embellishments involving metal threads. These features coincide with the baroque style. The shoes of the middle decades of the century have a lighter feel incorporating rococo influences such as more slender heels, fabrics such as satin and figured silks, and more delicate embroidered decoration. From about 1785 shoe shapes change more dramatically as the neoclassical style was adopted influencing both fashion and the decorative arts. Shoes became slip-ons (with no latches for fastening) and plainer, with lower heels and fewer embellishments.

The main parts of a shoe are as indicated in Figure 1. They comprise the uppers (the vamp, tongue, and two quarters) and the bottoms (heel, insole, and outer soles).

Uppers

Uppers generally changed over the period along with the shape. For the most part of the century they sat just under ankle height on the foot. By the end, much more of the instep was exposed, reaching the

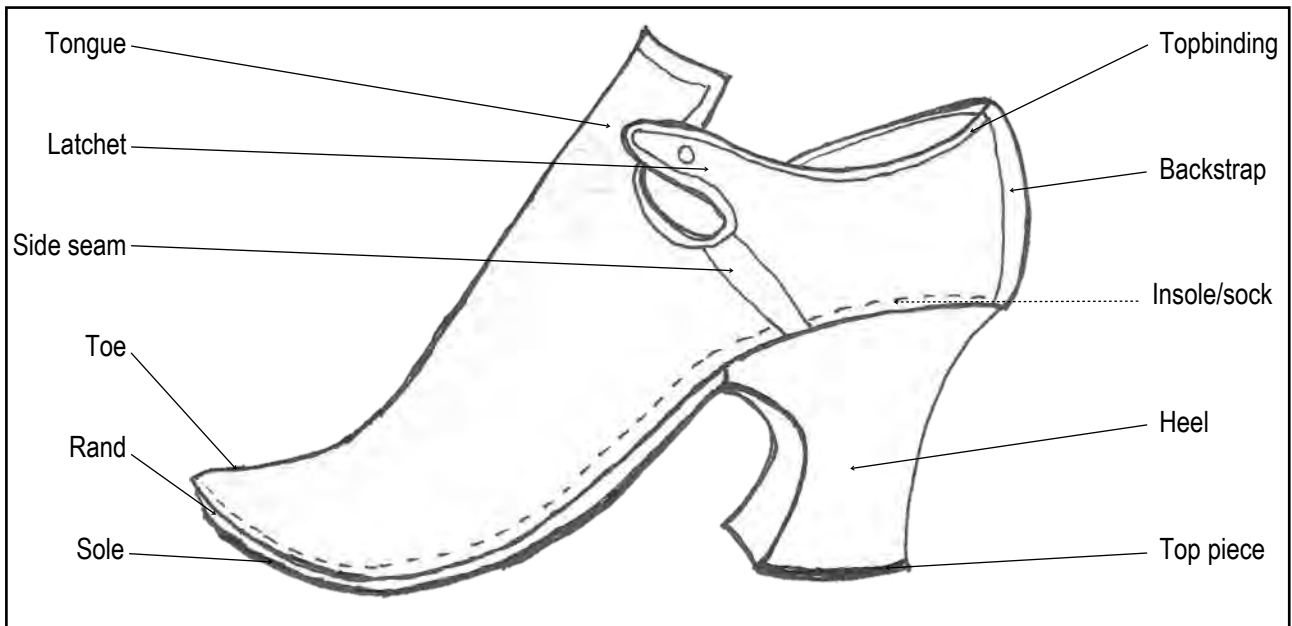


Figure 1
Parts of a shoe.³

tops of the toes providing a toe cleavage reminiscent of the cleavage exposing low cut and high-waisted dresses with which such shoes were worn.

The side seam varied also, both positionally and in shape. In the early part of the century it was a straight seam in line with the heel breast (Figure 2). Dog-leg seams were also used (Figure 3) which allowed the shoes to be opened wider for the foot to fit in. By the 1770s the side seam had moved further down the vamp to be situated much closer to the wearer's toes although it could still be straight (Figure 4) or dog-legged (Figure 5).



Figure 2
Shoe, 1725.⁴



Figure 3
Shoe, 1730.⁵



Figure 4
Shoe, 1780s.⁶



Figure 5
Shoe, 1760–1769.⁷

Rands

The rand (or welt) usually appears as a white band that separates the upper from the sole (Figure 6). It was a feature which served a purpose in the construction and also acted as decoration. The rand appears on the vast majority of shoes up to the end of the 1720s but is still significant in the 1730s through to



Figure 6
Needlepoint toe as seen from the side (left) and the front (right).⁸



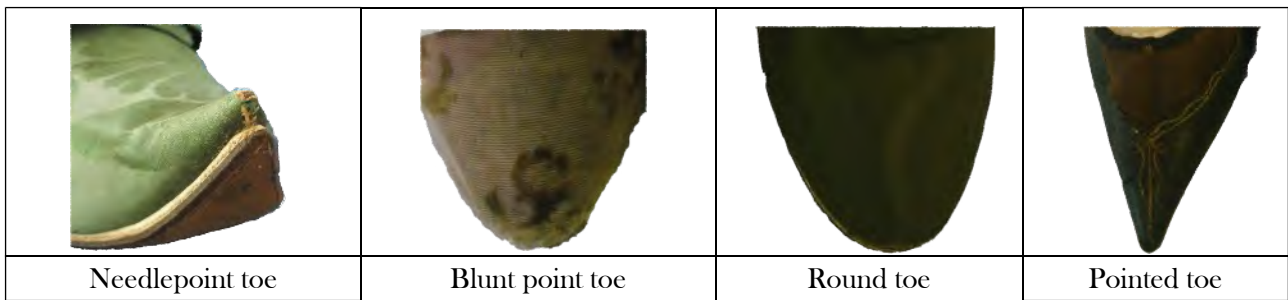


Figure 7
Toe shapes.⁹

the 1750s. By the end of the 1760s the numbers fall dramatically. It was invariably white tawed leather and although often termed “kid,” the likelihood is that it was mainly sheep’s leather that was used.

Toes

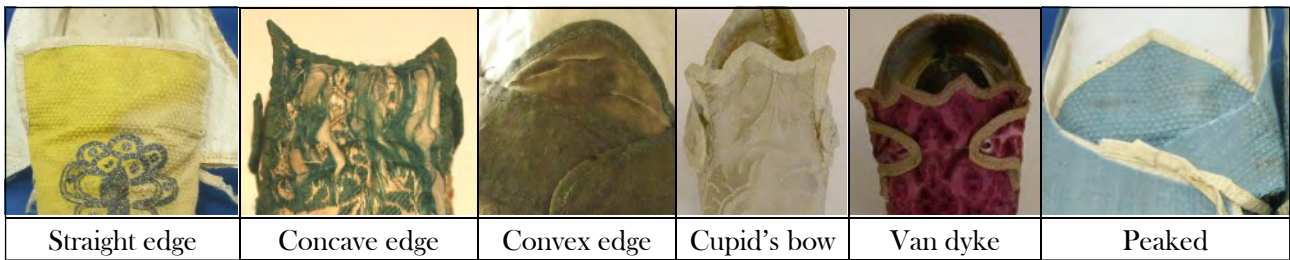
There are four main variations on the toe shape during the eighteenth century (Figure 7).

The needlepoint was the most ubiquitous toe shape at the start of the century, indeed from the 1690s. It was very sharply pointed with the upper overhanging the sole (Figure 6). It was often upturned, the shape being likened to the prow of a ship. The survey indicates that over half the extant shoes from the 1700s–1740s displayed the needlepoint toe, peaking at 85% of those from the 1710s. The needlepoint continued until the 1760s although its popularity had waned by the 1740s. Despite this, it is clearly illustrated in Hogarth’s *Marriage a la Mode* from 1743 (Figure 8) albeit on an older woman who would not necessarily be at the forefront of fashion.

The survey shows that the 1750s was a transition period when there appears to be more variation in toe shapes with the needlepoint still featuring but with equally as many shoes with a blunter point or with a rounded toe (Figure 7). Pointed toes reemerge from the 1780s being the dominant shape of the 1790s. This was probably to make the foot seem narrower.¹⁰



Figure 8
Detail, *Marriage a la Mode*,
Plate 6,
The Lady's Death,
William Hogarth, 1743.¹¹



Figures 9
Tongue shapes.¹²

Tongues

Figure 9 shows the various shapes commonly found. For the most part, tongues were cut straight along the top edge, especially in the 1710s and 1740s, when two-thirds of extant shoes show this feature. Variations include tongues which have a slightly concave edge (particularly in the 1720s to 1730s) or a slightly convex edge, evident between 1750 and 1780.

More decorative edgings such as the cupid's bow or van dyke (a zigzag effect), are evident from the beginning of the century to about the 1730s in the survey. These features emulate men's shoes of the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century.¹³ Men's shoes were obviously more visible than women's whose skirts covered all but the tip of the toe but the edgings were stylish and therefore sometimes adopted. These tongue styles are evident in only a small number of surviving shoes.

The peaked throat (or pointed tongue) came to the height of fashion in the 1770s and 1780s although there are examples from the 1740s. It finished lower down the instep and is a good indicator for dating shoes. The style appears to have been used for both latchet shoes (Figure 9) and for slip-ons (Figure 10). A contemporaneous print shown in Figure 11 confirms this.



Figure 10
Shoe, 1790.¹⁴



Figure 11
Detail, *A Real Scene,*
*in St Paul's Churchyard, on a Windy Day.*¹⁵

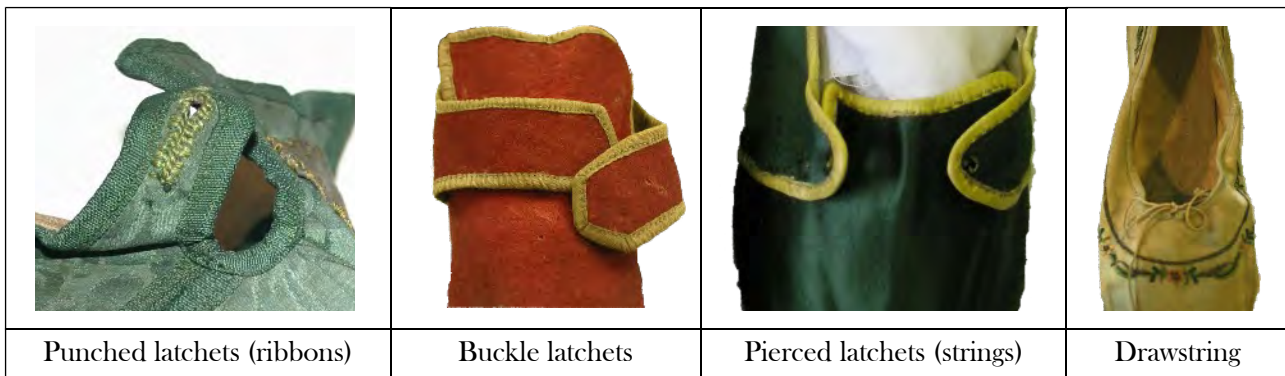


Figure 12
Fastenings.¹⁶

Ways of Fastening

The main means of fastening shoes in the eighteenth century was by the use of latches that were secured by tying or buckles (Figure 12). The use of latches dates back to the Tudor period and continued up to the end of the eighteenth century. Punched latches were predominant in the 1700s but were overtaken by the use of buckles from the 1710s onwards. The latches were usually cut in one piece with the quarters and joined to the vamp at the side seam. From the middle of the century latches of contrasting colours and fabrics to the rest of the uppers were fashionable. In this case the lining was cut in one piece and the contrasting fabric joined to the vamp at the side seam. It seems from the extant shoes that, in some cases, the early punched latches were lengthened to accommodate buckles and, conversely, longer buckle latches were cut down towards the end of the century and punched for laces. Figure 13 shows latches with evident buckle use that have been cut down.

Initially the latches were tied with ribbon and had holes punched or pierced to allow for this purpose. They were positioned high on the instep. On some examples surveyed the hole was embroidered to prevent the fraying of the fabric and to provide a more decorative finish. Figure 14 shows such stitching carried out neatly with the same thread as used on the topbinding. On a significant number the button hole stitching is not carried out to the same standard as the rest of the shoe which might suggest it was carried out post manufacture. The edges of the hole would have been a vulnerable area due to the friction of the bow and therefore would have needed reinforcing to prevent fraying or becoming too large. An example is shown in Figure 15 where the stitching is irregular and the hole appears to be getting dangerously close to the edge of the latchet. Few shoes have what appears to be the original ribbon remaining. This would have worn out easily and may have been changed regularly to match the outfit with which the shoes were worn.



Figure 13
Shoe, 1755–1765,
Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust,
Leominster, England, SNO127.



Figure 14
Shoe, 1700–1730,
Charles Wade Collection,
The National Trust,
Leominster, England, SNO128.



Figure 15
Shoe, 1780, Hereford City
Museums, Hereford,
England, 4991.



Figure 16

Shoe, 1700s,

Charles Wade Collection,

The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO116.



Figure 17

Shoe, 1770-1786,

Charles Wade Collection,

The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO140.

From the examination of shoes the use of the buckle as a means of fastening shoes is very evident even without the multitude of contemporaneous buckles that survive. Most buckle latches on extant shoes have holes left from buckles. An example of a buckle in situ showing how these marks are made is shown in Figure 16. Some shoes reveal marks left by the shape of the buckle such as those in Figure 17. These marks left by cheaper metals confirms that the type of shoes left in our collections did not have to have been worn only by the wealthy.

Buckles were adopted in preference to ribbons by the mid seventeenth century by men but it took longer for women to take up the fashion as buckles could damage the fabric of their long skirts. Walford states that it was not until around the 1720s that buckles became the norm for both sexes.¹⁷ This is supported by the survey with 55% of the shoes from the 1700s being punched latches dropping to around 25% between 1710 and 1729 and lost completely by the 1740s. The positioning of the latches moved nearer to the toe in the latter part of the century coinciding with large buckles and shorter hemlines allowing more of the foot to be on view.

Buckles played a large part in shoe fashion used by both sexes and by all classes during the eighteenth century and some examples are shown in Figure 18. Variations occur in the size, style, and the materials from which they were made. At the beginning of the century buckles were relatively small, about 2.5 x 4cm, growing larger as the century wore on and peaking in size during the 1770s. At this point slip-on or court shoes came into fashion. This period also saw the reintroduction of short, punched latches situated much lower down the instep. The holes were smaller in diameter indicating they were for tying with strings or laces rather than ribbons (Figure 12). The use of ties is said to have resulted from the French Revolution and the adoption of a simpler and less ostentatious mode of dress.¹⁸ Some slip-on shoes also feature a channel around the top of the vamp allowing for a drawstring to be tied to secure the shoe (Figure 12), much as a ballet shoe would be today.

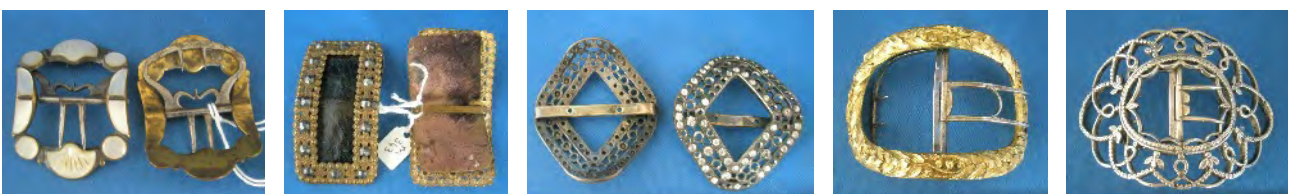


Figure 18

A selection of eighteenth-century buckles from the Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, showing the variety of materials, decorations, and sizes available.

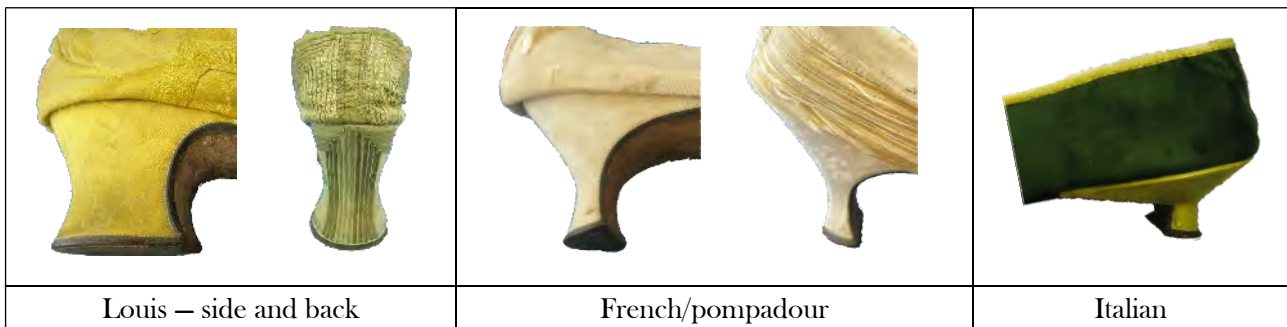


Figure 19
Heel types.¹⁹

Heels

The shape of the heel can be broadly categorised into three types during the eighteenth century – the Louis, the French or pompadour, and the Italian, as illustrated in Figure 19. Although there seems to be some confusion over terminology regarding heels, for the purposes of this paper the term ‘Louis heel’ will be used to describe the shape as shown in Figure 19. For the first half of the century the Louis heel was widely used. It had been adopted in the seventeenth century as a thick heel with a straight back-line but continued with slight variations such as a more curved back line or a thinner, less heavy looking shape until the 1760s. From the survey it can be seen that at least 75% of heels were in the Louis shape until the end of the 1740s and not falling much below for a further two decades. However, the 1770s saw a dramatic drop to only 17% and by the end of the century they had virtually disappeared. The original chunky shape of the heel was in keeping with the baroque feel of the period.

The emergence of the rococo style coincided with the raising and narrowing of the heel into its variant known as the French or pompadour heel. The height of the heel also induced a serpentine curve in the body echoing the heel shape. It came into use, according to the survey, from the 1750s with most examples found dated in the 1760s. Although not widespread they were obviously well enough known for them to be referred to in the satire of the time as in the following extract from *A Receipt for Modern Dress* which appeared in the *Universal Magazine* in 1753:

On slippers of velvet, set gold a-la-daube;
But mount on French heels when you go to a ball,
‘Tis the fashion to totter, and shew you can fall.²⁰

The style of heel which next came to prominence was known as an Italian heel. Although they first seem to have appeared in the 1750s, they did not feature significantly until the 1770s making up 69% of the shoes surveyed. This rose even higher in the following decades of the century almost to the exclusion of any alternative. Yet again there are some discrepancies with the use of the term. Swann suggests that the Italian heel “wedged to support the arch which had only a leather shank” came into favour in the late 1760s.²¹ It is this interpretation that has been used to categorise the shoes that were surveyed. Examples of the heels can be seen in Figure 19. This style of heel could be high or low. When high, they were vulnerable to breakage as there was little support in the heel shape. For this reason, a metal spike was sometimes inserted through the heel to prevent snapping much as is used in more modern times for stiletto heels. Their tendency to break was lampooned in the *Universal Magazine* in July 1776 in “The Modern Belle,” an extract is given below:

Shoes that buckle at the toe;
Gowns that o’er the pavement flow, ...
Heels to bear the precious charge,
More diminutive than large,
Slight and brittle, apt to break,
Of the true Italian make.²²

Heel heights varied considerably throughout the century with no one particular height dominant. Although extremes ranged from 1cm to 10cm, 58% were between 5cm and 8cm. The average highest heels were in the 1720s at 7–8cm and the lowest, in the 1790s, at 3–4cm.

For women, the heel symbolised status and as low heels were more commonly adopted by working women, the heels of those of higher status also increased in height. A higher heel emphasised the smallness of the foot, particularly as gowns hid all but the tip of the toe. Higher heels also elongated the leg and drew attention to the ankles which were considered to be a particularly attractive part of the female body in the eighteenth century. The use of high heels also affected the posture of the wearer causing the back to arch and the pelvis and chest to be thrust forward, and the buttocks to stick out.

Despite fashion, shoes were worn that were more sensible for their function, and those most likely to be on their feet for much of the time wore lower heels. For example, Hogarth's image of *The Enraged Musician* shows a milkmaid wearing shoes with a lowish heel, tied with ribbon and with a slightly upturned toe (Figure 20). Not all ladies were slaves to fashion as Lady Cowper remarks that the Queen (when Princess) 'danced in her Slippers very well' at the ball held for the Prince's birthday, implying that she wore low-heeled shoes which were then not in fashion.²³ However, not all were sensible about the height of their heels for dancing as an advertisement in *The Tatler* describes a stage-coach trip to Mr Tiptoe's dancing school and states that "dancing shoes, not exceeding four inches in height in the heels" could be "carried in the coach-box gratis."²⁴ Although *The Tatler* was a satirical publication this mention suggests that heel heights for dancing could be unnecessarily high. The connection between high heels and extravagant and frivolous lifestyles led to a drastic lowering of heels by the 1790s. This, combined with the fad for neoclassical lines in dress, meant that simpler and lower shoes were more in keeping.



Figure 20
The milkmaid's shoes,
detail, *The Enraged Musician*, William
Hogarth, 1741
etching and engraving, Tate Britain,
London, England, T01800.

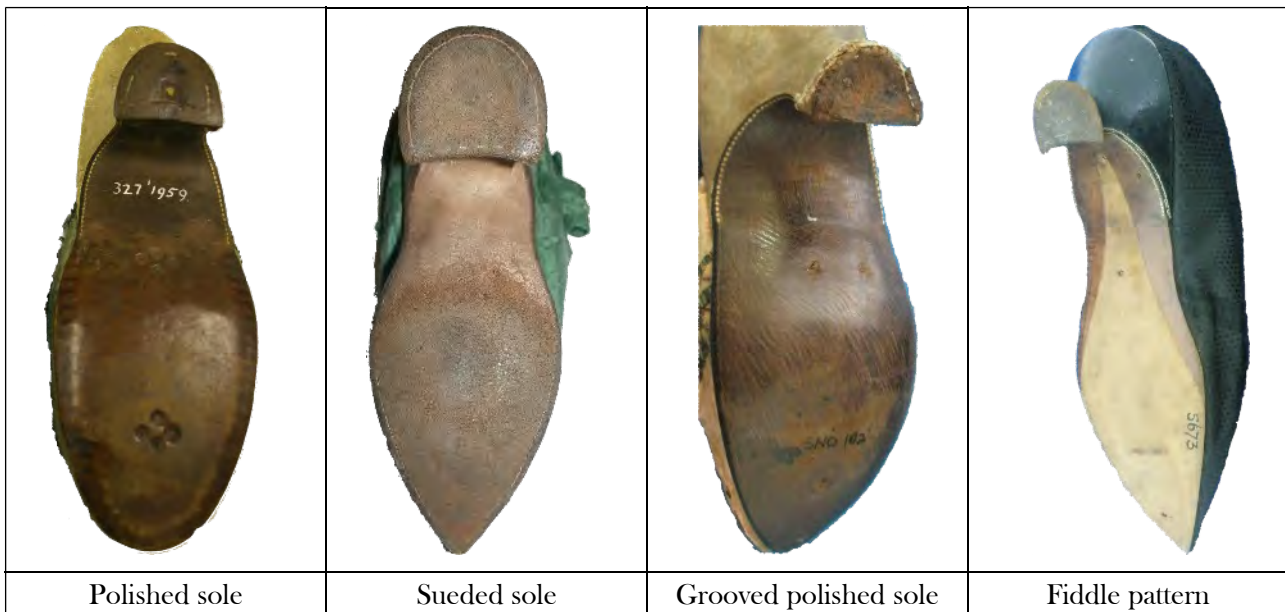


Figure 21
Soles.²⁵

Soles

All outer soles were invariably made from leather but different finishes were used, presumably to suit the purpose, but also according to fashion (Figure 21). Many of the shoes examined had been given what appeared as a polished finish. This may well have been achieved by a glaze of weak glue to provide some protection from water ingress but they would have inevitably been more prone to slippage on smooth surfaces. To counteract this some shoes were given a sueded effect finish to give a slightly better grip on polished floors and which would have been more hard wearing. An in-between measure seems to have been used on some of the mules which were given a glazed finished but shallow grooves were made in the leather to give a small amount of grip.

From the 1780s, when shoes were more elongated with flatter heels, a design known as a fiddle pattern was created using stains on the sole leather. There does not appear to be a practical reason for this and presumably it was used solely for decorative purposes. As with the shoe shape, the pattern was in keeping with the neoclassical style.

Materials and Colours

The survey recorded the materials from which the uppers were made and how they were lined. It is clear that silk (in various types of weave patterns) was the most used fabric for the uppers of women's shoes, generally forming over 80% of extant shoes. Brocade (Figure 22) is the most prominent fabric used up to the 1750s but this drops to virtually nothing in the 1790s. As this was also the fabric most widely used for gowns it could be assumed that shoes were made to match. However, it seems that this was more the exception than the rule. As the fabric used for shoes was most likely off cuts sold by mantuamakers to shoemakers, the outfit and the shoes were rarely coordinated. This may also explain why the patterns on the brocade are not always well matched between the different upper parts (or why the same brocade was not used all over). Silk damask (Figure 6) was particularly popular in the 1740s although used throughout the century. Satin was used widely at the beginning of the century but acts mainly as a base for applied decoration. However, it was the most used type of silk from the 1760s. Textured weave silk (monochrome with patterns created in the weave) was widely used in the 1770s and 1780s (Figure 23). There are also instances of cut and uncut velvet (Figure 24).

Wool was also used throughout the century with examples extant in most decades. Often this was in the form of callimanco which had a glazed effect providing a limited protection from the wet, dust and dirt (Figure 25). This was used for winter wear and more widely by the lower classes.²⁶ Wool ages less



Figure 22
Shoe, 1735,
Charles Wade Collection,
The National Trust,
Leominster, England, SNO133.



Figure 23
Shoes, 1775,
Hereford City Museums,
Hereford, England, 3340.



Figure 24
Shoe, 1770,
Northampton Museums and Art Gallery,
Northampton, England, 2005.33.

well than silk and is prone to moth attack, as many of the extant examples show, which suggests that wool may well have been more widely used but that fewer have survived.

From contemporary images it would seem that ordinary women mainly wore shoes of all leather, predominantly black but sometimes coloured (Figures 26 and 27). However, it was not uncommon for ordinary women to own shoes of both leather and worsted stuff. Styles cites a source from 1793 referring to a pair of stuff shoes with silver buckles being worn on Sundays but only to church.²⁷ It may well be that leather shoes were more widely worn for outdoor purposes but as these were well worn they were not prized enough to preserve and pass down. The Victoria and Albert Museum has an example of shoes (270&A-1891) from 1760 that are of white kid leather, painted as if to represent brocade that purport to originate from Brussels. Such shoes may have been used as outdoor wear being more resilient to the elements than true brocade. Alternatively they may have been available as a cheaper option to give the appearance of fine shoes.

Uppers were often lined with white leather or a plain weave linen (usually an undyed, natural colour). The tongue was sometimes lined with coordinating silk appearing as a plain weave, ribbed, or satin. Occasionally the same fabric as the upper was used as the tongue lining. There are also examples in the



Figure 26
Shoes, 1760-1780,
Nottingham Museum,
Nottingham, England,
NCM 1881-78/1.



Figure 27
Shoe, 1770s,
Charles Wade Collection,
The National Trust,
Leominster, England,
SNO61.



Figure 25
Shoe, 1780s, Charles Wade Collection,
The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO113.
Image © National Trust



Figure 28
Shoe, 1755, Northampton
Museums and Art Gallery,
Northampton, England,
1970.25.6. P.

survey where ticking or striped linen fabric was used as the upper lining (Figure 28) especially for the vamp nearer the toes and therefore less likely to be visible. This was coarser in texture than the usual linen and therefore stiffer, thus better able to support the shape of the shoe. Linen was also used for socks as it was absorbent as well as protecting stockings from the discolouration that leather could cause during the initial stages of wear. White kid served the same purpose.

The most prominent colour for uppers and topbindings was cream or ivory, often featuring as background colour. From about the 1760s, it often appeared in the form of satin. Green was particularly popular and appears in the top three colours from the beginning of the century through to the end of the 1770s. It was also particularly popular for topbinding. Wright proclaims that shoes were often green in colour as it was “a colour that was supposed to work great havoc in the male heart.”²⁸ *The Lady’s Magazine* throughout 1781 mentions green as being appropriate for the “Dress of the Month.”²⁹ Deep yellow was another colour that was fashionable throughout the century. It is interesting to note that even in relatively small collections of shoes, green and/or yellow examples usually appear.

Ribeiro states that “pink was the eighteenth-century colour par excellence for women’s dress;” but this does not seem to have followed for shoe colours.³⁰ However, pink was used more as a contrast colour for topbindings, often with ivory uppers, particularly from the 1780s onwards. From the middle of the century two contrasting colours were often used, one of which was commonly ivory. The more used colours in the 1790s were black, cream and blue.

Decoration

Despite the fact that shoes of this century were made of decorative fabrics and were worn with fancy buckles or tied with large bows, many were decorated even further. From the survey it can be seen that a common form of decoration in the early part of the period was the application of braid (Figures 29 and 30), usually of metal threads appearing gold or silver, about 3–5cm wide, stitched on the vamp and up the tongue. It could also be applied to the back of the heel (Figure 31). The braids (known as lacings) were stitched on and were therefore removable. The much quoted passages in *Pamela* where she, as a servant, was given laced shoes by her mistress but on her return home she states “I have taken the lace



Figure 29
Shoe, 1730.³¹



Figure 30
Shoe, 1700–1730.³²



Figure 31
Shoe, 1725.³³



Figure 32
Shoes, 1700–1720.³⁴



Figure 33
Detail,
The Four Times of the Day: Evening,
William Hogarth, 1738.³⁵



Figure 34
Detail,
A Rake's Progress, Plate 7,
William Hogarth, 1735.³⁶



Figure 35
Detail, *Henrietta Hobart, the Hon. Mrs Howard, Countess of Suffolk*, Thomas Gibson, 1720.³⁷



Figure 36
Detail,
The Stealing of a Kiss, Francis Hayman, 1743.³⁸

off, which I will burn;"³⁹ refers to such adornments suggesting that laced shoes were not appropriate wear for the lower classes. However, as can be seen from Figure 32, lacings could also be applied to otherwise all leather shoes suggesting more ordinary use than solely indoor or upper class wear. The images by Hogarth shown in Figures 33 and 34 illustrate that laced shoes were not restricted to the upper classes although also worn by them as seen in Figure 35, a detail of a portrait of Henrietta Howard, Countess of Suffolk. Between 1700 and 1749 this style of decoration applies to at least 16% of the samples and peaks in the 1720s where 23% were adorned. An engraving dating to 1743 clearly shows this type of decoration on shoes (Figure 36).

A further common adornment, in the early part of the century, was the use of narrow braids (usually around 3mm wide) and of the same colour as the uppers, applied to vamps, tongues and heel covers to form stripes or crisscross designs as shown in Figures 37 and 38. These were sometimes further embellished by the application of spangles or sequins or combined with the central wide band of braid. From the sample surveyed, 22% of shoes in the 1700s had this form of decoration with further examples being recorded up to the 1740s but none thereafter.

From the 1750s onwards, the survey shows that embroidery with polychrome silk threads (see Figure 12) or metal threads was widespread, and particularly in the 1770s and 80s. This was often carried out in conjunction with spangles and beads (Figure 39). Fanny Burney writes in her journal in April 1777 of spangled shoes being "quite the thing."⁴⁰



Figure 37
Shoe, 1710.⁴¹



Figure 38
Shoe, 1745.⁴²

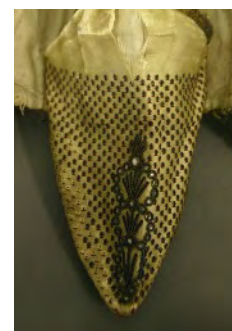


Figure 39
Shoe, 1760-1769.⁴³



Figure 40
Embroidered quarters, 1700–1749.⁴⁴



Figure 41
Uncut embroidered uppers and quarters, 1700–1729.⁴⁵

Swann implies that some uppers may well have been embroidered at home and made up by the shoemaker and that patterns appeared in the *Lady's Magazine* around the 1760s.⁴⁶ Unfortunately it has not been possible to locate an example of this. The Victoria and Albert Museum has several examples of embroidered shoe parts that have not been made into shoes (Figures 40–41). It may well have been this type of work that Fanny Burney received as a Christmas present from Queen Charlotte in 1786 as noted in her diary “The Queen presented me this morning with two pieces of black stuff, very prettily embroidered, for shoes.”⁴⁷

The survey shows that from the 1780s to the end of the century, other embellishments (Figures 42 and 43) were added to shoes such as fringes and pompoms. Ribbons were pleated or ruched. *The Lady's Magazine* recommends shoes with small roses for full dress in January, slippers with roses for déshabillé wear in June and slippers with bows in December.⁴⁸ *The Sherbourne Mercury* of 1773 advises that the dress of the month requires “satin slippers, with different coloured roses.”⁴⁹

The use of fabric as the most visible component of shoes diminished greatly by the 1790s but leather slip-on shoes sometimes had patterns cut out to reveal a fabric underlay. Nottingham Museum has several examples of this technique although some have an underlay of a different colour leather (Figure 44).

Size

There is a general perception that people were shorter in earlier centuries and consequently had smaller feet. This is in some way borne out by the results of the shoe survey which indicates that the largest percentage of shoes fall between 22cms and 24cms in length which roughly equates to modern day UK shoe sizes 1-5. Research has shown that the average height for a woman of this period would have been



Figure 42
Padded bows and fringing. Shoe, 1760s, Hereford City Museums, Hereford, England, 4775.



Figure 43
Ribbon decoration. Shoe, 1780s, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO114.



Figure 44
Shoes, 1790–1800, Nottingham Museum, Nottingham, England, NCM 1996-13; NCM 1960-80; NCM 1960-79; CTLOAN 12/1.



Figure 45

The Duchess Blush or York Flame,
Isaac Cruikshank, 1791, hand-coloured etching,
British Museum, London, England, 868.0808.6133.

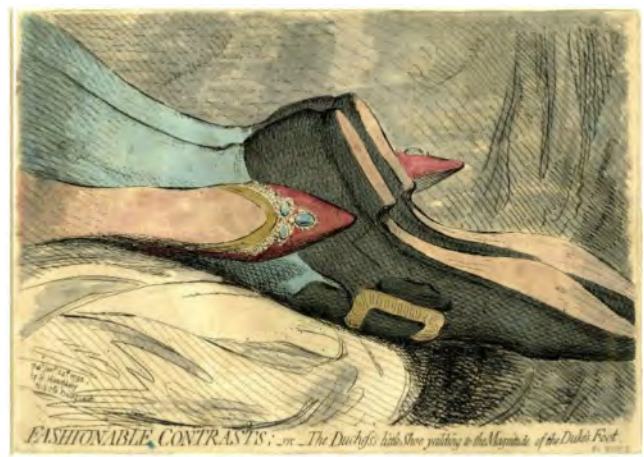


Figure 46

Fashionable Contrasts; or the Duchess's Little Shoe Yielding to the Magnitude of the Duke's Foot,
James Gillray, 1792, hand-coloured etching,
British Museum, London, England, 1868.0808.650.

about 5 feet 1 inch or 155cms.⁵⁰ Most of the shoes are between 7cms and 8cms across the sole equating to a modern day width fitting between A-D. The most frequently found size shoe from the survey would therefore be a narrow or A fitting size 3. This would seem to be in perfect proportion for a woman of average height. The current average female is 5 feet 4 inches tall and takes size 5 with a width fitting of B, confirming that feet have indeed grown although the eighteenth century average would not be too out of the ordinary in today's market.

In the eighteenth century, small feet were seen as more attractive and much was made of the size of Frederica, Duchess of York and Albany's feet. An advertisement was printed with an outline of her shoe showing just how small her feet were, at only 5½ inches long (Figure 45). A cartoon of the time contrasts the size of her feet compared to those of her husband (Figure 46). To this end women tended to wear shoes that were really too tight and too small for them. The following extract from a verse that appeared in the *London Magazine* of July 1755 suggests that the fit of shoes did not always render ease of walking and comfort to the foot.

Let a pair of velvet shoes
Gently press her pretty toes,
Gently press, and softly squeeze;
Tott'ring like the fair Chinese,
Mounted high and buckled low,
Tott'ring every step they go.
Take these hints, and do thy duty,
Fashions are the tests of beauty.⁵¹

Walford states that "Both men and women wore shoes considered too tight in width by today's standard and this habit remained well into the twentieth century."⁵² Camper, a Dutch physician, wrote a treatise in 1781 giving his reasonings on "the distressing consequences of the miserable manner in which we are at present shod" in which he explains how badly shoes were made in relation to the shape of the foot both in rest and in motion.⁵³ Among many of the points he makes is a diagram showing the shape of a foot and the outline of a sole (in red) typical of the period (Figure 47) which speaks for itself in showing the inevitable distortions the foot must make to fit the shoe. During the latter part of the century the average shoe length increased although this was a time when stylistically shoes had more pointed toes thus appearing longer while at the same time also becoming narrower with shoe widths lessening by about 1cm in the 1780s.

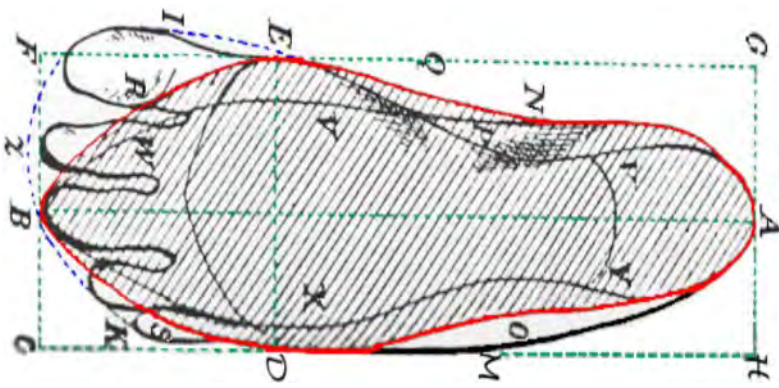


Figure 47
Taken from Petrus Camper,
On the Best Form of Shoe,
written in 1781.

Mules

Mules, ie, shoes without quarters or backless shoes, were in use from the late sixteenth century for men and women. Many of those surviving from the eighteenth century have uppers, often of velvet, heavily embroidered with metal thread as shown in Figure 48 and illustrated in the painting of 1730 of a pug dog (Figure 49). Queen Caroline, wife of George II apparently favoured mules over shoes for day-to-day wear. Semmelhack states that mules were “closely connected with the relaxed elegance and intimate dishabille fashionable in the rococo period. They reflect the pursuit of private pleasures that defined the era...”.⁵⁴ Figure 50 shows a pair of embroidered mules from the 1770s which have a softer feel more appropriate to déshabillé wear. This is reflected in Figure 51, showing a lady dressing, wearing mules with her maid on the right wearing even higher heeled mules. In contrast to this, Figure 52 shows a maid wearing mules while carrying out of her duties in the kitchen. The fact that they were worn in this context might explain why fewer pairs survive.



Figure 48
Mule, 1710–1720.⁵⁵



Figure 49
Pug Dog with Mule, Anon, circa 1730.⁵⁶



Figure 50
Mules, 1770s.⁵⁷



Figure 51
Detail, *La Toilette*,
François Boucher, 1742.⁵⁸



Figure 52
Detail, *Maid Taking Soup
from a Caldron*,
Pehr Hillestrom, circa 1780.⁵⁹

Conclusion

This paper has shown how the visual appearance of shoes and their various components altered over the century to reflect social, cultural, and political changes within society. Shoe shape evolved from the seventeenth century with variations in toe and heel shape until a marked shift in circa 1780 which reflected the broader cultural move towards the neoclassical style. The white tawed leather rand that was one of the most prominent features of the first half of the century disappeared altogether by the end. Toe shapes progressed from upturned needlepoints, through to a softer, more rounded shape in the mid century only to return to sharply pointed toes by the 1790s. The top edges of tongues varied throughout the century but finished by disappearing almost entirely as the use of buckles and latches fell out of fashion. Fastenings, material, and colours were determined by a mixture of practicality and fashion with some features offering the opportunity for ornament and display while others were necessitated by function. Silk was the most common fabric found as the visible upper layers in extant shoes but this may be more a reflection of shoes that were attractive to preserve rather than an overall summation of the fabrics used in the period. Heels varied throughout the century but most were variations on two distinct shapes, that of the Louis heel or the Italian. Heel heights went up and down according to fashion but extremes at both ends of the spectrum can be seen throughout the century.

Endnotes

- ¹ D A Saguto, *M de Garsault's 1767 Art of the Shoemaker*, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, United States, 2009, p xiii.
- ² Ibid, p 4.
- ³ Diagram by Alison Fairhurst.
- ⁴ Shoe, 1725, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17sD2.
- ⁵ Shoe, 1730, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17sD8.
- ⁶ Shoe, 1780s, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17+sD45.
- ⁷ Shoe, 1760–1769, Northampton Museums and Art Gallery, Northampton, England, 1977.120.5 P.
- ⁸ Shoe, 1740s, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO110.
- ⁹ Toe shapes – Needlepoint toe: shoe, 1740s, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO110. Blunt point toe: shoe, 1785, Nottingham Museum, Nottingham, England, NCM 1966.8. Round toe: shoe, 1750s, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester, England, 516.1951. Pointed toe: shoe, 1790s, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17+sD18.
- ¹⁰ Jonathan Walford, *The Seductive Shoe: Four Centuries of Fashion Footwear*, Thames and Hudson, London, England, 2007, p 44.
- ¹¹ *Marriage a la Mode, Plate 6, The Lady's Death*, William Hogarth, 1743, oil on canvas, The National Gallery, London, England, NG118.
- ¹² Tongue shapes – Straight edge: shoe, 1760, Hereford City Museums, Hereford, England, 4990. Concave edge: shoe, 1730s, Saffron Walden Museum, Saffron Walden, England, 4659.70 372. Convex edge: shoe, 1770, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO121. Cupid's bow: shoe, 1720–1740, Hampshire County Museums, Winchester, England, HMCMS:C2006.168, photograph © Hampshire County Museums. Van dyke: shoe, 1700–1720, Hampshire County Museums, Winchester, England, HMCMS:C1980.49, photograph © Hampshire County Museums. Peaked: shoe, 1775, Hereford City Museums, Hereford, England, 3340.
- ¹³ June Swann, *Shoes*, Batsford, London, England, 1982, p 21.
- ¹⁴ Shoe, 1790, Nottingham Museum, Nottingham, England, NCM 1996-13.
- ¹⁵ *A Real Scene, in St Paul's Churchyard, on a Windy Day*, Richard Dighton (after), 1782–1784, mezzotint, British Museum, London, England, 1880,1113.3312.
- ¹⁶ Fastenings – Punched latches: shoe, 1725, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17sD2. Buckle latches: shoe, 1730s, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester, England, 133.1919. Pierced latches: shoe, 1790, Nottingham Museum, Nottingham, England, NCM 1979-680. Drawstring: shoe, 1790, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17+sD1.
- ¹⁷ Walford, op cit, p 26.

- ¹⁸ Lucy Pratt and Linda Woolley, *Shoes*, V&A Publications, London, England, 1999, p 55.
- ¹⁹ Heel types – Louis side: shoe, 1740s, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO143. Louis back: shoe, 1730s, Hereford City Museums, Hereford, England, 3339. French/pompadour: shoe, 1765–1775, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO136, shoe, 1760s, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO144. Italian: shoe, 1790, Nottingham Museum, Nottingham, England, NCM 1979-680.
- ²⁰ *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, Volume 12, John Hinton, London, England, 1753.
- ²¹ Swann, op cit, p 30.
- ²² *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, Volume 59, John Hinton, London, England, 1776.
- ²³ Mary Cowper, *Diary of Mary Countess Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales 1714–1720*, London, England, 1864, 30 October 1714.
- ²⁴ *The Tatler; or Lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq: Volume the First*, Bathurst, Buckland, Strahern et al, London, England, 1774, 13 June 1710.
- ²⁵ Soles – Polished sole: mule, 1770s, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester, England, 327.1959. Sueded sole: shoe, 1725, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17sD2. Grooved polished sole: mule, 1750s, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO102. Fiddle pattern: shoe, 1785–1790, Hereford City Museums, Hereford, England, 5673.
- ²⁶ Swann, op cit, p 29.
- ²⁷ John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2007, p 88.
- ²⁸ Thomas Wright, *The Romance of the Shoe*, C J Farncombe and Sons, London, England, 1922, p 131.
- ²⁹ *The Lady's Magazine or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely for their Use and Amusement*, Volume XII, G Robinson, London, England, June 1781.
- ³⁰ Aileen Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750–1850*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 1995, p 65.
- ³¹ Shoe, 1730, Northampton Museums and Art Gallery, Northampton, England, 1977.33.5 P.
- ³² Shoe, 1700–1730, Charles Wade Collection, The National Trust, Leominster, England, SNO128.
- ³³ Shoe, 1725, Clarks Museum, Street, England, W17sD2.
- ³⁴ Shoe, 1700–1720, Nottingham Museum, Nottingham, England, NCM 1881.76/1.
- ³⁵ *The Four Times of the Day: Evening*, William Hogarth, 1738, engraving print on paper, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, DYCE2743.
- ³⁶ *A Rake's Progress, Plate 7*, William Hogarth, 1735, etching and engraving on paper, Tate Britain, London, England, T01793.
- ³⁷ *Henrietta Hobart, the Hon. Mrs Howard, Countess of Suffolk*, Thomas Gibson, 1720, oil on canvas, The National Trust, Blickling Hall, Norfolk, England, 355490.
- ³⁸ *The Stealing of a Kiss*, Francis Hayman, 1743, etching on paper, British Museum, London, England cc,3.168.
- ³⁹ Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*, Penguin Books, London, England, 1980 (first published 1740).
- ⁴⁰ Fanny Burney, *Journals and Letters (1768–1839)*, Penguin, London, 2001.
- ⁴¹ Shoe, 1710, Gunnersbury Park Museum, Gunnersbury, England, 75.2/19.
- ⁴² Shoe, 1745, Gunnersbury Park Museum, Gunnersbury, England, 2901/2.
- ⁴³ Shoe, 1760–1769, Northampton Museums and Art Gallery, Northampton, England, 1977.120.5P.
- ⁴⁴ Embroidered quarters, 1700–1749, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, T.159&A–1925.
- ⁴⁵ Uncut embroidered uppers and quarters, 1700–1729, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, 231–1908.
- ⁴⁶ Swann, op cit, p 29.
- ⁴⁷ Fanny Burney, *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, Henry Colburn, London, England, 1854, p 217.
- ⁴⁸ *The Lady's Magazine*, op cit.

- ⁴⁹ Beverley Lemire, "Developing Consumerism and the Ready-made Clothing Trade in Britain, 1750-1800," *Textile History*, 15, 1984, p 26.
- ⁵⁰ Richard H Steckel, "Height and Per Capita Income," *Historical Methods*, 16 (1)1983, pp 1-7. Margaret Cox, *Life and Death in Spitalfields 1700-1850*, Council for British Archaeology, York, England, 1996.
- ⁵¹ *The London Magazine or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, Volume 24 for the Year 1755*, R Baldwin, London, England, 1755, p 343.
- ⁵² Walford, op cit, p 45.
- ⁵³ Petrus Camper, *On the Best Form of Shoe*, (Translated by James Dowie), Hardwicke, London, England, 1861, (first published 1781).
- ⁵⁴ Elizabeth Semmelhack, *Heights of Fashion: A History of the Elevated Shoe*, Bata Shoe Museum Foundation, Toronto, Canada, 2008, p 25.
- ⁵⁵ Mule, 1710-1720, Gunnersbury Park Museum, Gunnersbury, England, 2605/1.
- ⁵⁶ *Pug Dog with Mule*, anon, circa 1730, oil on canvas, private collection, London, England.
- ⁵⁷ Mules, 1770s, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester, England, 327.1959.
- ⁵⁸ *La Toilette*, François Boucher, 1742, oil on canvas, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain, 58 (1967.4).
- ⁵⁹ *Maid Taking Soup from a Caldron*, Pehr Hillestrom, circa 1780, oil on canvas, private collection, Sweden.

All photography by Alison Fairhurst unless otherwise stated.

Bibliography

- Burney, Fanny, *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arbly*, Henry Colburn, London, England, 1854.
- Burney, Fanny, *Journals and Letters (1768-1839)*, Penguin, London, England, 2001.
- Camper, Petrus, *On the Best Form of Shoe*, (Translated by James Dowie), Hardwicke, London, England, 1861, (first published 1781).
- Cowper, Mary, *Diary of Mary Countess Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales 1714-1720*, London, England, 1864.
- Cox, Margaret, *Life and Death in Spitalfields 1700-1850*, Council for British Archaeology, York, England, 1996.
- The Lady's Magazine or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex, Appropriated Solely for their Use and Amusement*, Volume XII, G Robinson, London, England, 1781.
- Lemire, Beverley, "Developing Consumerism and the Ready-made Clothing Trade in Britain, 1750-1800," *Textile History*, 15, 1984, pp 21-44.
- The London Magazine or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, Volume 24 for the Year 1755*, R Baldwin, London, England, 1755.
- Pratt, Lucy and Woolley, Linda, *Shoes*, V&A Publications, London, England, 1999.
- Ribeiro, Aileen, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750-1850*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 1995.
- Richardson, Samuel, *Pamela*, Penguin Books, London, England, 1980 (first published 1740).
- Saguto, D A, *M de Garsault's 1767 Art of the Shoemaker*, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, England, United States, 2009.

- Semmelhack, Elizabeth, *Heights of Fashion: A History of the Elevated Shoe*, Bata Shoe Museum Foundation, Toronto, Canada, 2008.
- Steckel, Richard H, "Height and Per Capita Income," *Historical Methods*, 16 (1)1983, pp 1-7.
- Styles, John, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2007.
- Swann, June, *Shoes*, Batsford, London, England, 1982.
- The Tatler; or Lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq: Volume the First*, Bathurst, Buckland, Strahern et al, London, England, 1774.
- The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, Volume 12, John Hinton, London, England, 1753.
- The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, Volume 59, John Hinton, London, England, 1776.
- Walford, Jonathan, *The Seductive Shoe: Four Centuries of Fashion Footwear*, Thames and Hudson, London, England, 2007.
- Wright, Thomas, *The Romance of the Shoe*, C J Farncombe and Sons, London, England, 1922.

Copyright © 2017 Alison Fairhurst
Email: alisonfairhurst@btinternet.com

Alison Fairhurst gained her PhD from the University of Lincoln for her research into the materials, construction, and conservation of women's shoes in the eighteenth century. Her doctoral research included the examination of more than 100 pairs of extant shoes from various collections and highlighted the importance of object-based research. She has a BA and MA in the conservation of historic objects and has spent several years working as a textile conservator with The Landi Company. Her interests include anything dress or textile related but particularly those dating from 1500-1800.

Tina Leser Sketchbooks, 1942–1962: Crossing Continents and Interpreting Ethnic Dress for American Sportswear

Thomas P Gates

Abstract

The sketchbooks of American sportswear designer Tina Leser (1910–1986) in Kent State University’s June F Mohler Fashion Library contain renderings of her mid-twentieth century collections. As a world traveller Leser was familiar with the ethnographic dress and textiles of the Near and Far East, India, the Middle East and Africa, Latin American, and Oceania. Examples of her adaptations of ethnic dress and its components include swimwear, play clothes, and dresses, which reference Tahiti, Hawaii, Mexico, Japan, and India. This paper discusses Tina Leser’s unique contributions to mid-twentieth-century American sportswear design, based on her astute knowledge of ethnographic dress from across the continents.

Tina Leser was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1910, and adopted by her mother’s cousin, Georgine Wetherill Shillard-Smith. Her mother, an artist, supervised her art and music education with studies in Philadelphia and in Paris at the Sorbonne. The family travelled frequently – to Europe, India, the Americas, and Asia. Her exposure to cultures and penchant for studying and collecting ethnographic dress and textiles, along with a fine arts education, formed the basis for a successful sportswear designing career (Figure 1).

According to April Calahan in her 2009 Master’s thesis, Tina Leser married Curtin Leser and moved to Hawaii in 1931.¹ Newly divorced in 1935, she opened a boutique in Honolulu at Waikiki Beach. Leser carried in her shop a few high-end New York designer labels, but her real interest was designing



Figure 1

Tina Leser, designer for Signet ties,
4 February 1950.²



Figure 2

Waikiki Beach at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, 1951.³

prints for fabrics and resort and cruise apparel for the clientele who stayed at the nearby Royal Hawaiian Hotel (Figure 2). It was the lodging of choice for well-heeled tourists after they disembarked from Matson Line cruise ships for holidays in the balmy island environs.

In Hawaii, Leser applied her artistic ingenuity to her business when,

A shipping strike in the early years of the business tested Leser's creativity. Unable to acquire materials and stock through traditional sources, she "went native" and turned to materials found on the island. She used sailcloth, grommets, and rope in her early play clothes, as well as native textiles such as *palaka*, a blue and white woven fabric that was favoured by pineapple field workers.⁴

By 1940, *Women's Wear Daily*, the American trade publication which promoted her collections over the years, headlined Leser's success designing sportswear for Hawaiian resort-goers,

Hawaii Comes Through With the Newest Fashion, Via American Designer's Prints and Frocks: Tina Leser, Established in Waikiki Beach Specialty Shop, Combines Native Inspirational Themes With Smart Wear to Be Launched Here for New Resort Season.⁵

In December 1941, Japan attacked the American military base at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, and subsequently Leser closed her Honolulu shop and relocated to New York City. In 1943, she joined sportswear manufacturer Edwin H Foreman, Inc, and when he retired in 1953, she headed her firm with the label "Tina Leser Original." Her fashions were sold at stores throughout the United States. By 1949, her line was selected by Captain Edward Molyneux for his London and Paris boutiques. In 1961, she retailed her sportswear at larger venues abroad, in London at Harvey Nichols and Fortnum and Mason.⁶ From the onset of her forty-year career, Tina Leser was recognised by her peers as a sportswear innovator and among her many industry awards was the 1945, second prize American Fashion Critics Award. In 1981 Leser retired to her Long Island, New York, country house where she died five years later.⁷

Leser, like other designers, compiled seasons' collections into sketchbooks. The June F Mohler Fashion Library at Kent State University in Ohio has 18 sketchbooks, starting with Rivera, 1942 to 1943, followed by the years 1957 to 1962, representing Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer, Resort, Palm Beach, and Holiday. Leser's vivid concepts for advertising themes are sometimes revisited as in the example of a 1948 Blum Store, Philadelphia, window display, *Signals to the Sun*, which relates to a late 1950s' Resort sketchbook



Figure 3

Tina Leser, Designer
Sketchbook: Resort, circa 1950s.⁸



Figure 4

Signals to the Sun, window display, The Blum Store, Philadelphia, 21 December 1948.⁹

with an intense orange linen cover, decorated with a stylised gold sun above the glitter-enhanced title (Figures 3 and 4). It was around 1948 that American shops resumed advertising for cruise and resort wear, as the tourist industry was revived with the availability of ships for travel, and the rescinding of the L-85 American mandate on lengths of textiles used in apparel manufacturing.

Tina Leser's collection of sketchbooks, clippings, and photograph files, provide 20 years of visual documentation for mid-twentieth-century American sportswear trends, especially the influence of ethnic dress.¹⁰ The earliest sketchbook, Rivera (1942–1943) contains cartoon-like, primitively outlined figures on tracing paper taped to heavily acidic cardboard. The sketches were rendered in pen and black ink, and painted with gouaches. Swatches of fabric selections are also fastened to each page with pressure sensitive tape – its adhesive has degraded, causing damage to adjoining pages. As in most of the sketchbooks, Leser has added notations to the margins of pages, such as name and number of model; price of each garment in the set, sketches of flats, and details about the fabric. A 1941 article in *Women's Wear Daily* commented on the designer's ethnically and historically inspired clothes,

Tina Leser, designer of Honolulu, who made a favourable impression last year with the introduction of her exotically painted resort clothes, presented her fall collection yesterday in her wholesale showroom on 47th Street. It is a large collection, ranging from sports clothes to evening, in which the designer frankly links her development of modern clothes to those of the past – from Victorian "antimacassar" type to Chinese, Scottish, Indo-Chinese, and of course, the South Sea Islands, for often she shows along with the modern clothes some of the old-world costumes she has collected on her travels.¹¹

Leser's early inspiration for fashion themes derived from not only the *mélange* of ethnic dress of the islands, but from the imagery of the Hawaiian environment. In fact, she designed fabrics and used apparel as a canvas, painting directly onto them after they were sewn into blouses and skirts, as *Women's Wear Daily* observed,

Right from the beginning of her overnight success in the United States, she revealed an unusually strong sense of exotic decoration applied to honest, American-style patterns. Going from the lush flora and fauna of Hawaii, which she painted on those first clothes she made and sold, she has progressed to the forms themselves of skirts, trousers, and draperies of other exotic sources.¹²

The ethnic dress of Hawaii and Tahiti also provided Leser with design sources as evident in sketches from the Rivera sketchbook. A composite style called "Tiki" was developed by tourism promoters to the Hawaiian Islands, and its origin was based on a number of sources, some of which were taken out of their cultural context. Leser too, like other designers with a penchant for popular culture, had no qualms about incorporating into her fashions stereotypes of ethnic dress. For example, female hula



Figure 5
Hawaiian Hula
Hula Dancers,
circa 1910,
postcard,
Island Curio
Company.



Figure 6

Terry on jersey beach costumes with fringe, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Rivera, 1942-1943.¹³



Figure 7

Two Hawaiian-Lei bathing suits, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Rivera, 1942-1943.¹⁴

dancers who entertained visitors wore grass skirts as costumes, which evolved from a primitive covering of ti leaves worn only by the men who were designated to do the sacred dances (Figure 5). With the advent of American tourism, the image of hula dancers became associated with Hollywood's notion of a Westernised, exotic female, depicted as graceful and shapely, adorned in flower leis wearing only a grass skirt and bra, which was sometimes quite absurdly made of coconut shells.

Leser reworked the hula theme in the Rivera sketchbook, applying it to designs for play clothes and beachwear. She created in one sketch a novelty beach costume available in either terry cloth or jersey fabric. Its crossover bodice was constructed with the broad-shouldered silhouette made popular in the 1940s by Hollywood film star Joan Crawford; and to the diagonal hem of the skirt Leser added long rows of fringe cut from the fabric, suggesting strands of grass (Figure 6). For another sketch she rendered two identical figures standing side by side wearing what she titled "Lei" bathing suits in a waffle pique fabric (Figure 7).

Leser was also inspired by the culture and dress of the Polynesian island of Tahiti. So much so that she titled pages in the Rivera sketchbook Gaugin [sic], paying homage to the French artist, Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), who lived there and painted its tropical environment and comely inhabitants. She even taped to a page a reproduction of his painting *Tahitian Women on the Beach* (Figure 8).¹⁵ In one Gaugin [sic] sketch, Leser painted a crepe blouse with figures and colours derived from the artist's depictions of native women. The slightly upturned shoulders of the blouse suggests dance costumes of Southeast Asia. Leser noted on the sketch, an unconventional "two-tone trouser," with one leg in red and the other in blue (Figure 9).

Also evident in Leser's sketches are Hawaiian versions of women's dress based on prevailing European and American styles introduced to the islands in the early nineteenth century by wives of Protestant missionaries. They arrived in neoclassical day dresses characterised by a narrow, flowing silhouette with long sleeves; a modest scoop neckline; waist gathered under the bust; and a softly flared back (Figure 10). They encouraged the loin-cloth-girded Hawaiians to cover their near nudity, since, like Tahitians, they wore only a covering of hand-processed bark cloth (kapa), suitable for the hot and humid climate.



Figure 8
Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook:
Rivera, 1942-1943.¹⁶



Figure 9
Gaugin [sic], handpainted crepe blouse, two-tone
trouser, Tina Leser Designer Sketchbook:
Rivera, 1942-1943.¹⁷



Figure 10
American neoclassical day dress,
circa 1810.¹⁸

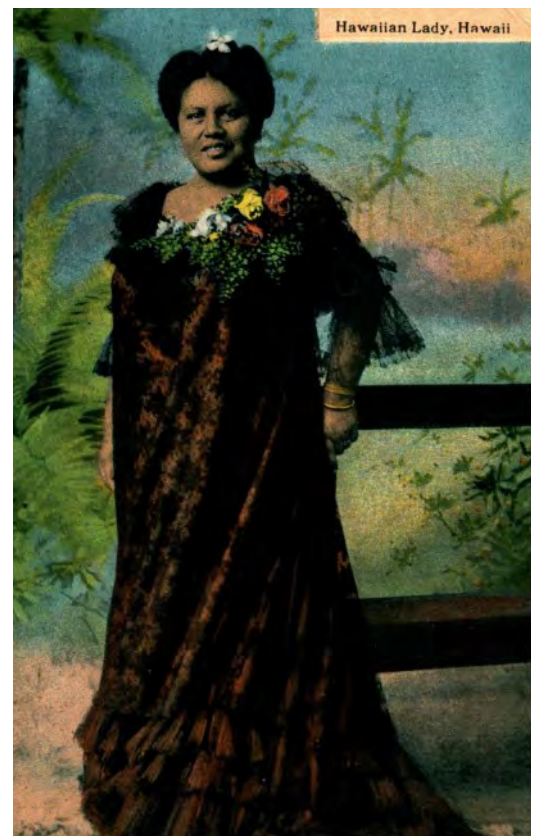


Figure 11
Hawaiian lady in holoku, circa 1930, postcard,
Hawaii and South Sea Curio Company.



Figure 12
Holoku Hula,
photograph
postcard, circa
1940.



Figure 13
Holoku wrap and
bathing suit, Tina
Leser Designer
Sketchbook:
Resort, 1960.¹⁹

Based on a version of the ubiquitous “Mother Hubbard,” indigenous women created what they called a holoku (Figure 11).

The holoku’s full-body covering had a decorative collar, yoked bodice, flounces encircling the skirt, and a long train held in the hand by a loop (Figure 12). When the shapeless shift called a muu-muu appeared, it was adapted for daily wear, and the holoku remained a more formal dress for hula singers and dancers, worn also for special occasions. Leser, as well as other designers, interpreted the holoku and muu-muu for new fashions (Figure 13). In her 1959 Resort collection she transformed the formal holoku into an informal beach cover up for which she designed a traditional Polynesian print in red, embellished with large white flowers. Like its neoclassical precedent, the silhouette had a scoop-neck bodice with a high, fitted waist. Leser added ties at the shoulders for convenient removal at the beach or poolside, revealing underneath a bright, one-piece red bathing suit. The skirt was cut to express a softly flowing silhouette. The holoku’s train extended at the back of the waist, suggesting the elegance of its original form.

Leser’s sketch of the holoku-dressed model holds in her left hand a Hawaiian “boozing bonnet” with the hatband encircled by red and white flowers. Woven of lauhala palm leaves and adorned with the islands’ tropical flowers, the unusually named hat was worn as a courting accessory by paniolos, described in the *Encyclopaedia of World Dress and Fashion* as cowboys of Spanish-Mexican ancestry who came to the islands to introduce horsemanship and ranching (Figure 14).²⁰ Leser redesigned the bonnet in



Figure 14
Hawaiian girl in decorated fibre hat, circa
1900, postcard, Island Curio Company.



Figure 15
Hawaiian “Boozing Bonnet,” 1941.²¹



Figure 16
Japanese immigrants on Hawaiian sugar cane plantation, circa 1900, photograph, unknown photographer.

1941 as a “unisex” accessory, “with coloured fishnet into which cork, dyed sponges, coral, shells, and rooster feathers are arranged as a decoration” (Figure 15).²¹ The bonnets retailed at Arnold Constable and Company’s New York City shop for \$7.50.

During her Hawaiian years, Leser also integrated into sportswear collections elements of Asian dress and textiles found on the islands and encountered in her Far Eastern travels. Because of its location, the Hawaiian archipelago was considered the crossroads of the central Pacific and became, in the late nineteenth century, a destination for immigrants from, among other places, Korea, China, Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines. Hawaii’s sugar, pineapple, coffee, and rice plantations attracted field workers who were housed at the sites and posed for photographs and postcards in the early 1900s wearing Western dress, although they kept their ethnographic traditions, languages, and dress (Figure 16).

Leser even found inspiration in utilitarian shirts and fabrics worn by the Hawaiian workers. This is apparent in a sketch for a one-piece woman’s bathing suit in the water-repellant fabric Lastex (Figure 17). Available in blue or red, the woven plaid cotton, originating in English textile mills, was called palaka by Hawaiians. When sailors landed in Hawaii, the indigenous population traded goods for their shirts,



Figure 17
Lastex bathing suit in palaka fabric, Tina Lesser, Designer Sketchbook: Summer, 1959.²²



Figure 18
Pineapple Plantation, Hawaiian Islands, circa 1920, postcard, Island Curio Company.



Figure 19

Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Man's Cabana Set, circa 1950s, palaka fabric.²³



Figure 20

"Kimo" at-home jacket, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: 1958.²⁴

referred to as frocks. In turn, they were adapted by plantation labourers as a quasi-uniform (Figure 18). Leser also created a man's cabana set with jacket and swim trunks in nubby red or green palaka (Figure 19). The design for the jacket is based on the generously cut Mandarin-collared Chinese style, worn in the fields with the conical Asian "coolie" hat, which Leser introduced as an accessory in a number of sketches from bathing suits to casual dresses.

Leser's sketchbooks also illustrate how she reworked elements of Asian dress she encountered in Hawaii into her collections. She was especially intrigued by Japanese kimonos and the wide obi-sash that belted the waist and tied at the back in various decorative bows. The focus of her 1958 Spring Resort collection was Japan and Bali, and a fashion journalist noted the appearance of kimono-inspired apparel, dubbed "Kimo:"

The "Kimo" jacket shows up in many ways. Basically, it is a wrapover easy design that hugs the hips. Wide self sashes from the side seams tie in front. Above-elbow kimono sleeves are a feature. It registers in terry cloth for beach, washable silk broadcloth for town.²⁵

Variations of Leser's "kimo" theme appear in several sketches, including what might very well be the most authentic interpretation of ethnic dress for leisure wear – the bombastic 1958 at-home entertaining ensemble combines the traditional kimono's crossover bodice with broad hanging sleeves (Figure 20). Its bold contemporary look is achieved by the narrow red tailored, tapered trousers that contrast with the hip-length jacket's traditional kimono silhouette and printed fabric, which is accented with strong yellow vertical lines and Oriental-derived motifs worked into a deep red background. A less authentic ethnic statement, but still in keeping with the Japanese theme, is an off-white sheath with a bateau neckline appearing in the spring 1959 sketchbook. Its waist is accented with a wide red-and-black woven obi-sash, tied high at the back and finished with a decorative tassel (Figure 21). The split hemline of the long, narrow skirt is reminiscent of the Chinese cheongsam.



Figure 21

Sheath dress with obi-sash, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Spring, 1959.²⁶



Figure 22

Obi-sash swimsuit, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Resort 1958.²⁷

Finally, an unusual twist appears in Leser's line of obi-sash swimsuits, as reported in a 1958 *Women's Wear Daily*, "Miss Leser's imaginative swimsuits are elevated at the waistline with the ancient obi-sash from Japan. They are removable for active pool or ocean thrashers."²⁸ A sketch from Leser's 1958 Resort collection done in pen and ink on interfacing fabric shows a lithe figure wearing a unique one-piece bathing suit, available in a red or blue striped fabric, accompanied by a short detachable obi-sash. A flared matching jacket in a yellow-and-black block print covers the swim suit, to which Leser added a conical Asian hat (Figure 22).

In addition to Hawaiian influences in her sketchbooks, Tina Leser was also inspired by Mexican and Guatemalan native dress and woven textiles. Throughout her career she revisited this interest, which is apparent in the Rivera sketchbook. Leser titled it and individual sketches after the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera whose work she admired along with the iconic paintings of his artist-wife, Frida Kahlo.

Leser, and other fashion designers, frequently travelled to Latin America, especially to where Americans called "south of the border" – nearby Mexico – in search of design inspiration as well as handcrafted textiles and accessories. During the summer of 1943, *Women's Wear Daily* reported that Leser considered her travels there, "as fashion stimulant," and "as source for sportswear styles."²⁹

Although Leser was often inspired by heavily ornamented ethnic dress, she used it as a point of departure for designing, concentrating on one idea, as a reviewer observed,

Each of Tina's lines is planned around a single theme which is expressed with a background of historical interest and a balance of seriousness and fun. And then her ideals are punctuated with concentrated accent. "Strip off anything superfluous," she says. "Subordinate everything to that fullness centred in one place, that single print or embroidery motif, those red sleeves!"³⁰

Tina Leser's sketchbooks demonstrate her thematic approach to design and the manner in which she extracted a single feature of apparel to create a dramatic or interesting statement. For example, she used



Figure 23
Dinner dress with
rebozo, Tina
Leser, Designer
Sketchbook:
Resort, 1958.³¹



Figure 24
Bathing suit with
poncho wrap and
boozing bonnet,
Tina Leser,
Designer
Sketchbook:
Resort, 1958.³²

the outerwear woven by Latin America’s indigenous people to create focal points or to finish an ensemble. She included three types in the Rivera sketchbook – the rebozo, the poncho, and the serape. A sketch for the 1958 Resort collection combines a purple rebozo, the traditional long, woven shawl used by native women for totting infants and keeping warm, with a simple sleeveless dinner dress of the same colour (Figure 23). Its hem is heavily fringed like the rebozo, and its colour and style relate to several selfportraits by Frida Kahlo in regional Mexican dress over which she wore similar rebosos.

The poncho was also worn by native peoples to protect from the elements. It was fabricated from a woven square with an opening for the head. Again, Leser found a way to repurpose it into contemporary beachwear. In a 1958 Resort sketch, Leser altered the quasi-poncho into a crossover bath towel and wrap for a bathing suit ensemble. She selected the fabric in diamond and striped patterns resembling those woven by Mayan descendents of Mexico and Guatemala (Figure 24 and Figure 25).

The rectangular woven blanket, known as a serape in Mexico, provided Leser with additional inspiration for an unusual bathing suit combination. She repurposed the traditional garment, as noted on a sketch in the Rivera sketchbook, as a “Serape bath towel and bathing suit” in a grey terry cloth “dish towel stripe.” Instead of encompassing the wearer’s upper-torso like the original, Leser folded a smaller version of it over the right shoulder and tucked it into the waistband (Figure 26).

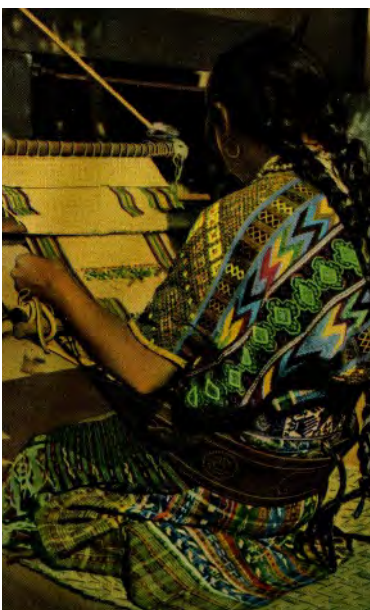


Figure 25
Indian weaver,
San Antonio
Aguas Calientes,
Guatemala,
circa 1940,
colour photograph
postcard, J Munoz,
©Clark’s Tours.



Figure 26
Serape bath
towel and
bathing suit set,
Tina Leser,
Designer
Sketchbook:
Rivera,
1942-1943.³³



Figure 27

Her First Kill, Bayonne France, Conchita Cintrón, Bullfighter,
18 August 1947, press photograph, World Wide Photos.



Figure 28

Pink maxi coat, halter, and pants,
Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook,
circa 1960.³⁴

Just as Tina Leser was inspired by Hawaiian field workers' clothes, she was, on her 1943 Mexican trip, influenced by the charro or cowboy gear worn by bullfighter Conchita Cintrón as reported by *Women's Wear Daily*,

Miss Leser was struck with the grace and exquisite technique of Conchita Cintrón, Mexico's famous young woman matador and implied that the very simplicity of her costume, so unlike the matador's usual costume, had extreme effectiveness and was an inspiration in silhouette (Figure 27).³⁵

Cintrón, known as the Diosa de Oro, was an acclaimed Chilean-Peruvian bullfighter whose dramatic career in the 1940s and 1950s resulted in 750 kills in the world's foremost corridas. In place of the elaborately embroidered form-fitted matador costume, she elected to wear in the bullring the work outfit of Latin American charros or cowboys. It consisted of functional clothing, which was layered mostly in leather for protection – chaps covering heavy trousers; a vest over a shirt; and a jacket worn with boots. For an undated Resort collection, Leser adhered to Cintrón's slim, tailored silhouette, but transformed the rough masculine garb into a glamorous feminine statement by creating a tailored pink maxi-coat fastened with a row of four toggle closures similar to those used on Asian dress. A detail on the sketch reveals the provocative costume underneath the long coat – a skin-tight pink halter with narrow pants and stiletto-heeled boots (Figure 28).

Tina Leser's sportswear collections, evident in the sketchbooks, were heavily influenced by her interest and knowledge of worldwide ethnic dress which she interpreted for modern clothes. Sportswear developed in the late 1920s for upper-class women. Designers were aware of the need for comfortable dress for various activities at country clubs, on cruise ships, and at resorts. Leser's sportswear was sold in specialty shops of high-end department stores, such as Neiman-Marcus in Dallas, Texas and New York City's Bonwit-Teller, Saks-Fifth Avenue, and Lord & Taylor. An article, "Clothes Make a Woman's Holiday," explains the requirements of resort dress for women over thirty-five, calling for, "Expansive, Planned Wardrobes" for morning, play, afternoon, and evening activities. The individual carefully plans,

... the thorough-going wardrobe for resort wear, it is not overstating it to say that the most complete wardrobes are assembled by your woman customer.



Figure 29

Egyptian costume, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Resort 1961-1962.³⁶



Figure 30

Egyptian and Indian bathing set, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Resort, 1960.³⁷

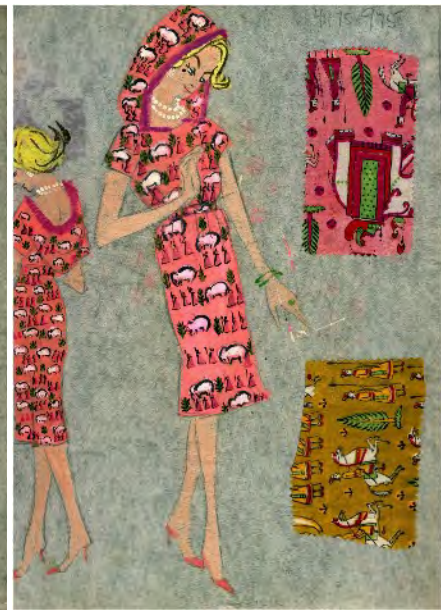


Figure 31

Indian dinner dress with hood, Tina Leser, Designer Sketchbook: Resort, 1960.³⁸

She blue-prints her wardrobe to the last detail — for her own satisfaction and for the scrutiny of her contemporary girlfriends.³⁹

After the Second World War ended in 1945, fashion publicists had a field day creating and promoting every imaginable type of sportswear with a plethora of inventive names, exemplified by Leser's play clothes, for which she inventively labelled, "fishtail skirts," "corset-shorts," "toreador," "water boy" or "jester" pants, and "wading-skirts." Resort-goers became consumers of innovative apparel as noted in *Women's Wear Daily* which reported when they shopped,

... they can continually be swept away by anything that is new, amusing and gay. It is not exceptional to witness a sales-transaction and hear the woman customer say: "I just had to have that to wear down here, though I know I won't wear it when I get home."⁴⁰

Indeed, some of Leser's ethnic-inspired designs defied conventional norms and might have been considered rather over-the-top if worn outside of a resort or cruise ship setting. Her sketchbooks show examples of novelty fashions that targeted the intrepid traveller. She found especially irresistible textiles and dress from Egypt and India, evident in sketchbooks of the 1950s and early 1960s. Among colourful, albeit exotic examples, include a narrow Egyptian-style dress from the 1961-1962 Resort sketchbook. Wearing a headdress replicated from an ancient fresco, the model was available in blue or red with acanthus leaf motifs decorating the front panel. Although eye catching, the sketch seems more appropriate as a costume for a film, perhaps inspired by the 1963 Hollywood blockbuster, *Cleopatra*, starring Elizabeth Taylor (Figure 29).

In a sketch from the 1960 Resort sketchbook, inspired this time by regional Indian dress, Leser combined a short-sleeved black, bare midriff blouse with a billowing skirt decorated with rows of red elephants (Figure 30). And yet another page from the same sketchbook shows a model wearing a vivid pink, hooded sheath dress (Figure 31). The printed fabrics selected show motifs derived from Indian textiles and manuscripts, with figures of ancient warriors on foot and on horseback, along with camels and elephants parading around the skirt.

Dress historians have described sportswear as uniquely American, targeting the independent woman,

who sought originality, comfort, and interchangeability in their wardrobes. Tina Leser, as a sportswear designer, encompassed worldwide ethnographic dress, borrowing freely bits and pieces. She mixed and matched various cultures and created an engaging, if not at times whimsical image, fresh and contemporary. She expressed her impetus for designing as “fun,” explaining in a 1945 interview that,

Play clothes should be designed for fun in the leisure hours when we best express our individuality, this designer believes. And with the growing demand for leisure clothes, she thinks we may well find new retail departments with concentrated accent on clothes for all the leisure hours. These departments should include bathing suits, sun dresses, trouser and shirt fashions, cabana or dinner-at-home dresses, after-ski clothes, and the like, she believes.⁴¹

The success and creativity of American sportswear, at first targeted to upper-class cruise and resort wear clients, reached its apex during the postwar 1950s and 1960s with middle-class consumers. At the time suburbia was a way of life for many Americans, and leisurely lifestyles were promoted along with sportswear for activities such as lounging around the pool or patio, relaxing and entertaining guests informally, or to wear on family vacations.

American fashion promoters set about convincing women to select clothes for specific, at-home activities. For example, a 1945 article in *Women's Wear Daily* described the concept of “at home, after five,” referring to several types of hostess gowns and lounging pyjamas worn by the lady of the house to welcome her husband home from work.⁴² The notion of “at home clothes” and Leser’s emphasis on fashions for “fun” continued well into the 1960s. The designer, in a 1960 article for *American Fabrics*, stated,

At-home clothes are dress-up evening clothes and fun clothes at the same time. They give a woman a chance to romanticise her home life. They may be elaborate but they must always be casual and comfortable enough to make a woman feel she can sit on the floor.⁴³

Leser, like other sportswear designers of the time, found the apparel niche that Americans preferred and pursued it to the nth degree. Designers found the appeal of sportswear in the informality and creative freedom it entailed, and the absence of traditional conventions for creating apparel, exemplified by couture and its precise construction and custom sizing; use of luxury fabrics and ornamentation; exacting



Figure 32
Blouse with Peter Pan collar,
Bermuda shorts, Tina Leser,
Designer Sketchbook:
Summer 1959.⁴⁶

sewing techniques; and obsessive dependency on Parisian modes coordinated with expensive accessories. The absence of body-moulding foundation garments, a pervasive trend in the postwar years for women's clothes, allowed sportswear designers to create more comfortable types of apparel for all body types and sizes, adjustable through the use of straps, flexible belts, ties, and fold-over wraps.

And too, designers found many examples of ethnic dress with components that adjusted quite naturally to the body. The major features and appeal of sportswear were discussed by Richard Martin in 1998 for the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in a catalogue and exhibition titled *Ingenuity: Sportswear 1930s-1970s*.⁴⁴ Key features of sportswear are included as, "wrapping and tying," "latching," "stowing," "harmonising," and "adapting."⁴⁵

American women were comfortable wearing Leser's ethnic-inspired sportswear and evening clothes, and, as her business increased, she expanded her design repertoire to include dinner and evening dresses, men's neckties, and more conventional, if not a bit conservative, apparel that projected the crisp, American "girl next door" look, so popular at the time. This is exemplified by a page in the 1959 Resort sketchbook, with a model wearing a pink blouse and a neat Peter Pan collar with white tailored Bermuda shorts (Figure 32). The permutations of sportswear were endless for Tina Leser, given her fecund imagination and creativity, for indeed her background as an artist and her perceptive understanding of ethnic dress provided the formula for her success.

Endnotes

- ¹ April D Calahan, *Tina Leser: Designs for Escape*, Master's Thesis, Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York, United States, 2009, <https://search.proquest.com/dissertations/docview/305329576/fulltextPDF/4DBBD838A9A74FEC PQ/6?accountid=11835>. Accessed 14 July 2017.
- ² Photograph, Eleanor Lambert, publicist, 4 February 1950.
- ³ Postcard, Ray Helbig's Hawaiian Service, 1951.
- ⁴ Calahan, op cit, pp 3-4.
- ⁵ "Hawaii Comes Through With the Newest Fashion, Via American Designer's Prints and Frocks: Tina Leser, Established in Waikiki Beach Specialty Shop, Combines Native Inspirational Themes With Smart Wear to Be Launched Here for New Resort Season," *Women's Wear Daily*, Volume 61, Issue 54, Monday, 16 September 1940, pp 4, 20, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1654243298?accountid=11835>. Accessed 16 February 2017.
- ⁶ "London Orders Please Tina Leser," *Women's Wear Daily*, Volume 102, Issue 46, Wednesday, 8 March 1961, p 16, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1627537691?accountid=11835>. Accessed 27 February 2017.
- ⁷ "Designer Tina Leser Dies; Services Will Be Held Today," *Women's Wear Daily*, Volume 151, Issue 18, Monday, 27 January 1986, p 2, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1445610680?Accountid=11835>. Accessed 27 February 2017.
- ⁸ Cover, mixed media, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ⁹ Freedman Photos, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ¹⁰ Tina Leser created covers with titles for the sketchbooks with fabric cutouts of butterflies, fish, birds and flowers. She pasted them onto heavy linen and sandwiched or laminated the covers between clear plastic. The pages were bound loosely with ordinary metal rings into holes punched into pages of the sketches.
- ¹¹ "Shells, Fringes and Crochet Trim Individual Fall Fashions," *Women's Wear Daily*, Volume 62, Issue 126, Friday, 27 June 1941, p 5, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1654188853?Accountid=11835>. Accessed, 12 December 2016.
- ¹² "American Fashion Critics' 1944 Awards Reflect Expanded Scope of American Design: Tina Leser, Second Award Winner," *Women's Wear Daily*, Volume 70, Issue 32, Wednesday, 14 February

- 1945, p 3, <https://searchproquest.com.proxy.library.kent.edu/docview/1627589679?Accountid835>. Accessed 12 December 2016.
- ¹³ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on tracing paper, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Paul Gauguin, *Two Women on the Beach*, 1891, oil on canvas, Louvre, Paris, France.
- ¹⁶ Reproduction, *Two Women on the Beach*, Paul Gauguin, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ¹⁷ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on tracing paper, op cit.
- ¹⁸ Day dress, circa 1810, sheer cotton with whitework embroidery, Kent State University Museum, United States, 1995.17.1771.
- ¹⁹ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ²⁰ Margaret Maynard, ed, *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion – Volume 7, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 2010, p 391.
- ²¹ “Hawaiian ‘Boozing Bonnet,’ an Arnold Constable Feature,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Volume 62, Issue 83, Monday, 28 April 1941, p 19, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1677115233?Accountid=11835>. Accessed, 8 December 2016.
- ²² Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, op cit.
- ²³ Sketch, gouache, white pen and ink on blue construction paper, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ²⁴ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on blue-grey construction paper, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ²⁵ “Kimo Jackets, Coats; Hip-Fitting Chemises,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Volume 96, Issue 29, Tuesday, 11 February 1958, p 5, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1565127907?accountid=11835>. Accessed, 27 February 2017.
- ²⁶ *Tina Leser Designer Sketchbook: Spring, 1959*, sketch, sheath dress with obi-sash, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.
- ²⁷ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, op cit.
- ²⁸ *Women’s Wear Daily*, 11 February 1958, op cit.
- ²⁹ “Mexico As Source for Sportswear Styles; Tina Leser Reports on Her Trip To Mexico As Fashion Stimulant,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Volume 66, Issue 95, Monday, 17 May 1943, p 14, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1653373602?accountid=11835>. Accessed 12 December 2016.
- ³⁰ “‘Punctuate Designs With Concentrated Accent,’ Says Tina Leser: ‘Strip Off Superfluties!’” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Volume 70, Number 33, Thursday, 15 February 1945, p 26. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1627317772?accountid=11835>. Accessed 12 December 2016.
- ³¹ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, op cit.
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on tracing paper, op cit.
- ³⁴ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on blue construction paper, op cit.
- ³⁵ *Women’s Wear Daily*, 17 May 1943, p 14, op cit.
- ³⁶ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, op cit.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ “Clothes Make A Woman’s Holiday: Resort Life Everywhere Has Over-Thirty-Fivers Leading Social Activities Calling For Expansive, Planned Wardrobes,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Volume 61, Issue 77, Thursday, 17 October 1940, Section 2, p 7, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1653614497?accountid=11835>. Accessed 12 December 2016.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ *Women’s Wear Daily*, 15 February 1945, op cit, p 26.
- ⁴² Edward Drayton, “Retail Executive: National Retail Advertising Digest: At Home After Five,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, Volume 71, Issue 110, Wednesday, 5 December 1945, p 39,

<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1627347719?accountid=11835>. Accessed 12 December 2016.

⁴³ “A Growing Dress-up Trend in At-Home Clothes,” *American Fabrics*, Issue 51, 1960 Fall-Winter, p 62.

⁴⁴ Martin, Richard, *Ingenuity: Sportswear 1930s-1970*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States, 1998.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Sketch, gouache, pen and ink on interfacing fabric, Tina Leser Collection, June F Mohler Fashion Library, Kent State University, United States.

Bibliography

Published Sources

American Fabrics, Issue 51, 1960 Fall-Winter.

Martin, Richard, *American Ingenuity: Sportswear 1930s-1970s*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States, 1998.

Maynard, Margaret, ed, *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion – Volume 7, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, 2010.

Internet Sources

Calahan, April D, *Tina Leser: Designs for Escape*, Master’s Thesis, Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York, United States, 2009. <https://search.proquest.com/dissertations/docview/305329576/fulltextPDF/4DBBD838A9A74FECpq/6?accountid=11835>. Accessed 16 November 2016.

Women’s Wear Daily, <https://search-proquest.com.proxy.library.kent.edu/docview/>. Accessed various issues, 1940-1960s. Accessed December 2016, February 2017, and July 2017.

Copyright © 2017 Thomas P Gates

Email: tgates@kent.edu

Thomas P Gates received an undergraduate art history degree from Case Western Reserve University and Masters’ degrees in art history and librarianship from the University of Southern California, and also a Master’s degree in art education from the University of New Mexico. He was a recipient of a Rockefeller Fellowship at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, where he researched exhibitions at its Downtown Centre. In 1996, he developed at Kent State University, Ohio, the June F Mohler Fashion Library. He has presented papers at conferences for The Association of Dress Historians, and the Costume Society of America.

Paris, 1982–1994: The Fashion Designs of Danish Couturier, Erik Mortensen, for Balmain and Jean-Louis Scherrer

Kirsten Toftegaard

Abstract

In June 2017, Designmuseum Danmark in Copenhagen launched an exhibition featuring the Danish couturier, Erik Mortensen (1926–1998), who worked in Paris in haute couture from 1948 to 1994. Mortensen designed exclusively for Pierre Balmain and Jean-Louis Scherrer from 1982 to 1994, the time period during which the exhibition is focused. Although the era of haute couture was declining throughout the 1980s, Mortensen maintained the aesthetics of haute couture and the high standard of creativity for both brands, Balmain and Jean-Louis Scherrer. By highlighting the craft of haute couture, Designmuseum Danmark wanted to communicate the characteristics of Mortensen's design idiom, to contextualise his work within fashion history, and to celebrate his outstanding artisanship.

In 2002, Designmuseum Danmark in Copenhagen inherited a collection of 90 dresses designed, between 1982 and 1994, by Erik Mortensen (1926–1998) (Figure 1). After the death of the French fashion designer, Pierre Balmain (1914–1982), Mortensen became the Creative Director for the Balmain haute couture collections. The collection of Mortensen-designed dresses at Designmuseum Danmark consists of 55 haute couture dresses designed for Balmain, and another 35 haute couture dresses designed for the Parisian fashion house of Jean-Louis Scherrer (1935–2013), for which Mortensen designed four



Figure 1
Erik Mortensen in Paris, France,
photography by Mik Eskestad,
mid 1990s,
Designmuseum Danmark,
Copenhagen, Denmark,
unaccessioned.

collections after leaving Balmain in 1991.¹ This body of work was donated to the museum from the estate of Erik Mortensen, along with a large number of fashion drawings, scrapbooks, and photographs.

The exhibition, launched in June 2017, at Designmuseum Danmark is titled *I Am Black Velvet ... Erik Mortensen Haute Couture* and focuses on the time period, 1982–1995. Moving through ten themes, the exhibition explores the creative talent of Mortensen. Three of his collections, Autumn/Winter 1983–1984, Autumn/Winter 1987–1988, and Spring/Summer 1994, were awarded The Golden Thimble, the half-yearly prize bestowed by the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture de Paris upon fellow colleagues in recognition of their work.² Although the era of haute couture had already been declining since the 1960s due to the success of prêt-à-porter – “ready-to-wear” – Mortensen maintained and upheld the aesthetics of haute couture and the high standard of creativity and craftsmanship for both brands, Balmain and Jean-Louis Scherrer.

Erik Mortensen was born in 1926 in Frederikshavn, a small market town in North Jutland, practically as far away from Copenhagen as one can get in Denmark. In 1942, he moved to Copenhagen to become an apprentice with the most prominent Danish couturier at that time, Holger Blom (1906–1965). In the 1940s, Holger Blom ran his private fashion salon with a staff of 25–30 seamstresses.³ In a very caring but also quite flamboyant environment, Mortensen learnt the trade.

In 1948 after having completed his apprenticeship, Mortensen went to Paris with the express aim of working at the fashion house of Balmain, founded in 1945 by the French fashion couturier, Pierre Balmain (1914–1982). Mortensen’s goal was to educate himself further, but not, however, to remain in Paris forever.⁴ As a start, he secured a position as an illustrator at Balmain. The usual practice in all the fashion houses was that after a collection had been launched, a drawing was made of each model, and all the drawings were collected in a binder. In other words, at this point Mortensen was not designing his own ideas, but illustrating the design ideas of Pierre Balmain.

Fashion illustration was one of the tasks the young Mortensen had to carry out in his early years at Balmain. On ordinary days, he worked alongside Balmain in the studio. In 1951, Mortensen succeeded the Irish-English couturier, John Cavanagh, as first assistant to Balmain (Figure 2). Over the following years, Mortensen became responsible for Balmain’s prêt-à-porter collections and private customers.⁵



Figure 2

Pierre Balmain (right) and his First Assistant, Erik Mortensen (left) in Paris, France, late 1950s, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, unaccessioned.



Figure 3

Erik Mortensen as a young assistant at Balmain in Paris, France, late 1950s, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, unaccessioned.

Balmain's couture was known for its sophistication and elegance, and following the Second World War the two fashion houses Balmain and Dior, the latter founded in 1946 by Christian Dior (1905–1957), were considered to be the epitome of Parisian fashion and feminine chic. In a press release published in October 1945 in *Vogue* magazine, the American novelist, poet, playwright, and art collector, Gertrude Stein (1874–1946), wrote in favour of the new Balmain fashion house under the headline "From Dark to Day."⁶ To quote Mortensen, Balmain brought elegance back to Paris following "the Second World War's tendency to vulgarity," which he thought dominated in those years, and most especially the latter years of wartime fashion (Figure 3).⁷

In 1982, Pierre Balmain died and Erik Mortensen, effectively the natural "heir" to the fashion house, became the Creative Director for the house's haute couture collections. Mortensen had been the loyal first assistant for 31 years, from 1951 to 1982, and he was the obvious choice to ensure continuity. It felt right to have Mortensen take over after the sudden, unexpected death of Pierre Balmain.⁸ The two master couturiers had shared their sense of colour and taste in clothes, and in a way Mortensen perpetuated the basic idea of feminine elegance of the Balmain era.⁹

The exhibition at Designmuseum Danmark focuses on unfolding the talent of Mortensen through 10 themes and selected models from his 17 collections for the house of Balmain, as well as his four collections for the house of Jean-Louis Scherrer. Although the museum holds a collection of 90 dresses, the museum additionally managed to secure a loan from Balmain's archive of 31 dresses. Along with approximately 40 dresses from previously existing collections, these groups together present a well-balanced characterisation of Mortensen's creative capacity.

After an introduction and a small section on the legacy and artistic influence of Balmain on Mortensen's design work, the next three themes revolve around craftsmanship within haute couture. These themes are Haute Couture, Fabrics and Materials, Form and Design. Next, three more themes communicate stories regarding The Private Customer. The way the dresses were presented at fashion shows will be explored in Presentation. And finally, dresses are displayed from two of the three collections for which Mortensen was awarded The Golden Thimble.

The Private Customer theme will be staged differently from the other themes, because it will focus on drawings, especially fashion drawings made for one of the most prominent customers of Balmain: Queen Sirikit of Thailand (Figure 4). Contact between Queen Sirikit and Balmain was established in 1960, when Balmain designed a full wardrobe for the Queen in preparation for the official visits, with her husband, Bhumibol Adulyadej (1927–2016) to Europe and the United States.



Figure 4
Drawing for Queen Sirikit, 1992, The Print and Drawings Collection,
Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, unaccessioned.



Figure 5

The Little Black Dress, Balmain Autumn-Winter 1989-1990, photography by Pernille Klemp, 2003, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, DMD 113/2003.



Figure 6

Dress, Balmain Autumn-Winter 1986-1987, photography by Pernille Klemp, 2003, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, DMD 163/2003.

In 1985, yet another visit to America provided Queen Sirikit an opportunity to promote traditional Thai silk – called Mudmee Silk and woven using the ikat technique – and to increase the knowledge and awareness of this fabric worldwide. This time, Mortensen created all of the Queen’s dresses.¹⁰ After Mortensen stopped working for the fashion house, Jean-Louis Scherrer, in 1994, he continued to work as a private couturier for Queen Sirikit, using the Scherrer atelier when it was available between collections.¹¹

The remaining themes in the exhibition revolve around three strong features of Mortensen’s collections, which he practiced and cultivated throughout his career: The Little Black Dress (Figure 5), The Transparent Dress, and The Full-Length Black Evening Gown (Figure 6). By highlighting the craft of haute couture, Designmuseum Denmark wants to communicate the characteristics of Erik Mortensen’s creative idiom, to contextualise his work within the history of fashion, and to celebrate his outstanding craftsmanship and ingenuity.

This goes perfectly hand in hand with the museum’s strategic plan for the coming years, which will strive to, “... find inspiration in the past in order to take part in shaping the future through design and quality craftsmanship and to focus on, amongst other [things], a high level of knowledge, craftsmanship, tradition, quality, and sustainability.”¹² With the strategy plan in mind, the following questions need to be asked: why show an exhibition of haute couture dresses? and how is haute couture still relevant today? There are several answers. The first and most obvious, however, is that it provides our museum an opportunity to communicate the story of Erik Mortensen.

Danes love the iconic fairy tale written by Hans Christian Andersen (1805–1875) about the ugly duckling that became a majestic swan, the most beautiful bird of all. To Danes, the story of Mortensen is always relevant. However, and most important of all, it is a unique chance for Designmuseum Danmark to showcase an outstanding collection of haute couture fashion to a wider audience, and to share the specialist knowledge we have about these unique dresses, made in exquisite fabrics, and executed with the most excellent skill and craftsmanship.

Another answer to the question of why haute couture is relevant today is much more complex. Many of us can only dream of such glorious gowns, which only a small group of very wealthy women and celebrities are able to buy and wear. There are different interpretations of the haute couture customer base worldwide. In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture de Paris* estimated the number of female haute couture customers to have been around 3000–4000. In Mortensen's opinion, this number was exaggerated and overly optimistic. In 1986, he believed the number of clients was around 2500–3000.¹³ In 1988, Mortensen even estimated the number of women who could afford haute couture, worldwide, to be less than 1000. At that time, the price for a single haute couture garment ranged roughly from €6,000 to €140,000.¹⁴

Especially after the Second World War, several Parisian fashion houses opened boutiques selling perfume and accessories. In the 1950s, haute couture houses had to face decreasing incomes from season to season and find other ways to improve their financial situation. One way was prêt-à-porter. Linking such activities to an haute couture fashion house was not an entirely new concept, as Paul Poiret had already introduced premade premium clothing in the 1930s.¹⁵

In the beginning of the 1950s, Balmain launched a collection of 60 models – coats, dresses, and suits – designed in fabrics that were more classic and less luxurious compared to the haute couture collection. After a few years, this collection was titled *Pierre Balmain Florilège* (which means “anthology”). Following the introduction of licenses, the label became internationally known, though it did not actually consist of premade clothes but was a high-quality collection still tailored for the individual customer.¹⁶ In France, however, it was in the late 1950s and early 1960s that the concept of prêt-à-porter gained a firm foothold, due to fashion designers including Pierre Cardin (1922–), André Courrèges (1923–2016), Hubert de Givenchy (1927–), and Guy Laroche (1921–1989).

In 1966, Yves Saint Laurent (1936–2008), working together with his partner, Pierre Bergé (1930–), established the iconic boutique *Saint Laurent rive gauche* for ready-to-wear items.¹⁷ Instead of couture clothing, the typical affluent woman of the 1960s preferred a streamlined, comfortable, and slightly more anonymous style and after the late 1960s, the market for haute couture fashion changed radically.

The 1970s antifashion and unisex style made the sumptuous, luxurious haute couture dresses look like excessive consumerism, and the refined craftsmanship and artisanal details appeared obsolete. The haute couture collections became a quaint presentation of the designer, while prêt-à-porter was the commodity that generated turnover. This luxury production was, and still is, difficult to justify with a tiny clientele. Whereas in 1946 the membership of the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture de Paris* numbered 106, membership in 1970 was as low as 19, with membership numbers varying since.¹⁸ However, in 2001 the rules governing the application of the term, haute couture, were reviewed and reformed, following the establishment a few years before of a new division, which had introduced “membres correspondants” and “membres invites” as new categories.¹⁹ In 2014, the number of haute couture houses was fifteen, with six correspondent members and ten invited members.²⁰

Despite these developments, there was a time when fashion was dictated from the world's major cities, mainly Paris – a time when customers remained loyal to an individual fashion designer rather than following a trend. Unlike today, where fashion points in many different directions at once, fast-paced fashion houses force themselves upon us with their constant stream of new trends and between-season collections even as the industry offers online shopping and “see now, buy now” collections. Personal styles are no longer fashionable, and instead of building the next collection on an individual designer and their ideas and creativity, modern-day collections are based on trends.

In spite of today's obsession with profit, haute couture is still relevant as a form of artistic expression. Each designer cultivates their special characteristic design features and maintains continuity from one collection to the next. Haute couture is a continuous exploration of visual forms, shapes, volumes, and technical solutions, yielding results that can provide inspiration to several other types of clothing production. Of course, couture is much more expensive than ready-to-wear, yet on the other hand couture has greater utility value. A higher quality of fabrics and execution make for a longer useful life. Superior quality and craftsmanship are fundamental components of haute couture, and perhaps they are also the most powerful tools for promoting sustainability, and counteracting the large amounts of discarded clothing resulting from "the throwaway society."

Mortensen was the first Dane to reach the upper echelons of the Parisian fashion community. In my opinion, Erik Mortensen's design shows no signs of Danish influence, partly because he spent most of his adult life in Paris, and partly because French fashion served as the model for Danish couture in the 1940s, his formative educational years. His attitude was "work hard, get the job done," and perhaps this work ethic echoes his Danish roots. In 1964, Balmain wrote of his first assistant in his autobiography:

Erik Mortensen, a Dane who arrived 15 years ago at Rue Francois 1er with a letter of introduction and a strong determination not to allow himself to be put off – rather like the twenty-year-old Pierre Balmain at Molyneux's – succeeds wonderfully in his role of catalytic agent. He is hard to please and acts as my second, severe conscience. By forcing me to defend certain ideas he brings



Figure 7

Jean-Louis Scherrer Autumn-Winter 1993-1994,
photography by Mik Eskestad, 1993,
Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen,
Denmark, DMD 132/2003.



Figure 8

Jean-Louis Scherrer Autumn-Winter 1994-1995,
photography by Mik Eskestad, 1994,
Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen,
Denmark, DMD 136/2003.

home their importance in my own eyes; or his uncompromising stand will make me realise how readily I have been following other ideas which must be abandoned.²¹

Mortensen appeared to be a person with his feet firmly planted on the ground, although he did consider himself to be ambitious.²² However, it was never the kind of ambition that could have encouraged him to open his own fashion house, in his own name. As he stated several times in interviews, that was of no importance to him.²³ He wanted to be judged, known, and respected for his craftsmanship. He said that the haute couture world was a business for perfectionists.²⁴ What is more, he did not want to conform to the often-believed preconception that inspiration came to the artist as a sort of divine intervention. This was certainly not the impression he wanted to communicate to his audience. When asked about this, he revealed that his method was to “store impressions,” which he believed would pop up later, instinctively or unconsciously, in his creative work. Beyond this, however, inspiration also came from hard work.²⁵

Mortensen’s haute couture collections were divided into day dresses, cocktail dresses, short evening wear, and large full-length gowns (Figure 7). As a working method, Mortensen designed, constructed, and arranged every collection into groups. He created peacock and theatrical dresses, and his evening dresses were an important part of every collection. He became known for his unique ability to bring out the feminine body in his creations. He was especially attracted to black fabric in every quality, and he preferred to work with autumn/winter collections. Another favourite feature in his designs were trimmings, for instance, those made of fur.²⁶ His strength lay in creating sensual, transparent dresses in dark and black chiffon, silk, and velvet.

In a 1996 Danish documentary of Erik Mortensen, the French couturier and fashion designer Paco Rabanne (1934–) described Mortensen as “merveilleux fou” – marvellously mad. Mortensen was a true master in the art of haute couture (Figure 8). Although he created daring fashion, he never overstepped the mark. He went as far as he possibly could, while still preserving the image of the woman, and at the same time, profoundly respecting the female body.²⁷

Endnotes

- 1 The fashion house, Jean-Louis Scherrer, existed from 1962 to 2008. In 1992, Jean-Louis Scherrer was the first couture designer to be dismissed from his own fashion house that bore his name.
- 2 Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture is a trade association for high fashion.
- 3 *Monsieur Erik*, Interviewer and production coordinator Annette Breuning, Produced by Jette Sachs, TV-Kulturafdelingen, DR (the Danish Broadcasting Corporation), 1986.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 From 1947 to 1951, John Cavanagh was first assistant to Pierre Balmain. In 1952, Cavanagh established his own fashion house in London at 26, Curzon Street.
- 6 Gertrude Stein, “From Dark to Day,” in *Vogue*, October 1945, archived in the box Pierre Balmain, Articles de presse, généralités couturiers et maison, expositions, catalogue de vente [Press releases and articles, general information on couturiers and fashion houses, exhibitions, sales catalogues], Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France.
- 7 Erik Mortensen, *Ej blot til pynt – et livstykke [Not Just Finery – A Live Wire]*, Gyldendal, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1987, p 69.
- 8 *Le Matin*, 30 June 1982, Pierre Balmain Communiqué, *Erik Mortensen succède à Pierre Balmain*, 1982, archived in the box Pierre Balmain, Articles de presse, généralités couturiers et maison, expositions, catalogue de vente [Press releases and articles, general information on couturiers and fashion houses, exhibitions, sales catalogues], Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris France.
- 9 “Verdensberømte danskere,” [“World-Famous Danes”] *Søndags BT*, Volume 32, 7 August 1970, *Monsieur Erik*.
- 10 Jennifer Sharples, *Thai Silk*, Post Books, Bangkok, Thailand, 1994, pp 84–85.

- ¹¹ *Monsieur Erik - et livstykke*, [*Monsieur Erik – A Live Wire*] Interviewer and production coordinator, Lone Bastholm, produced by Nina Crone, Crone Film Production A/S, produced for TV2 and J-J-Film, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1996.
- ¹² Designmuseum Danmark, *Strategic Plan 2017-2020, Sharing Design*, Designmuseum Denmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2017.
- ¹³ *Monsieur Erik*, op cit.
- ¹⁴ *Monsieur Erik - et livstykke*, op cit.
- ¹⁵ Didier Grumbach, *History of International Fashion*, Interlink Publishing Group, Northampton, United States, 2014, p 227.
- ¹⁶ Ibid, pp 227-229.
- ¹⁷ Ibid, p 440.
- ¹⁸ Information is difficult to obtain about the exact numbers but http://www.fashion-era.com/chambre_syndicale.htm provides some information: In 1946 there were 106 haute couture houses recorded, in 1952 60 houses, in 1997 18 houses, in 2002 12 houses and finally in 2004 nine houses. In the Spring 2017 website of Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode informs that 14 members are recorded, followed by five correspondent members and nine guest members, <https://fhcm.paris/en/the-federation/>. Accessed May 2017.
- ¹⁹ Grumbach, op cit, p 443.
- ²⁰ *Chambre syndicale de la haute couture – printemps été 2014*, Paris: 100 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Paris 8e. The “membres correspondants” are all foreign designers. Members of the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture (Parisienne) have to be based in Paris; foreign designers are those that are based in countries other than France (not only outside Paris).
- ²¹ Balmain, op cit, p 176.
- ²² Mortensen, op cit, p 58.
- ²³ One of several statements, see *Monsieur Erik – et livstykke*, op cit.
- ²⁴ *Monsieur Erik*, op cit.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ *Monsieur Erik - et livstykke*, op cit.
- ²⁷ Ibid.

Bibliography

Archives

Archive Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France.

Published Sources

Balmain, Pierre, *My Years and Seasons*, Cassell, London, England, 1964.

Chambre syndicale de la haute couture - printemps été 2014, Paris: 100 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Paris 8e, France, 2014.

Grumbach, Didier, *History of International Fashion*, Interlink Publishing Group, Northampton, United States, 2014.

Haute Couture: printemps-été 1990, Pierre Balmain, Paris, France, 1990.

Mortensen, Erik, *Ej blot til pynt – et livstykke [Not Just Finery – A Live Wire]*, Gyldendal, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1987.

Sharples, Jennifer, *Thai Silk*, Post Books, Bangkok, Thailand, 1994.

Audiovisual Sources

Monsieur Erik, Interviewer and production coordinator Annette Breuning, produced by Jette Sachs, TV-Kulturafdelingen, DR (the Danish Broadcasting Corporation), Copenhagen, Denmark, 1986.

Monsieur Erik - et livstykke, Interviewer and production coordinator Lone Bastholm, produced by Nina Crone, Crone Film Production A/S, produced for TV2 and J-J-Film, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1996.

Internet Sources

http://www.fashion-era.com/chambre_syndicale.htm

<https://fhcm.paris/en/the-federation/>

Copyright © 2017 Kirsten Toftegaard
Email: kto@designmuseum.dk

Kirsten Toftegaard is a curator and keeper of the Fashion and Textile Collection at Designmuseum Danmark in Copenhagen. At the museum, her recent major exhibitions have included *Rokoko-mania* in 2012, the permanent exhibition, *Fashion and Fabric*, in 2014, and *Marie Gudme Leth – Pioneer of Print*, in 2016. In 2015, she curated an exhibition, *Modern Danish Tapestry*, at the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia. Her research has, in recent years, focused on twentieth-century Danish fashion and textiles. Since 2005, Kirsten Toftegaard has been a member of the Conseil du CIETA (Centre Internationale d'Études des Textiles Anciens), representing Denmark.

Living Garments: Exploring Objects in Modern Fashion Exhibitions

Emma Treleaven

Abstract

This paper examines the role of object-based research in modern fashion exhibitions. Fashion history as a discipline evolved out of art history and consequently has relied largely on written and visual sources. The development of object-based research is examined, along with the role living history has played in the development of dynamic display. The methodologies of experimental archaeology and ethnoarchaeology are consulted to give these developments in fashion history a theoretical framework. The case study of a major fashion exhibition is used to show how these developments have influenced the way fashion is displayed and communicated in museums.

Introduction

This paper endeavours to answer two research questions about the relationship between garments held in museums and how they are exhibited in exhibitions, specifically “What role does object-based research play in displaying fashion in museums today?” And “What information can be shown through object-based research in fashion exhibitions?”

These questions are relevant to the current shift of dress history away from textual and visual sources and towards objects as a resource. The indicated change has included the reconnection between finished garments and the processes used to make them. This research is primarily relevant to fashion historians and those working with items of dress in museum collections, but it also has relevance to disciplines such as art history, archaeology, and ethnography.

This paper is structured to show the evolution of the modern fashion exhibition through the growth of object-based research within the discipline of fashion history, and the importance of living history practices in researching and exhibiting dress. It also examines how these practices have come together through the case study of a major fashion exhibition at The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A).

The academic discipline of fashion history is a recent field of study.¹ Despite the phenomena of fashion being present in Western society since the early fourteenth century, it received little academic attention until the twentieth century. As Lou Taylor described it, “‘Clothes’, especially those relating to Western European feminine fashions, were considered to be a frivolous and ephemeral characteristic of society. As such, to study them would therefore be to trivialise history itself and the subject was seen as an unworthy vehicle for ‘serious’ academic research.”²

Until recently, fashion history had been structured using similar research methodologies to art history. As in art history, textual and visual sources, and secondary analysis were the primary methods of research.³ As Valerie Steele notes in her article, “A Museum of Fashion Is More than a Clothes-Bag,” “because intellectuals live by the word, many scholars tend to ignore the important role that objects can play in the creation of knowledge. Even many fashion historians spend little or no time examining actual

garments, preferring to rely exclusively on written sources and visual representations.”⁴ This reluctance to use objects is due to fashion history’s evolution from art history, its previous taboo status, and limitations of access to objects in museums.

Recently the discipline has attracted the attention of a wide field of researchers from disciplines including anthropology, sociology, economics, and cultural studies.⁵ This broadening of fashion history has led to a variety of new viewpoints and research methodologies from which to view fashion, including increased object-based analysis. The shift to object-based research requires different skills and knowledge, including an understanding of how garments were made and worn throughout history and how these processes can be discovered through object-based analysis.⁶

Object-Based Research in Fashion

Valerie Steele’s work marks a shift in fashion history. Using Jules David Prown’s methods, Steele argues the value and importance of object-based research for fashion, and therefore the need for fashion collections in museums.⁷ Prown’s arguments and methods were originally intended to be used by art historians, but Steele shows how his three processes of description, deduction, and speculation can be effectively applied to fashion.⁸ Both Steele and Prown’s methods are key to how the role of object-based research in exhibitions has evolved, and what unique information regarding fashion history can be found through this kind of research.

Mary Beaudry’s work on archaeological findings of needlework materials also proposes a new, object-based perspective and methodology. She encourages the reader to regard objects as having an “active voice,” and to consider the social connections that objects once had.⁹ Beaudry argues that the high number of small needlework items, including pins, excavated at archaeological sites and the lack of common use of such items by the average person today has led archaeologists to make assumptions, such as a pin is “just” a pin. By regarding the pin as an object with an active voice, regardless of its simplicity, one is able to observe, gain information, and speculate on the making and use of that specific object.¹⁰ As Beaudry explained in detail, the making and various uses for pins has changed over time, proving that a pin is certainly not “just” a pin. In her opinion, every object has a story that should not be disregarded because of its cultural associations or the humbleness of the object. Beaudry’s work encourages a new kind of active perspective that can be applied to fashion exhibitions and for the objects to have a more central role in the historical discourse.

Combining Steele and Prown’s process with Beaudry’s concept of an active voice gives object-based garment research a wide and varied scope. Steele and Prown’s process gives a thorough understanding of a physical garment and facilitates the creation of further research possibilities. Beaudry’s active voice encourages the researcher to approach the garment as an object with an individual history of meaning and worth. Garments may be sitting in a museum storeroom and not shown in a book or painting, but these two methods establish the scaffolding to make garments valuable research resources for any dress historian.

When conducting object-based research, it is important to acknowledge the difference in context between the world in which the object was made, and the world in which it, and the researcher, currently reside.¹¹ It is easy to make assumptions about material culture based on modern experiences, and these assumptions can quickly detour away from the garment. Using personal experiences can be a valuable research methodology but only if it acknowledges that ideas derive from a modern perspective. It is only through comparison with other garments from the same period that we are able to understand what is normal for that period and for that type of garment.

This process of comparison is important to understanding dress history. The quality of clothing available throughout the past was completely dependent on wealth and status, as it is today.¹² A sixteenth-century fisherman’s hose would differ hugely in material and construction to a lady’s fashionable gown of the same period, and yet they are both representative of the time in which they were made. It is only through

comparison with similar garments as well as drastically different ones that it is possible to gain a clear picture of what is normal and abnormal in the period in question.¹³

Without analysis and comparison, the assumptions forwarded by purely textual and visual sources are often left unquestioned. “Common assumptions are often wrong, especially in the field of fashion history, where myths can persist unchallenged for years.”¹⁴ Visual and written forms of evidence are fundamentally flawed as research material. They can both be altered to suit current tastes, ideals, and knowledge.¹⁵ Garments, by comparison, must physically fit the people that are wearing them. While the details can clearly reflect current tastes, the structure and size of a garment cannot lie. Myths, based on visual and written sources, are often presented as facts in fashion exhibitions, despite the garments that prove them incorrect often being displayed in the same case.

Object-based research has become an important part of fashion history today. This kind of research can provide new and interesting information about how garments were made and worn in the past. This type of research has also changed the role of fashion exhibitions, from providing contextual information to displays focused on garments.

Living History and Fashion History

The concept of living history, including open-air museums and reenactment, experienced a resurgence in the 1970s and has evolved greatly since. Living history is defined by Jay Anderson as “an attempt by people to simulate life in another time.”¹⁶ Anderson explained, “Historical simulation is generally used for three basic reasons: to interpret the past at an outdoor museum and historic sites, as a research tool in experimental archaeology, and as an enjoyable recreational activity for history buffs interested in discovering what life in the past was really like.”¹⁷

The living history movement has had a distinct effect on object-based research for dress history. Methods of display in modern fashion exhibitions, particularly object-based research, have been inspired by the principles found in living history. It is possible to make connections between current fashion research and living history that can be traced through the evolution of both disciplines.

To increase the accuracy of the experience for visitors, many museums, such as the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, have established a programme to create historically accurate dress to interpret heritage buildings and sites.¹⁸ The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum has created full sets of clothing for fifteenth-century Sussex farmers. Very little clothing from this period survives, and the majority of pieces that do survive are of expensive fashionable dress, so the initial research for this project was conducted from visual and written sources. Instead of following these sources verbatim, knowledge was pooled with crafts people and researchers from other fields to determine the accuracy of visual and written sources.¹⁹ Thread was spun and woven using accurate wheels and looms. The resulting fabric was then fullled and naturally dyed. The garments were then cut and sewn according to visual and textual research. Finally, the recreations were worn by interpreters as they worked at the museum.

This project is important because it has expanded on Steele and Prown’s step of speculation. Garments in a museum (on display or in stores) are inaccessible to be experienced as clothing. They are treated as objects.²⁰ It is impossible to try the clothes on and feel what it is like to wear them. The Weald and Downland Museum’s fifteenth-century farmers’ garments, however, are accessible to feel and touch and are experienced by the wearer in a way no museum garment ever will be (Figure 1). Taking the time to conduct research from multiple angles, there is a much higher chance of authenticity in the garments, and therefore authenticity in the experience of the wearer.²¹ The tactile experience of clothing is impossible to replicate on a static mannequin in an exhibition but is available to the public through this reproduction of dress in a way that is inaccessible in a traditional museum.

Reenactment is an important component of the living history movement. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines reenacting as “repeat[ing] the actions of an earlier event,” which fits with Anderson’s definition



Figure 1

Spinning demonstrations at the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum.²²

of living history simulating life in another time.²³ These simulations rely on object-based research regarding making processes and have influenced methods of displaying fashion.

Reenactment groups are an important link in the connection between making and fashion exhibitions. Reenactors have a passion for an accurate historic experience, and they invest great amounts of time and energy to ensure they get that experience.²⁴ This includes making and wearing reproduction dress themselves. Reenactors are unrestricted to the same theoretical biases as fashion history as a discipline has been. Reenactors are able to experiment and conduct research without the rigid legacy of art history to confine them. As encouraged by Steele and Prown, reenactors combine object research, written and visual research, and personal experience to create historic dress that can be worn and experienced. This is the purpose of reenactment, to combine the *why* and the *how* of history to create a realistic personal experience.

Janet Arnold's work, although indirectly intended for the living history movement, has had a significant effect on the resources available to those endeavouring to recreate historic fashion recreationally. Arnold was an early proponent of object-based research, and she travelled through Europe studying and making patterns from garments in museums.²⁵ In her *Patterns of Fashion* series Arnold provided a scale pattern for each garment, along with an illustration, basic construction instructions, and some contextual information.²⁶ This was a revolutionary format. Surviving dress had never been examined in this way before.²⁷ Through Arnold's publications, it was now possible for someone without the ability to visit museum collections to have access to historic garments and knowledge of how they were made. This decreased the reliance on textual and visual sources for researchers.

Theatre and film are not usually considered part of the living history movement as they do not prioritise authenticity, and their actions do not relate directly to the personal experiences of the audience.

Costumes for these mediums are rarely accurate as it is expensive and time consuming to produce historically correct garments.²⁸ However, productions that do strive for some level of authenticity are making a clear attempt to “simulate life in another time.”²⁹ Therefore, theatre and film that make an effort to be historically accurate can be included as living history. Through theatre and film, recreations of historic dress can be seen on living people instead of static mannequins, or in a museum drawer.

Historically accurate costumes create an important connection between the principles of living history, surviving objects, and displaying fashionable dress. One clear example of these connections is the Globe Theatre in London. The Globe is an attempt to recreate Shakespeare’s playhouse, but as little is known about the original Globe, or what was performed there, it has become a constantly evolving institution that is willing to experiment, including through costume.³⁰

Between 1997 and 2005, Jenny Tiramani designed and made costumes for the Globe that were as accurate as possible to the time Shakespeare’s plays were originally performed. Every garment that was part of these productions was made by hand, using techniques and materials appropriate for the time. As a student of Janet Arnold, Tiramani was aware of the importance of object-based research and accurate making techniques when attempting to recreate fashionable historic dress.³¹ Research was conducted on completed garments but also on every step of the making processes used during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.

Tiramani and her team were the first to professionally combine visual and written sources with object-based research, and then test their research by attempting to make detailed, accurate garments. This increased the accuracy of the experience of the audiences, who were now watching sixteenth- and seventeenth-century plays, with accurately recreated costumes, in an accurately recreated theatre. These productions would have been impossible without the development of living history and object-based research in fashion history.

What all of these aspects of living history have in common is an element of experimentation. There are a finite number of garments in museum collections, and even fewer of these are in a condition to allow detailed study. It is difficult to gain enough information about the garment-making processes from garments alone, and visual and textual sources offer very little assistance. The techniques of garment cut and construction before the nineteenth century, when tailoring manuals became widely available, are largely lost.³² It is only through studying surviving objects and experimenting by using information from surviving garments that it is possible to test hypotheses and draw conclusions about how garments were constructed and worn in the past. This process has distinct similarities to experimental archaeology. John Coles described the purpose and process of experimental archaeology.

One way in which archaeology can reach back and experience some parts of ancient life is through attempts to reproduce former conditions and circumstances ... by trying to actually live as our ancestors did ... we may become aware of our prehistory, of past problems concerned with food supplies and shelter, and of the inventive nature of man.³³

Archaeology is the study of cultural history through what was left behind. Its only connection with the present is through analysis. Experimental archaeology, by comparison, is “designed to look at ancient man as an inventor, a technician, a craftsman, an artist, and a human being. By reproducing his actions archaeologists can better understand not only his technical abilities but also his reasons for choosing one course of action rather than another.”³⁴ Experimental archaeology is a way of connecting to and experiencing the past, like the living history movement, but by the testing of hypotheses and the use of formal analysis.³⁵ Experimental archaeology benefits from the academic background, formal research models, and scientific structure that is lacking in living history experimentation. However, both experimental archaeology and living history are attempting the same thing: an understanding of the past through making.

Experimental archaeology is largely concerned with the material remains of the ancient past, a time with little other record to provide information to researchers today. It is used to test and fill in gaps of knowledge about early periods.³⁶ While its principles are easily applicable to ancient dress and textiles, experimental archaeology can be useful for analysing clothing predating the nineteenth century. Other than paintings and rudimentary tailors' manuals, there is little visual or written evidence for the making of garments before industrialisation.³⁷ What does exist must be questioned due to its cultural biases. The garments themselves are the most reliable sources of information, and in combination with other existing evidence, it is possible to create hypotheses about garment making before the nineteenth century. Using experimental archaeology principles, it is then possible to test these hypotheses. These processes would be familiar to anyone involved with the living history movement, but the use of experimental archaeology principles is an unusual and effective form of analysis for fashion history.

The use of experimental making has become an accepted and growing part of dress history. In 2011, Jenny Tiramani and Susan North of the V&A published a book about the museum's holdings of seventeenth-century women's wear.³⁸ This book was inspired by Janet Arnold's *Patterns of Fashion* series, but it is significantly more expansive. *Seventeenth Century Women's Dress Patterns: Book 1* was a major success with both academics and those partaking in living history, as it took an approach that was valuable to both parties. Fashion academics received valuable new object-based research from a world-famous collection, and living history participants received detailed making instructions and important contextual information.

These books clearly show the value of object-based research in fashion, but they also show the convergence of two areas of study, fashion history and living history. This convergence is a clear inspiration for the increase in demonstrating making in exhibitions. Living history methods have changed the roles objects play in fashion exhibitions today. It has helped popularise the importance of garments and object-based research, including making processes, within fashion history.

Living Garments in Modern Fashion Exhibitions

Living history garments can be displayed on people, but museums are restricted in their display methods. Display is a challenging aspect of any fashion collection.³⁹ Every body is different, and this is reflected by how clothing was made and worn. There is no stock size of human, and so when exhibiting dress, there is no stock way to display it. Displaying dress usually involves careful mounting, with specially selected mannequins that are further altered to mimic the original wearer's body (Figure 2).

Garments were intended to clothe a moving human body and to present a certain image to others.⁴⁰ There are those who argue that fashion exhibitions of museum garments are unable to recreate this movement and personality, and therefore the garments no longer have any life to them. As Steele wrote, "It is as though (critics) believe that collecting and exhibiting clothes in a museum effectively 'kills' their spirit."⁴¹

The art history-based model of fashion history encouraged the passive display of garments. They were looked at and used for contextual information, but of little importance in themselves. That model makes a static garment on a mannequin comparable to a painting on a wall. This is the reason fashion collections and exhibitions have received criticism for "killing" their clothes.⁴²

With the recent movement to object-based research in fashion history, garments are now often displayed with an "active" voice. Information about their making or wearing is displayed alongside them. The role of fashionable dress in exhibitions has changed, no longer displayed solely as objects of a wider history, but as distinct pieces with history unto themselves.⁴³

Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion

The V&A exhibition *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion* opened in May 2017. The curator of the exhibition, Cassie Davies-Strodder, explained that "Balenciaga is one of the greatest couturiers of the twentieth



Figure 2

Keira Miller, Costume Mounting Specialist, removing the bust from a papier-mâché figure in the Textile Conservation Department of The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2013.

century...We have a large and important collection of Balenciaga's designs."⁴⁴ This exhibition, however, endeavours not to be a standard retrospective. "We are looking at how Balenciaga's work was shaped by his skill in making and his profound understanding of his craft."⁴⁵

Shaping Fashion is the first major exhibition in the United Kingdom (UK) looking at one fashion designer's work from the perspective of making. Instead of just showing garments and stating that they are representative of a period, Shaping Fashion is endeavouring to use the garments themselves to explain *why* Balenciaga's garments are representative of the period, and *why* they are special. Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion is endeavouring to discover the *why* by analysing and displaying his garments through an active voice, instead of just a statement, and in doing so, discovering more about Balenciaga himself.⁴⁶ The active voice of Balenciaga's garments is being explored specifically through how they were made. By reverse engineering the garments, information on the skills required to create the garments can be found. "We are taking a forensic look at the making process with sections looking in depth at his use of textiles, pattern cutting, [and] dressmaking."⁴⁷

This forensic look includes a partnership with a group of students from London College of Fashion (LCF). The students took a pattern from a Balenciaga garment in the V&A's collection, digitised it, and made a toile to check their pattern against the original garment.⁴⁸ This process provided the museum with new information about Balenciaga as a designer and maker. Davies-Strodder stated, "This project has provided a wealth of information about cut and construction and has allowed us to identify what is Balenciaga's 'handwriting' as a designer."⁴⁹ This form of analysing a designer's work based on information derived from garments is a new approach to fashion history research.

The LCF project is the first time a group of makers has been consulted for object-based research for a major fashion exhibition in the UK.⁵⁰ People creating garments for living history often use museum objects as a basis for their recreations, but their end goal is a personal experience instead of a public exhibition. Living history practitioners want to feel what it was like to make and wear a garment. Their use of experimental archaeology principles is often necessary to fill in gaps when museum objects are not available. The LCF students by comparison, were given access to Balenciaga garments, and their aim was not the finished product, but the information produced about the process.⁵¹

Sewing techniques have evolved greatly since the early twentieth century. The world of couture is slowly shrinking due to cost and skilled-labour shortages, leading to the loss of couture techniques. Couture sewing is not a lost skill, like that of sixteenth-century tailoring, but it is a dying one.⁵² For this reason, the techniques and methodologies used for the LCF project align more closely to those of ethnoarchaeology than experimental archaeology.

Experimental archaeology uses archeological information combined with a series of guesses and checks through making to test hypotheses. Ethnoarchaeology, by comparison, is "the use of ethno-graphic methods and information to aid in the interpretation and explanation of archaeological data."⁵³ By using present day material culture viewed from an ethnographic perspective, an ethnoarchaeologist is able to draw conclusions regarding past cultures from the remains of their material culture. "There [is] a difference between using ethnographic analogy when direct historical continuity between the ethnographic and archaeological data existed and when a general comparative approach was employed, where no such continuity existed."⁵⁴

It could be argued that living history recreations can be viewed through ethnoarchaeology, rather than experimental archaeology, as the physical action of sewing is a common connection between modern garments and historic ones. However, sewing has evolved enough that the study of present day methods cannot lead to any conclusions about early historic garments.⁵⁵ The experimental archaeology methods of guessing and checking are a more successful methodology to understand historic garments, as opposed to twentieth-century ones.

The continuity required for ethnoarchaeology exists between twentieth-century couture and modern making methods, which is why it is an appropriate comparison for the Shaping Fashion LCF project.

The LCF students used their knowledge of modern pattern drafting and sewing to draw conclusions about twentieth-century couture and about Balenciaga.⁵⁶ The LCF students were able to use their modern skills to relate to the garments, conducting object-based research from a making perspective. They were able to isolate techniques that were unusual or specific to Balenciaga through their observations and making processes.⁵⁷ Through the students' research, Balenciaga's methods became increasingly clear.

Many of the LCF students have been surprised at the lengths he went to to ensure a minor detail of design... He often created complex patterns to ensure a particular detail was correct, which is quite at odds with modern clothing manufacture.⁵⁸

As Balenciaga never discussed his making practices, the ethnoarchaeological conclusions made by the LCF students are new information about the couturier, and they help show the relevance of his garments.⁵⁹

The new information discovered by the Shaping Fashion project has altered the goal of the exhibition to show why the garments are special through an active voice. Various display methods were chosen by Davies-Strodder to exhibit the active voices of the garments. While the museum objects were displayed on static mannequins, digital simulations of pattern pieces turning into garments will show the complexity of Balenciaga's cutting skills. Short films will show various making processes, alongside garments that were made using them. X-rays of garments will be used to show the complex layers used in couture garments (Figure 3).⁶⁰ The LCF students' toiles will be shown alongside original garments, but they will



Figure 3
X-ray photograph of an evening dress
by Cristóbal Balenciaga.⁶¹

be used to show aspects of the garments that are unable to be shown on the original for conservation reasons.⁶⁰

While the actual garments do not move in the exhibition, they are expressed in a dynamic and lively way. Visitors will obtain a clear sense of how these garments were worn and made. Through display methods, the object-based research conducted by the curator and the LCF students for *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion* will be conveyed in a way that changes the role of the garments from passive contextual objects to objects with an active voice, explored for information about how they were made. *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion* is endeavouring to show garments that are very much alive.

Conclusion

The role object-based research is currently playing in fashion exhibitions is increasingly diverse and important. Although *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion* is the first major exhibition in the UK to rely on object-based research for its theme and display methods, elements of object-based research have been part of fashion exhibitions in the UK, in varying amounts, for the past decade.⁶¹ Object-based research has helped make fashionable garments in exhibitions evolve from the role of static contextual objects to dynamic, individual pieces with valuable information and stories to tell.⁶² There is an endless amount of information a garment can produce through object-based analysis using methods such as those described by Steele and Prown.⁶³

Using object-based research to examine how garments were worn also offers a unique perspective on fashion history that has become part of fashion display in museums.⁶⁴ By looking at the actual garments, many common myths derived from biased visual and written sources can be discredited, and accurate assessments of fashion history can be made.⁶⁵ When used to examine a designer's work, such as *Balenciaga*, object-based research can help isolate the specific design and making attributes of that designer, showing a new perspective on their work and abilities.⁶⁶

The way object-based research in fashion is developing is similar to both ethnoarchaeology and experimental archaeology. Fashion spans a large time period. In order to use fashionable material culture to draw conclusions and make hypotheses, multiple frameworks must be established. Borrowing methodology from experimental archaeology for pre-nineteenth-century garments and from ethnoarchaeology for post-nineteenth-century garments allows for a structured analysis of these new developments in fashion history. Developments in living history relating to dress have also influenced the analysis and display of dress through the encouragement of an experimental mindset, and the importance of being able to experience a garment.

Object-based research is becoming increasingly common in fashion history, and in fashion exhibitions.⁶⁷ The output of books, such as a recent V&A publication dedicated to seventeenth-century men's clothing patterns, shows the increasing level of practical literature on the subject.⁶⁸ The V&A is showing the influence of the increased importance of objects in fashion exhibitions through *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion*, but it is also possible to see this influence internationally through exhibitions such as *Manus x Machina* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.⁶⁹

This article has shown the growth of object-based research in fashion history and fashion exhibitions, but it is only the beginning of this new field of research and display. The application of existing technology such as x-ray imaging, high definition photography, and 3D scanning will greatly enhance the ability to analyse and communicate information from garments, in addition to creating unique forms of display for fashion.⁷⁰ Developing technologies such as 3D printing and non-invasive testing will also become useful tools for bringing garments to life. It is clear that object-based research and fashion exhibitions are already successfully partnered and promise an exciting future ahead.

Endnotes

- 1 Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, England, 2002, p 2.
- 2 Ibid, pp 1-2.
- 3 Ibid, p 2.
- 4 Valerie Steele, "A Museum of Fashion Is More than a Clothes-Bag," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 2, Issue 4, Taylor and Francis, London, England, April 1998, p 327.
- 5 Taylor, op cit, pp 1-2.
- 6 See Ingrid Mida and Alexandra Kim, *The Dress Detective: A Practical Guide to Object-Based Research in Fashion*, Bloomsbury Academic, London, England, 2015.
- 7 Steele, op cit.
- 8 Steele, op cit, p 329.
- 9 Mary Beaudry, *Findings: The Material Culture of Needlework and Sewing*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2007, p 7.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 See Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 2012.
- 12 See Valerie Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History*, Batsford, London, England, 2004.
- 13 See Cecilia Aneer, "Tailored Criticism: The Use of Renaissance and Baroque Garments as Sources of Information," in Margarita Gleba, Cherine Munkholt, and Marie-Louise Nosch, *Dressing the Past*, Oxbow Books, Oxford, England, 2008.
- 14 Steele, op cit, p 330.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Jay Anderson, *A Living History Reader: Museums, Volume 1*, American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, United States, 1991, p 3.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Richard Harris, *Building History: Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, 1970-2010: The First 40 years*, Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Chichester, England, 2010, p 141.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Taylor, op cit.
- 21 Harris, op cit.
- 22 *insideSUSSEX* magazine, Sideways Media, Brighton, England, February 2017, p 48.
- 23 Merriam-Webster, Definition of Reenact, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reenact>. Accessed 7 September 2016.
- 24 Anderson, op cit, p 3.
- 25 Janet Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion: 1660-1860: Volume 1*, Macmillan, London, England, 1972, p 3.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Mida and Kim, op cit, p 20.
- 28 Cumming, op cit, p 114.
- 29 Anderson, op cit.
- 30 Tim Schadla-Hall, "Shakespeare's Globe: 'As faithful a copy as scholarship ... could get': 'A bit of a bastard'" in Peter G Stone and Philippe Planel, eds, *The Constructed Past: Experimental Archaeology, Education and the Public*, Taylor and Francis, London, England, 1999, p 104.
- 31 Susan North and Jenny Tiramani, *Seventeenth-Century Women's Dress Patterns: Book 1*, V&A Publications, London, England, 2011, p 3.
- 32 Aneer, op cit, p 100.
- 33 John Coles, *Experimental Archaeology*, Academic Press, New York, United States, 1979, p 1.
- 34 Ibid, p 2.
- 35 Schadla-Hall, op cit, p 3.
- 36 Coles, op cit.
- 37 Aneer, op cit, p 104.

- ³⁸ North and Tirimani, op cit.
- ³⁹ See Judith Clark and Amy De La Haye, *Exhibiting Fashion: Before and after 1971*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2014.
- ⁴⁰ Steele, op cit, p 335.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Clark and De la Haye, op cit.
- ⁴⁴ Emma Treleaven, *Living Garments: Exploring Objects in Modern Fashion Exhibitions*, unpublished MA dissertation, University College London, England, 2016, p 63.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid, p 64.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid, p 63.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid, pp 59-60.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid, p 64.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid, pp 63-64.
- ⁵¹ Ibid, pp 59-60.
- ⁵² Ibid, pp 61-62.
- ⁵³ Daniel Stiles, "Ethnoarchaeology: A Discussion of Methods and Applications," *Man*, Volume 12, Issue 1, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London, England, 1977, p 87.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵ Aneer, op cit.
- ⁵⁶ Treleaven, op cit, pp 59-64.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid, p 59-61.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid, p 64.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid, p 63.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid, p 64.
- ⁶¹ Nick Veasey, 2016, Courtesy of The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England.
- ⁶² Treleaven, op cit.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ Mida and Kim, op cit.
- ⁶⁵ Steele, op cit.
- ⁶⁶ Mida and Kim, op cit.
- ⁶⁷ Steele, op cit.
- ⁶⁸ Treleaven, op cit.
- ⁶⁹ Mida and Kim, op cit.
- ⁷⁰ North and Tirimani, op cit.
- ⁷¹ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Manus x Machina, 2016 <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2016/manus-x-machina>. Accessed 13 September 2016.
- ⁷² Treleaven, op cit.

Bibliography

Published Sources

- Anderson, J A, *Living History Reader: Museums, Volume 1*, American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, United States, 1991.
- Aneer, Cecilia, "Tailored Criticism: The Use of Renaissance and Baroque Garments as Sources of Information," *Dressing the Past*, Gleba, Margarita, Munkholt, Cherine, and Nosch, Marie-Louise, eds, Oxbow Books, Oxford, England, 2008, pp 98-114.
- Arnold, Janet, *Patterns of Fashion: 1660-1860: Volume 1*, Macmillan, London, England, 1972.

- Beaudry, Mary, *Findings: The Material Culture of Needlework and Sewing*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2007.
- Clark, Judith and De La Haye, Amy, *Exhibiting Fashion: Before and After 1971*, Yale University Press, New Haven, United States, 2014.
- Coles, John, *Experimental Archaeology*, Academic Press, New York, United States, 1979.
- Cumming, Valerie, *Understanding Fashion History*, Batsford, London, England, 2004.
- Harris, Richard, et al, *Building History: Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, 1970-2010: The First 40 Years*, Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Chichester, England, 2010.
- Jordanova, Ludmilla, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 2012.
- Mida, Ingrid and Kim, Alexandra, *The Dress Detective: A Practical Guide to Object-Based Research in Fashion*, Bloomsbury Academic, London, England, 2015.
- North, Susan and Tiramani, Jenny, *Seventeenth-Century Women's Dress Patterns: Book 1*, V&A Publications, London, England, 2011.
- Palmer, Alexandra, *Couture and Commerce: The Transatlantic Fashion Trade in the 1950s*, University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, Canada, 2001.
- Schadla-Hall, Tim, "Shakespeare's Globe: 'As faithful a copy as scholarship ... could get'; 'A bit of a bastard'," *The Constructed Past: Experimental Archaeology, Education and the Public*, Stone, Peter G and Planel, Phillipe, eds, Taylor and Francis, London, England, 1999, pp 1-14.
- Steele, Valerie, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes-Bag," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Volume 2, Edition 4, Taylor and Francis, London, England, April 1998, pp 327-335.
- Stiles, David, "Ethnoarchaeology: A Discussion of Methods and Applications," *Man*, Volume 12, Edition 1, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London, England, 1977, pp 81-103.
- Taylor, Lou, *The Study of Dress History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, England, 2002.

Unpublished Sources

- Petersen, Glenn, "Beyond Dummies: Enlivening the Costume Exhibition Charles James: Beyond Fashion with Animated Content," *North American Textile Conservation Conference*, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, United States, 2015, unpublished conference paper.
- Treleaven, Emma, *Living Garments: Exploring Objects in Modern Fashion Exhibitions*, Unpublished MA dissertation, University College London, 2016.

Internet Sources

- Merriam-Webster, "Definition of Reenact," 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reenact>. Accessed 7 September 2016.
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Manus x Machina*, 2016 <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2016/manus-x-machina>. Accessed 13 September 2016.

Copyright © 2017 Emma Treleaven
Email: emmatreleaven@gmail.com

Emma Treleaven is the Exhibitions Assistant at Bletchley Park, the home of British codebreaking and a birthplace of modern information technology. She completed her Master's degree in Museum Studies at University College London and has an Undergraduate degree in Fashion History and Theory from Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. Her recent work has focused on the connections between object-based research, making processes, fashion history, and the use of dress in twentieth-century espionage.

The Clothes Worn in 1785 for the Betrothal and Wedding of Carlota Joaquina of Spain and Dom João of Portugal

Fausto Viana

Abstract

A marriage of the nobility, especially between two significant European imperial houses, such as the Bourbon and the Braganza, that date back to the thirteenth and seventeenth century, respectively, was a reason to celebrate. This article seeks to identify the clothes worn at the celebration in Madrid, Spain in 1785, based on two recently discovered paintings of the marriage of Carlota Joaquina of Spain and Dom João of Portugal.

Part of the project, Dressing the Contemporary Scene: Patterns and Dress in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Brazil, developed at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, involves investigating dress, sewing and tailoring manuals, pictures, and iconographic material in general. In Brazil, the study of eighteenth-century dress is a challenge. No trace of dress from that period has yet been found in private or public museums in Brazil, and iconographical resources are scarce.

Brazil was for a long time a colony of Portugal, and clothes were only part of the cultural knowledge shared for more than three centuries, 1500-1822. People from Portugal would travel to Brazil under many circumstances, normally related to the exploration of the land in terms of gold, diamonds, and other natural resources. From the point of view of the coloniser, the strategy was to go to the colony, explore and experience it for a period, and then return home to enjoy the fortune acquired in Brazil. The country was not isolated in terms of clothing influences. Not only did members of the Portuguese court sail to Brazil, but travellers from all parts of the world came through Brazil on their way to other countries in South America, Australia, and Pacific destinations. A whole diversity of costume was worn in Brazil, even though there are no material remains.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Portugal and England maintained deep financial relations with Brazil, and England was the main supplier of fabric and other textile materials to Brazil. In order to conduct object-based dress research of Portuguese and English dress, Brazilian dress historians must travel to Portugal and England specifically in search of historic costumes, fabric, and haberdashery of the period. In 2016, an exciting dress-related discovery occurred, which opened new research opportunities. Two paintings were discovered in Portugal, which depicted the royal wedding of Carlota Joaquina of Spain and Dom João of Portugal in 1785. These paintings were found at The National Palace of Queluz, a national museum located 12 kilometres from Lisbon.

A Royal Wedding

Carlota Joaquina (1775-1830) was the daughter of Carlos IV of Spain and a descendant of Louis XIV of France. Dom João (1767-1826), who would become Dom João VI, King of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves, was the son of Pedro III and the Queen Maria I, both of Portugal. The marriage of Carlota Joaquina and Dom João had been previously arranged in the late 1770s, as Rui Ramos stated in his History of Portugal:

The early years of the reign of Queen Maria were also marked by a policy of approaching Spain, sponsored by King Carlos III. It was in this context that they celebrated, in 1785, the crossed marriages of Prince João and the Infanta Dona Mariana Victoria with the infants of Spain, respectively, Dona Carlota Joaquina and Dom Gabriel Antonio.¹

On 2 May 1784, the preliminary marriage agreements were signed in Aranjuez.² It was to be a double wedding: the Prince of Spain marrying an Infanta from Portugal while the Prince of Portugal, Dom João, marrying an Infanta from Spain (Carlota Joaquina of Spain). This article will focus on the latter wedding between Carlota Joaquina of Spain and Dom João of Portugal.

Also in 1784, and almost a year before the wedding, the staff at the Ducal Palace of Vila Viçosa, the seat of the House of Braganza, situated 187 kilometres from Lisbon, were already preparing for the actual celebration.³ On 10 March 1785, a wedding treaty was signed. On 27 March 1785, a scripture and a matrimonial contract were signed in Madrid, in the presence of Dom José Moñino y Redondo, count of Florida Blanca, who represented the King of Spain. Also present at the contract signing was Dom Henrique de Menezes, the third Marquis of Lourical, who represented the King of Portugal.

On 8 May 1785, Dona Carlota Joaquina de Bourbon arrived at the Ducal Palace of Vila Vicoso. She was introduced to Prince João and his parents, who were surprised as Carlota Joaquina “was not only a child, but also extremely short, not very attractive in terms of appearance, her hair curly, and she was very awkward looking.”⁴

After a religious ceremony, there was a great feast celebrating the event. *The Lisbon Gazette* reported that “...all the royal family dined in public, a ceremony that had not been practiced since the royal wedding in 1729. The family and the Spanish entourage dined at several of the state tables and were served with magnificence, profusion, and delicacy.”⁵ On 9 June 1785, the religious wedding ceremony took place in Lisbon, at the Chapel of the Barraca Real. The ceremony was followed by three days of festivities, and there were fireworks in the Praça do Comércio.

Mariano Salvador Maella painted a portrait of Carlota Joaquina (Figure 1) in 1785, the year of her wedding to Dom João (Figure 2). In Figure 1, Carlota Joaquina was painted when 10 years old, much younger in age than her mother-in-law had been when she married at the age of 25. Carlota Joaquina at 10 years old was the same age at marriage as was Maria Anna of Austria, Queen of Portugal (1718–1781) (Figure 3). Maria Anna of Austria, mother of Queen Maria I (1734–1816) (Figure 4), married in 1729. It is also worth noting that the husband of Queen Maria I, Dom Pedro III, was the uncle of Queen Maria I. To secure thrones, power, and property, negotiations between Imperial families worked in this manner.

In her book, *Maria I, the Crazy Queen*, Louise Boléo stated that many of the costumes worn during the reign of Queen Maria I were inspired by the fashions of the Spanish and Austrian courts.⁶ The Austrian influence is well highlighted in the severity of the dress of Maria Anna of Austria in Figure 3. When analysing paintings and portraits of rulers or other women in Portugal, the deep and powerful pressure imposed on them by the Catholic Church must be acknowledged. In the eighteenth century, the moral influence of the Catholic Church was wide-reaching and its condemnations and judgments very strict, affecting the way people dressed.

Boléo stated that even for simple daily wear, “The toilettes of women were time consuming and hairstyles required hours. In festive days they had to be elaborated with pearls, according to the taste of Queen Maria I and clearly shown in the paintings that have survived until today,” as one can see in Figure 4.⁷ The use of feathers in women’s hair arrangements in Portugal did not become as excessive as in France, which, Boléo stated, was “curious because Portugal had access to rarer, more precious, and exotic feathers coming from Brazil.”⁸ The hair of Portuguese women was neither as powdered nor high as the French.



Figure 1
Carlota Joaquina of Spain, Queen of Portugal,
 Mariano Salvador Maella, 1785,
 oil on canvas, 177 x 116cm,
 Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain, P02440.



Figure 2
Dom João as a Child,
 artist unknown, late eighteenth century,
 Museum of the Inconfidencia, Ouro Preto, Brazil,
 unaccessioned.



Figure 3
Maria Anna of Austria, Queen of Portugal,
 Jean Ranc, 1729, oil on canvas, 112 x 88cm,
 Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain, P02331.



Figure 4
Portrait of Queen Maria I with a Crown,
 Giuseppe Troni, circa 1783, oil on canvas, 259 x 162cm,
 Gripsholm Castle, Sweden, NMGrh 666.

Neither the hairstyles nor wigs were high; however, in party costumes the bustles and petticoats were largely used, thus resulting in a round silhouette, with corsets embroidered with lace and very low-cut dresses. The stockings were embroidered with silver thread and the shoes made of silk or satin, embroidered in the same colours of the dresses, as well as the reticules. The cloaks in velvet or heavy silks completed the toilette.⁹

French dressmakers arrived in Lisbon in the nineteenth century, but before that, there was a reliance on Portuguese dressmakers, as described by Boléo. “In the eighteenth century, court ladies could meet Portuguese dressmakers in their well-located ateliers in town, where they could browse through the first fashion magazines edited abroad.”¹⁰ The Court of Lisbon was not, in fact, as exuberant or luxurious as other courts of Europe. But riches coming from Brazil, then a colony of Portugal, allowed some excesses; “in costumes of great galas, semi-precious stones would glitter, as they came from Brazil.”¹¹

Dress historians have been unable to locate any dress (or images of dress) utilised by Queen Maria I or Carlota Joaquina on 8 May 1785 at the royal wedding at the Ducal Palace of Vila Vicosa. The following, though, is a description of the dress worn in Figure 1 by its artist, Mariano Salvador Maella.

The painting depicts the future sovereign (at the age of ten) in a monumental palatial interior, with a pilaster at the background, a large curtain and a big cage on a Louis XVI console. The floor is carpeted with sumptuousness and the room, perhaps invented, can correspond to any room in those royal palaces. The girl is dressed in gala or court dress, according to the terminology of the period, with a pink corset adjusted with ribbons over the sleeves, and they get bigger over the elbows. The skirt on the pannier has a skirt that falls over it, opening in a tail. The fabric is a marvel of silver, embroidered with flowers and bouquets ... She has a high hairstyle, with a headdress of flowers on top. The fashion is typically French and reminds us of the last years of the Ancien Régime; and evokes the clothes Marie Antoinette and women used in the surroundings.¹²

As a ten-year-old girl, Carlota Joaquina may have felt uncomfortable, in a place where she was not adapted or respected. But in terms of costumes, she would not feel isolated because the two courts, Portugal and Spain, were both extremely refined and traditional. The royal family of Braganza dated back to the 1640s (the roots of the family reach to 1442, after the House of Borgonha) and the royal House of Bourbon began to reign in Spain in 1700, with Filipe V, the grandson of Louis XVI, King of France. The royal family of Bourbon in France had been reigning since 1268.

The Celebration in Madrid

The Infanta Carlota Joaquina lived in the Palace of Queluz, formerly called Old Palace, located 14 kilometres from Lisbon. Dom Pedro III, her father-in-law, expanded and reformed the Palace of Queluz from 1760 onwards. In 1821, when Carlota Joaquina departed Brazil and returned to Portugal, she returned to Queluz, where she passed away in 1830.

In 2016, during a research trip to the Palace of Queluz, two significant paintings were studied (Figure 5 and Figure 6) that helped to understand the dress of the Spanish and Portuguese courts. The web site of the company that manages the parks and palaces of Sintra and Queluz points out that:

The wedding and consortium of Braganza-Bourbon happened in 1785, and it was a motive of great manifestations and celebrations of joy and in the two peninsular kingdoms (Lisbon, Vila Viçosa, Madrid, Aranjuez, among other places). Great festivities were organized in Madrid to celebrate the wedding ... To celebrate the wedding of Dona Carlota Joaquina, the Portuguese Ambassador in Madrid, Henrique de Menezes, 3rd Marquis of Louriçal, set



Figure 5

View from the Pavilion Built to Celebrate the Wedding of Dom João and Carlota Joaquina in Madrid, Muzzi, 1785, gouache on paper, 40 x 50cm, The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.



Figure 6

View from the Garden with the Pavilion Built in the Background, 1785, gouache on paper, 40 x 50cm, The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.



Figure 7

Henrique de Menezes, 3rd Marquis of Louriçal, and Family
 (his wife, Dona Maria da Glória da Cunha, Dom Luiz Eusebius and Dona Constance),
 Noirdemange, circa 1785, oil on ivory, 16 x 17.5cm,
 The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.

up a huge pavilion suitable for the so desired marriage, where he received about 2000 guests.¹³

On 27–29 March 1785, the envoy of Queen Maria I of Portugal, Dom Henrique de Menezes, offered a feast for 2000 guests, celebrating the marriage of Carlota Joaquina. As this article discusses dress, it is necessary to pay close attention to the possible costumes of the host of the wedding celebrations in 1785, who acted on behalf of her Majesty, the Queen of Portugal (Figure 7).

In Figure 7, the host Dom Henrique de Menezes is shown in 1785 with his family. He was a gentleman of the House of Queen Dona Maria I, a knight of the Holy Order of the Golden Fleece of Spain. He was sent to Madrid, as seen, as an ambassador in charge of negotiating the wedding treaty of the Infantas of Portugal and Spain, Dom João and Dom Gabriel. The costume of Dom Henrique de Menezes is an example of what one would see at the wedding party in 1785, at the venues illustrated in Figure 5 and Figure 6. His dress is a combination of a dress coat, waistcoat, and breeches, as seen in the extant outfit in Figures 8 and 9.

Dom Henrique de Menezes wears a sophisticated set of clothes in Figure 7, but the patterns of the clothes can also be applied to the costumes of the musicians of the party, for example, in a variety of



Figures 8 and 9

Dress coat, waistcoat and breeches (front and back), 1770–1780, National Museum of Costume, Lisbon, Portugal, 3966, 3967 and 3968, photography by Fausto Viana.

colours but with simpler fabric for the musicians. The coat of Dom Henrique had a similar cut to the musicians' coats, but with a much more sophisticated fabric. The fabric of the coat of Dom Henrique included embroidered silk, as seen in the extant dress Figure 10, worn along with a silk waistcoat as in Figure 11. Other men depicted in Figure 5 and Figure 6 could wear the cut of the waistcoat in Figure 12, but tailored from somewhat more rustic textiles. Alternately, men at the wedding party could have worn a waistcoat with attached long sleeves, or *véstia*, as it was called in Portugal and Brazil.

An important male presence at the wedding party in 1785 was in the form of those in military uniforms, as shown in detail in Figure 13, with blue coat, white waistcoat with red neckerchief, and white breeches. According to Carlos Daróz, the colour of the Spanish military uniform would change from white to blue at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ In 1926, the uniform became khaki.

In the lower left-hand section of Figure 14, a man and a woman are dressed in Turkish style, with harem trousers and turbans with feather trim. An official guest list of the night of the event has not yet been found, but presumably those in Turkish dress are artists hired to perform during the event. To the left of the detail in Figure 14, many well-dressed women are standing behind a barrier, as spectators. In the upper-right quadrant of Figure 14, there is also a group of five, who are wearing Turkish dress. In the foreground to the right, a group of musicians brighten the environment. Next to them, there is a Harlequin dressed in traditional Italian costume, flanked by an *Innamorata*, another traditional character of the *commedia dell'arte*, wearing a face mask.



Figure 10

Detail, embroidered dress coat, 1780-1790, National Museum of Costume, Lisbon, Portugal, 3972, photography by Fausto Viana.

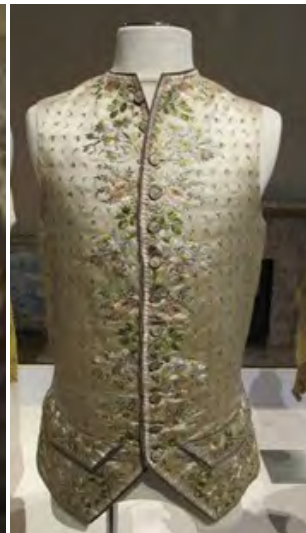


Figure 11

Waistcoat, 1770-1780, National Museum of Costume, Lisbon, Portugal, 4011, photography by Fausto Viana.



Figure 12

Waistcoat, 1760-1780, National Museum of Costume, Lisbon, Portugal, 3925, photography by Fausto Viana.



Figure 13

Detail, *View from the Pavilion Built to Celebrate the Wedding of Dom João and Carlota Joaquina in Madrid*, Muzzi, 1785, gouache on paper, 40 x 50cm, The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.



Figure 14

Detail, *View from the Garden with the Pavilion Built in the Background*, 1785, gouache on paper, 40 x 50cm, The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.



Figure 15

Detail, *View from the Garden with the Pavilion Built in the Background*, 1785, gouache on paper, 40 x 50cm, The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.

Regarding women's fashion, Henrique de Menezes, the host of the wedding celebrations in 1785, was accompanied by his wife, Dona Maria da Glória da Cunha, who wore an elegant robe à la anglaise (Figure 7). The dress could be tied and adjusted at the back. In contrast, the woman featured at the far left-hand side of Figure 14 wears a robe à la française, which is also known as a Watteau dress, sack back dress, or sack dress. The Watteau dress was a popular fashion during the time and place of the 1785 wedding party depicted in these paintings. In the foreground of Figure 15, there is masked woman whose back is clearly in view, and her gown features the characteristic Watteau pleating cascading down the back. Many women's ensembles feature shawls; there are a variety apparent in the paintings.



Figures 16 and 17

Women's jacket (front and back), red velvet, 1790–1800,
National Museum of Costume of Portugal, Lisbon, Portugal, 4175, photography by Fausto Viana.

Several jackets are represented in the painting, as seen in the extant examples in Figure 16 and Figure 17. This is similar in style to that of Dona Maria da Glória da Cunha in Figure 7. It is significant to note that in the paintings that depict the wedding celebrations in 1785, there are many colour combinations in women's dress. The jacket (or bodice) is almost always different from the petticoat. As cited by Baungarten and Watson, there were "dresses for women of all social levels, from the highest ranks to the poorest working women."¹⁵

The jackets, or *casquinhas*, were made in a range of styles. The front of some had a stomacher, while others were tied with bands, such as can be seen in the woman in Figure 14, who is behind the woman wearing the Watteau dress. Alternatively, the jacket could be buttoned up the centre front, as illustrated in Figure 16.

Aprons are also an apparent dress accessory in these wedding celebrations. In the right-hand section of Figure 14 and in the left-hand section of Figure 15, two women wear aprons. In the eighteenth century, aprons "were not just for cleaning and protection while working. Many were fashion accessories, made of very thin cotton or silk, which could be enriched with embroidery and prints," summarises Baungarten.¹⁶

As illustrated in Figure 5, the women of high society, since there would be no other reason for them to be there, occupy the front of the central arena, alongside a central figure that must be very important. It is not yet known who is portrayed. It is surely a powerful person.

Figure 18 seems to be indicating jackets (or bodices), similar to the extant garment depicted in Figure 19. These bodices often have petticoats (Figure 20), in the same tone. In the paintings depicting the 1785 celebrations, one can denote stomachers (Figure 21), which provide support for jewellery and other adornments. Those dresses seem to be *à la anglaise*, as the dress of Dona Maria da Glória da Cunha.



Figure 18

Detail, *View from the Pavilion Built to Celebrate the Wedding of Dom João and Carlota Joaquina in Madrid*, Muzzi, 1785, gouache on paper, 40 x 50cm, The Palace of Queluz, Queluz, Portugal, unaccessioned.



Figure 19

French caraco (jacket), 1780-1800, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, T114-12
photography by Fausto Viana.



Figure 20
Stomacher, circa 1740, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, T99-1962, photography by Fausto Viana.



Figure 21
Petticoat, circa 1760, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, T430-1967, photography by Fausto Viana.



Figure 22

“Fourth Car of the Bride and Groom,” Fourth Car of the Wedding Parade in Rio de Janeiro, Antonio Francisco Soares, 1786, 31 x 19cm, Instituto Histórico Geográfico, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, L794/Doc-16.

Other Parties, New Celebrations

The wedding celebrations of Carlota Joaquina and Dom João were not restricted to European territory. In Brazil, and more specifically in Rio de Janeiro, the viceroy Luís de Vasconcelos organised celebrations that stretched over a month in early 1786.

The carriage depicted in Figure 22 was part of a set of six made to celebrate the wedding of Carlota Joaquina and Dom João. Atop the carriage, one can see the costumes of the future king and queen (that were represented by actors, since the royal couple would only come to Brazil in 1808). But there is other important information. The costume of the knights, who conduct the carriage, become important references when compared to the watercolour of an artist of the same period, Carlos Julião (1740–1811).

The guards depicted in Figure 22 and Figure 23 are very similar, except for the colours, to those of Spain in 1785, as illustrated in Figure 13. Portuguese military costumes were made in England, as discovered during a research trip to The Museum of Carriages in Lisbon. Many of those uniforms were



Figure 23
Detail, *Officers of the Cavalry of the King's Guard, in Blue Jacket, Yellow Waistcoat and Breeches*, Carlos Julião, end of the eighteenth century, watercolour, The National Library, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30306-041.



Figure 24
The Combination That Was So Common at the Party in Madrid: Dress Coat, Waistcoat and Breeches, Carlos Julião, end of the eighteenth century, watercolour, National Library, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30306-058.



Figure 25
A Robe à la Française, with a Stomacher, Carlos Julião, end of the eighteenth century, watercolour, National Library, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30306-057.



Figure 26
An Outfit Known as "Short Dress," for Everyday Use, Carlos Julião, end of the eighteenth century, watercolour, National Library, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30306-055.

transported to Brazil, but none have yet been found to compare with those in Portugal. The iconographic record is quite suggestive of similarity: Figure 24, drawn by Carlos Julião, is very much related to the basic military outfit in the party of 1785.

As for women's dress, Figure 25 illustrates a robe à la française with a stomacher. Figure 26 shows a costume that was very popular for everyday use, cheap and panned to fasten. An apron was also used to help keep the costume in position, as suggested by Baungarten.¹⁷ As additional evidence of the dress worn during 1785, as depicted in the paintings of the wedding celebrations, Figure 27 and Figure 28 represent a robe à la française, or Watteau dress, in a *Folia de Reis*, a special party held by African descendants to celebrate Twelfth Night.



Figures 27 and 28
Coronation of the Black Queen on Twelfth Night and detail, Carlos Julião, end of the eighteenth century, watercolour, National Library, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30306-071.



Figure 29

Detail, cotton dress, 1780, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England, T.274&A-1967, photography by Fausto Viana.

In Figure 27, the women are generally wearing jackets with matching petticoats, with probably more than one petticoat underneath, as the skirt volume suggests. The research quest for this paper, raised additional research questions, with regard to the clothing depicted in Figure 27, such as: what type of textile was used? and was the pattern created by a printed or weaving technique? For this reason, a visit was made to the The Victoria and Albert Museum, where fabric was found that was made by a commercial partner of Portugal and one of the most important suppliers of cotton to Brazil: England. The dress shown in detail in Figure 29 has basically the same print believed to have featured in Brazil during the eighteenth century.

The research for this article, including iconography, textual, and other materials, was accomplished in visits to The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The National Carriage Museum and The National Museum of Costume in Lisbon, and The Palace of Queluz in Queluz, Portugal. The objects studied in these venues reflect a way of thinking about Brazilian costume or the costumes used in Brazil during the eighteenth century.

As this research continues, more consistent evidence becomes apparent that the fabric and construction methods used in Brazil during the eighteenth century were not so different from the material used in other parts of the world. Brazil was a well-positioned country on the commercial maritime routes, and, after the arrival of the royal family in 1808, there would be even more meaningful exchange with other nations. For Brazil, it was already the start of globalisation.

Endnotes

- ¹ Rui Ramos, *História de Portugal, [History of Portugal]*, A esfera dos livros, Lisbon, 2012, p 427.
- ² Luiz Maria do Couto de Albuquerque da Cunha, *Memórias da Academia Real das Ciências de Lisboa, [Memories of the Royal Academy of Science in Lisbon]* Tipografia da Academia, Lisbon Volumes 1–3, 1865, p 326.
- ³ Maria do Rosário Jardim, “A baixela Germain a serviço da corte no Reinado de D. Maria I,” *[The Germain Silverware at the Court Service in the Kingdom of Dona Maria I]* Artigos em linha, número 6, 2012, <http://www.palacioajuda.pt/Data/Documents/Artigos/A%20Baixela%20Germain%20ao%20servi%C3%A7o%20da%20Corte.pdf>. Accessed 13 September 2017.
- ⁴ Jenifer Roberts, *Dona Maria I, a vida notável de uma rainha louca, [Dona Maria I, the Notable Life of a Mad Queen]*, Casa das Letras, Alfragide, Portugal, 2009, p 116.
- ⁵ Jardim, op cit, p 25.
- ⁶ Luísa Viana de Paiva Boléo, *D. Maria I, a Rainha Louca, A esfera dos livros*, Lisbon, Portugal, 2010, p 142.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ibid, p 143.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Juan Luna, “Carlota Joaquina, Infanta de España, reina de Portugal,” 2006, <https://www.museodelprado.es/coleccion/obra-de-arte/carlota-joaquina-infanta-de-espaa-reina-de/5dcdbf98-5320-4600-9f13-f581c44edca1>. Accessed 28 September 2017.
- ¹³ Parques de Sintra, “Dona Carlota Joaquina de Bourbon,” 7 August 2013, <https://www.parquesdesintra.pt/pontos-de-atracao/d-carlota-joaquina-de-bourbon>. Accessed 28 September 2017.
- ¹⁴ Carlos Daróz, “Uniforme soldado espanhol 1815,” 11 June 2011, <http://darozhistoriamilitar.blogspot.com.br/2011/06/uniformes-soldado-espanhol-1815.html>. Accessed 28 September 2017.
- ¹⁵ Lisa Baungarten and John Watson, *Costume Close Up: Clothing Construction and Pattern, 1750–1790*, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Hollywood, United States, 1999, p 38.
- ¹⁶ Ibid, p 47.
- ¹⁷ Ibid, p 43.

Bibliography

Published Sources

- Baungarten, Lisa, and Watson, John, *Costume Close Up: Clothing Construction and Pattern, 1750–1790*, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Hollywood, United States, 1999.
- Boléo, Luísa Viana de Paiva, *D. Maria I, a Rainha Louca, [Dona Maria I, the Mad Queen]*, A esfera dos livros, Lisbon, Portugal, 2010.
- Cunha, Luiz Maria do Couto de Albuquerque da, *Memórias da Academia Real das Ciências de Lisboa, [Memories of the Royal Academy of Science in Lisbon]* Tipografia da Academia, Lisbon, Portugal, Volumes 1–3, 1865.
- Julião, Carlos, *Riscos iluminados de figurinhos de brancos e negros dos uzos do Rio de Janeiro e Serro do Frio, [Illuminated Drawings of White and Black People in Rio de Janeiro and Serro do Frio]*, Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1960.
- Ramos, Rui, *História de Portugal, [History of Portugal]* A esfera dos livros, Lisbon, Portugal, 2012.

Roberts, Jenifer, *Dona Maria I, a vida notável de uma rainha louca, [Dona Maria I, the Notable Life of a Mad Queen]*, Casa das Letras, Alfragide, Portugal, 2009.

Internet Sources

Daróz, Carlos, "Uniforme soldado espanhol 1815," 11 June 2011, <http://darozhistoriamilitar.blogspot.com.br/2011/06/uniformes-soldado-espanhol-1815.html>. Accessed 28 September 2017.

Jardim, Maria do Rosário, "*A baixela Germain a serviço da corte no Reinado de D. Maria I*" [*The Germain Silverware at the Court Service in the Kingdom of Dona Maria I*] Artigos em linha, número 6, 2012, <http://www.palacioajuda.pt/Data/Documents/Artigos/A%20Baixela%20Germain%20ao%20servi%C3%A7o%20da%20Corte.pdf>. Accessed 13 September 2017.

Luna, Juan, "Carlota Joaquina, Infanta de Espanha, reina de Portugal," 2006, <https://www.museodelprado.es/coleccion/obra-de-arte/carlota-joaquina-infanta-de-espaa-reina-de/5dcdbf98-5320-4600-9f13-f581c44edca1>. Accessed 28 September 2017.

de Sintra, Parques, "Dona Carlota Joaquina de Bourbon," 7 August 2013, <https://www.parquesdesintra.pt/pontos-de-atracao/d-carlota-joaquina-de-bourbon>. Accessed 28 September 2017.

Copyright © 2017 Fausto Viana
Email: faustoviana@uol.com.br

Fausto Viana, PhD, is a fashion, set, and costume design professor at The School of Communication and Arts at São Paulo University, Brazil. He was awarded a Bachelor's degree in Drama in 1992, a Master's degree in 2000, and a Doctoral degree in 2004 in Drama at São Paulo University. He earned a second Doctoral degree in 2010, in Museology at Lusófona University in Portugal. He completed two postdoctoral programmes, one in Textile Conservation in Lisbon and the other in Fashion in Rio de Janeiro. He is the author of several books, including *The Manual of Costume Conservation* (2006), *Theatrical Costume and the Renovations of the Twentieth Century* (2010), and *Costume as Document* (2015).

Kimonos for Foreigners: Orientalism in Kimonos Made for the Western Market, 1900–1920

Allie Yamaguchi

Abstract

In the late nineteenth century, whilst Japanese goods were becoming more prevalent throughout Europe and America, kimonos, too, were widely available to consumers in the West. “Kimonos for Foreigners” were designed specifically for the Western customer. This paper will outline how these exported garments started to appear in catalogues in Britain and Japan from 1900 onwards. It explores how they were represented in Britain between 1900 and 1920 in order to gain a deeper understanding of the process of crosscultural appropriation in Japan and Britain, as well as Japanese cultural selfexoticism for the purposes of commercial export.

Introduction

Japan’s 200 years of isolation ended when an American, Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry, sailed into Edo bay in 1853. Trade between Japan and the West officially began after Japan signed a treaty in 1858.¹ The Meiji Restoration of 1868 toppled the long-reigning Tokugawa shoguns and propelled the country into the modern era.² The Meiji government actively promoted trade with the West in order to obtain foreign currency needed to complete the modernisation of Japan. Fortunately, Japanese arts and crafts were becoming popular in Euro-American countries at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The traditional Japanese garment, the kimono, was one of Japan’s largest exports to the West.³

In 1876, an American visited the Takashimaya store in Kyoto to purchase some Japanese *fukusa*, textile pieces traditionally used for gift wrapping. This was the first time a customer from outside Japan had visited the store.⁴ In 1893, Takashimaya established a trade department to start trading worldwide.⁵ Most likely from the very end of nineteenth century, they began to produce many goods designed specifically for *gaijin*, which literally means “the outsider.” Kimonos were the major product in their lineup of goods for the Western market. At first, original Japanese kimonos (often depicted in James McNeil Whistler’s paintings in 1863–1867) were exported to Western countries. However, kimono-like garments more suitable for Western customs and fashion were soon invented and became popular in the West. Takashimaya named those kimonos “Kimonos for Foreigners.” Surviving garments, photographs, and sketches of these kimonos show several elaborate designs, most of which were very different in shape and design to the original kimono.

The appropriation and misunderstanding of culture between Occidental and Oriental countries presents an ongoing challenge. Courses dealing with dress history can only be found in a few colleges and universities in Japan, and most of these are located in the department of home economics rather than history, art, or sociology. Therefore, dress history in Japan focuses more on material and technical

analysis of the garments in question rather than taking a critical or an anthropological approach.⁶ Japanese studies of Japonism, therefore, often see Japonism in terms of Western appreciation of Japanese art and design, and exclude discussion from an Orientalist point of view.⁷ Furthermore, they often conclude that the kimono-craze in the West helped to free Western women from the tight corset, which was not entirely true.

Studies of Japonism and fashion in Britain, in comparison, often place it in its social and political context, and sometimes victimise Japan as an appropriated orient. Studies of Japonism in Euro-American countries often refer to Edward Said's argument in his 1978 book, *Orientalism*. Said argued that "the Orient was almost a European invention," and continues that Orientalism has a meaning as "a Western style for dominating, restricting and having authority over the Orient," along with academic and imaginative meanings.⁸ Therefore, according to Said, Orientalism is a Western idea of the Orient that cannot usually be understood or studied without considering "their configuration of power."⁹ On the other hand, historians such as PL Pham, Daisuke Nishihara, Melissa Miles, and Jessica Neath pointed out that Japan is "neither fully Oriental nor Occidental, neither Eastern nor Western."¹⁰ As Miles and Neath have noted:

Japan's imperialist activities in parts of Asia, its Meiji-era adoption of European models of modern industry and infrastructure, the recognition that Japan received from Britain as a mighty naval and economic power, and Japan's attitudes of racial superiority towards other Asian countries, are amongst the many examples cited by others as evidence of how the binary model opposing East and West fails to reflect the geographic, cultural, and political history of Japan.¹¹

Considering the points above, this paper aims to suggest that kimonos for foreigners represent neither pure appreciation nor victimisation, but highly commercialised crosscultural appropriation between the two countries. It suggests that the appropriation of kimonos in Britain was not a one-way phenomenon but a mutual one. The missing Japanese cultural and structural complexities in kimonos for foreigners were not just the Westerner's sin, but also the result of Japan herself playing a key role. Selforientalising for social and economic development in Japan was key to forming this Western representation of Japanese culture.

This paper will explore how kimonos for foreigners started to appear in catalogues and how they were represented and worn in Britain between 1900 and 1920 through finding clues to their social relevance. It will also explore how they illustrate the complex cultural relationship between Japan and Britain. Here, this paper discusses three examples: kimonos held by the Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, the Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery, and the Chertsey Museum. All three examples are made of fine silk. They are classic examples of kimonos for foreigners, and show that the power of objects can provide insight into the past impossible with text or visual resources alone. Lou Taylor believes that an interdisciplinary material culture approach in dress history will allow us to "establish emotional responses to clothing and appearance" that would otherwise be impossible.¹² It will bridge the gap between the "representation" and the "physical reality" of clothing in order to gain an insight into the hybridity and the dynamism of society on many levels.

Kimonos for Foreigners

Kimonos for foreigners were designed and sold by many companies and department stores both in Japan and Britain. The kimono in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Britain was a feminine and domestic garment that was normally worn indoors as a tea gown, dressing gown, or night gown, except when being worn on stage as a theatre costume.¹³

In 1898, a robe called the "Japanese Kimono (or Native Robes)" first appeared in the Liberty department store catalogue in England.¹⁴ A model with a fan in her hand illustrated the clichéd image of the Japanese woman at that time (Figure 1). While the word, kimono, had been repeatedly used in the catalogue

throughout the years, there were two kinds of “kimonos” sold in Liberty catalogues: Liberty-made kimonos and Japanese-made kimonos.

Liberty-made kimonos appeared in the catalogue from 1900 and were called “Kimono (or Japanese Robe),” “Kimono Robes,” and “Kimono Shaped Silk Robes.” The description of the kimono reads “Made in ‘Liberty’ Silk-Brocade, in various designs and colourings.” The aesthetic patterns were often printed on Liberty-made kimonos (also Figure 1). Liberty-made kimonos were normally sold in silk, satin, or silk crepe, with embroidered or printed aesthetic characters. Kimonos made from Liberty silk brocade were sold from five guineas and Liberty-printed silk kimonos were sold from 75 shillings.

Arthur Liberty’s mission at the very end of the nineteenth century was “the revival of the British silk industry which had declined ever since Cobden’s treaty with France in 1860 when the import duty on silk was repealed.”¹⁶ Britain was in a state of general trade depression in the 1880s, and the silk industry was in dire straits.¹⁷ For the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902, there was a royal command that the robes of peeresses and all Court dresses must be made entirely in British silk.¹⁸ More than half of the kimonos sold in the 1902 and 1903 Liberty catalogues, therefore, are made of “Liberty silk.” From 1905, however, more and more Japanese-made kimonos began to appear in their catalogues. By 1908, Liberty-made kimonos were almost entirely replaced by kimonos made of Japanese silk.

The kimonos labelled as “Japanese Kimono (or Native Robe),” “Japanese Silk Embroidered Robes (Kimonos),” “Native-Japanese Silk Embroidered Robes (Kimono),” “Native Kimono Robes,” and “Real Japanese Silk Embroidered Robes (Kimono)” in the Liberty catalogues were all presumed to have been made in Japan or using Japanese materials. The rich embroideries and the clichéd Japanese designs such as wisteria, apple blossom, and chrysanthemum are characteristic of Japanese-made kimonos in the Liberty catalogue. These Japanese-made kimonos were sold from three pounds and 10 shillings to 10 pounds and 10 shillings.

The Takashimaya department store in Japan published its first English language catalogue in 1911. Kimonos made up the largest part of this catalogue and prices varied greatly from 0.85 yen (about one pound) to 40 yen (80 pounds). The most expensive item was a full-length kimono made of heavy silk crepe with fine embroidery, good silk lining, and embroidered sash. The cheapest item was a half-length kimono made of printed cotton. By looking at this range of prices, it appears that kimonos were probably available to not only upper-class customers, but also to upper-middle class customers. The kimonos introduced in this catalogue were all Takashimaya made, but vary in design and materials. Plain cotton, silk, *yoryu* union crepe,¹⁹ *kabe* crepe,²⁰ *habutai* silk,²¹ and muslin²² were textiles used for kimonos. The designs have rich embroideries, prints, and *yuzen* dyeing.²³ Interestingly, Takashimaya actively used



Figure 1
Kimono (or Japanese Robe),
Liberty Yule-Tide Gifts, 1900, p 25.¹⁵

Japanese terms such as *yoryu*, *kabe*, and *yuzen* to add authenticity and “Japaneseness,” even though the kimono itself looked very different from the original garment.

Elizabeth Kramer has explored British ideals about Japan and Japanese kimonos in the late nineteenth century and argues that the British reception of the Westernisation of clothing in Japan meant “the eradication of ‘Old Japan.’”²⁴ Kimonos, which “served as a potent visual sign of Japanese tradition,” had to remain poetic and romantic as British viewers regarded them as a representation of “Old Japan.”²⁵ From the end of the nineteenth century, many modern and innovative “new” kimono designs and materials began to be introduced in Japan. However, the “Old Japan” in British eyes was reflected in kimonos for foreigners. A binary opposition between the British ideal and the Japanese reality, ascribing to one “romantic, preindustrial” and to the other “modern and civilised,” added high value to the brand “Old Japan” in the West.

The exhibition *The Elegant Other: Crosscultural Encounter in Fashion and Art*, held at the Yokohama Museum of Art in Japan in spring 2017, stated that Western ladies wore kimonos either with or without loosened corsets in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁶ The materials used for the surviving kimonos for foreigners, such as soft silk or flowing cotton crepe, also helped to cement this image of kimonos as loose and comfortable. Observing kimonos sold in the catalogues discussed above, on the other hand, reveals a slightly different view of how kimonos were actually worn in the West.

In the 1900 Christmas gift catalogue of Liberty & Co, there is a picture of a woman in a Liberty-made kimono (Figure 1). Her waist is wrapped tightly with a sash belt, reminiscent of the corset worn underneath, and the top of the kimono is bloused to create an S-bend silhouette, fashionable during the era. Harrods, too, sold “Kimonos and Wraps” in their catalogues in 1909. The illustration depicts the women wearing kimonos in the Edwardian style with a tight waist and a train (Figure 2). A Kimono in the Takashimaya catalogue was also very tightly wrapped on the mannequin (Figure 3).



Figure 2

“Chic Kimonos and Wraps,” *Harrods Catalogue*, 1909.²⁷



Figure 3

Lady's silk crepe kimono, 1911.²⁸

This is very different to how kimonos were worn in Japan. While it is true that designers of high fashion such as Charles Frederic Worth and Jeanne Paquin were inspired by Japanese kimonos and designed rather loose gowns, mainstream wearers wore kimonos in the Edwardian style. Moreover, the neck of the kimonos in the Liberty catalogues is closed *hidarimae* (with the left side tucked under the right). This is the same as Western female jackets or collared shirts.

However, this kind of wrapping was used only to dress the dead in Japan, so the Japanese kimono must be worn *migimae* (with the right side tucked under the left). As the “Crossover Fichu” blouse in the 1905 Liberty catalogue is also worn *hidarimae*, it appears that it was much more natural for Western female clothing to be worn this way (Figure 4). These points suggest that kimonos for foreigners were embedded into British mainstream fashion rather than being worn as a traditional Japanese kimono.

Case Study 1: Kimonos at the Worthing Museum and Art Gallery and the Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery

A padded kimono in dark blue silk held by the Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, England, represents an extant example of a classic kimono for foreigners. The kimono is covered with massive wisteria and chrysanthemums on the front (Figure 5) and back (Figure 6), adding an “exotic” touch to the garment. There is also a separate sash belt in the same dark blue silk, decorated with wisteria and chrysanthemums. The motifs have been embroidered with flat silk thread. The structure of this kimono is very flat without any inserts or pleats to create a three-dimensional silhouette. Museum records indicate that it was made in 1900 and was donated to the museum in 1961. This kimono has been altered by shortening the hem and stitching the underarm openings which Japanese kimonos would usually have had.



Figure 4
Cross-Over Fichus, “Liberty Yule-Tide Gifts,” 1905-1906, p 45.²⁹



Figures 5 and 6

Front and back of the kimono, 1900, Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Worthing, England, 1961/706.³⁰



Figure 7
Kimono, 1881-1914.³¹

The Takashimaya Archive in Osaka, Japan holds 38 photograph albums presumed to have been taken between 1888 and 1914.³² This album contains many photographs of textiles, designs, and kimonos that were produced for the foreign market. Five out of 200 kimonos are decorated with wisteria and chrysanthemums (Figure 7). While the details of these embroideries are different, the layout is very similar to the Worthing kimono. Traditional Japanese flowers, birds, and insects such as chrysanthemums, wisteria, irises, swallows, and dragonflies frequently appear in Japonism arts and crafts. However, the chrysanthemum was one of the most popular and well-known Japanese motifs in the West, as can be seen in Japonism journals such as *Le Japon Artistique* by Samuel Bing, and the 1888 novel and later opera, *Madame Chrysanthemums*.³³ Lionel Lambourne refers to the recognition of chrysanthemums in the West, writing that *Madame Chrysanthemums* was one of the elements that made this flower famous.³⁴ Lambourne continues that the success of Loti's novel "had made the very word 'chrysanthemum' synonymous with both Japan and exoticism."³⁵

It was not only the Japanese motifs but also the use of flowers and plants that caught the attention of Westerners. Christopher Dresser travelled to Japan in 1876 and recorded his journey in *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*, published in 1882. In his book, he wrote that "much of the interest of Japanese patterns lies in its poetical feeling."³⁶ He also praised Japanese patterns by adding "while it savours little of the college, and makes no pretence to Attic elegance, it is redolent of spring, and has all the freshness of the fields and flowers."³⁷ It might be wrong to view the use of flowers and plants on dress and textiles as only and entirely Japanese; however, it is correct to state that this representation of flowers and plants on Japanese clothing and textiles caught Westerners' eyes.

A kimono held by the Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery has traditional Japanese motifs, too (Figure 8). The camellia is one of the traditional Japanese motifs that have been repeatedly used in many arts and crafts in Japan. Here, camellias and plum blossoms have been richly embroidered with tightly twisted silk thread in various shades of pink. The kimono is dyed in a deep burgundy that gets lighter at the hem and has a matching sash belt. It is made of soft silk satin with silk linings. Ribbons have been attached on both sides of the kimono through which to pass the sash belt.



Figure 8
Detail of kimono, 1833–1866,
Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery,
Tunbridge Wells, England, 1993.149.³⁸



Figure 9
Front of kimono, 1833–1866,
Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery,
Tunbridge Wells, England, 1993.149.³⁹

As this kimono has embroidery only on the upper body and the hem of the kimono was worn out, this kimono might have been worn in the Edwardian style, by tightly wrapping the sash belt around the waist and dragging the kimono like a train. Museum records estimate it was made between 1833 and 1866, however it is possible that it was made between 1900 and 1920 when kimonos were widely sold in England. Interestingly, the design of the Tunbridge Wells kimono contains less embroidery than other examples. The front of the kimono is rather modest compared to the Worthing kimono (Figure 9).

In the 1876 issue of *The Architect*, Edward W Godwin introduced “the little shop at the top of Regent Street” where Japanese arts and crafts were sold, but deeply regretted the gradual Westernisation shown in the products of Japan:

Now and then, too, one stumbles against a curtain or rug that is irritating in its sheer violence of colour. Such coarseness, however, is rarely or ever to be found even in the *modern* products of Japan. I say “rarely,” but I confess, with not a little sadness and misgiving, that the rareness is lessening every day. Either the European market is ruining Japanese art, or the Japanese have taken our artistic measure and found it wanting; perhaps there is a little of both. Take for example the common paper fan of today and compare it with some imported here ten or even eight years ago. Those are for the most part lovely in delicate colour and exquisite in drawing, but most of today’s fans are impregnated with the crudeness of the European’s sense of colour, and are immeasurably beneath the older examples.⁴⁰

Kimonos for the Western market are no exception here. The two kimonos assessed above are nothing like the ones depicted in Whistler’s paintings: second-hand Japanese kimonos with sombre colours and delicate motifs. Japanese flowers and plants on kimonos for foreigners have dramatic designs, are decorative in colour, and are embroidered with heavy padding.

While the kimonos assessed above use clichéd “Japanese” motifs such as chrysanthemums, wisteria, and camellias, they show a European sense of colour, as in Godwin’s assessment above. Here, these kimonos for the Western market represented the mixing of Japan through Western eyes and the West through Japanese eyes.



Figure 10
The Chertsey kimono, 1911–1930,
Olive Matthews Collection,
Chertsey Museum, England, M.1986.15.⁴¹



Figure 11
Woman's kimono jacket (haori), 1920s.⁴²

Case Study 2: The Kimono at Chertsey Museum

Chertsey Museum in Surrey, England, also holds a kimono for foreigners. The Chertsey kimono is made of cream coloured silk with beautifully embroidered roses in pink (Figure 10). It does not have a sash belt and the front of the kimono has been closed by stitching and attached hooks. It is no longer a gown to put on but is rather a dress or an overcoat to slip into. This kimono has been greatly altered and a few press studs have also been attached at the neck. Here, the Chertsey kimono was again closed *hidarimae*, with the left side tucked under the right, a style used only for dressing a dead body in Japan.

Roses have been embroidered with extra padding to provide a three-dimensional effect. In the photograph album of exported textiles produced by Takashimaya, there are 13 kimonos with roses. The Kyoto Costume Institute in Kyoto, Japan also holds a kimono for foreigners decorated with roses. Roses started to appear on kimonos for foreigners as early as 1911 according to the 1911 Takashimaya catalogue that stated “designs of chrysanthemum, rose, wisteria, cherry, poppy, assorted, natural colour or monotone embroidery.”⁴³ In the Taisho era (1912–1926), roses were at their most popular on female kimonos in Japan.⁴⁴ Western flowers were considered to be modern and fashionable in early-twentieth-century Japan. Interestingly, many of the Japanese kimonos with roses worn in Taisho era showed a European sense of colour, with bright and vivid colourings, in contrast to the natural colourings of the Chertsey kimono (Figure 11). Yumi Matsushita argued that the introduction of chemical dyes in Japan helped promote the fashion for modern kimonos, so “modern” motifs such as roses were usually designed in “modern” colours using chemical dyes.⁴⁵ This shows an interesting contrast between kimonos for foreigners and domestic Japanese kimonos – the Chertsey kimono, like the other kimonos for foreigners, emphasises its “Japaneseness.” However, this is emphasized not with the choice of motifs but with the choice of colours.

Selforientalising “Japan”

The issue that is of interest with regard to this research is the character of the design of kimonos sold to Western markets. Close observation of kimonos of this type surviving in museum collections indicates that these for-export designs were adapted, as discussed above, to follow Western women's fashions – with various degrees of accuracy. According to the Liberty and Takashimaya catalogues, kimonos decorated with elaborate embroidery, like the three kimonos assessed above, were probably made in

Japan. While the clichéd “Japaneseness” of the British aesthetic sense was emphasised in its representation on kimonos for foreigners, the Westernised “modern” characteristics of the Japanese aesthetic sense also appeared. Here, not only appropriated images of Japan, but also appropriated images of the West, were perfectly recreated by the Japanese for commercial purposes. In this case, Japonism in fashion did not result in the introduction of “Japanese” kimonos to the West but rather the creation and production of a new hybrid kimono that did not belong exclusively to Japan or Britain but to both.

Conclusion: Kimono and Beyond

Examining kimonos for foreigners through textual, visual, and material resources bridges the gap between separate studies in Japan and Britain. This paper has sought to show “the danger of leaving out pieces of the puzzle”⁴⁶ through “open-minded interdisciplinary approaches that are not skewed by personal prejudice, by obsessive reliance on one field of study or by over reliance on the latest theoretical fad.”⁴⁷

These fascinating examples of kimonos from three museums and department store catalogues have taught us that kimonos for foreigners were a mix of both Western and Japanese appropriation of the other’s culture. In this case, Japonism in fashion is not a one-way phenomenon but a mutual one.

Elizabeth Kramer’s conviction that the adoption of kimonos into British fashion “resonated not only with Victorian yearnings to preserve ‘Old Japan,’ but also with their desire to recapture a time before Britain’s own industrialisation” seems a sufficient answer to these questions, however, these “kimonos,” which were supposed to recapture the unindustrialised and romanticised past through “Old Japan,” were, after all, kimonos for foreigners; the new, hybrid kimonos that helped complete the industrialisation of Japan.⁴⁸

In Japan, while aiming toward economic, social, and industrial Westernisation and modernisation, Japanese people tried to show a Western version of “Old Japan” to Western customers. During the rapid modernisation of Japan, Japanese people hid their true version of “Old Japan” in an untouchable place called “tradition.” Therefore, “traditional” kimonos remained as they had been in the past, although no longer part of everyday Japanese life from then on. The binary opposition between Westernisation and the move to protect traditions was swirling in early-twentieth-century Japan. Kimonos for foreigners represented both the aesthetic sense of Japanese and British people, influencing the representation of their own culture.

Endnotes

- 1 Elizabeth Kramer, “Not So Japan-Easy: The British Reception of Japanese Dress in the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Textile History*, Volume 44, Issue 1, Routledge, London, England, 2013, p 12.
- 2 Hiroko T McDermott, “Meiji Kyoto Textile Art and Takashimaya,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Volume 65, Issue 1, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan, 2010, p 40.
- 3 Akiko Fukai, ジャポニスム イン ファッション—海を渡ったキモノ [*Japonisme in Fashion*], Heibonsha, Tokyo, Japan, 1994, p 38.
- 4 Takashimaya, おかげにて 高島屋一八〇年史 [*180 years of Takashimaya*], Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan, 2013, p 85.
McDermott, op cit, p 56.
- 5 Takashimaya, op cit, p 86.
- 6 Tomita Hironi, Yamamura Akiko, Zhan Mingyue, 平面構成から立体構成への展開—キモノのデザイン展開の試み [*The Contrivance from Flat Pattern Clothing to Three-Dimensional Clothing Construction: An Experiment of the Design Variation of the Kimono*], *Journal of Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University*, Volume 48, Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan, 2008, pp 79-84.
- 7 Fukai, op cit, p 262.

- ⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Penguin Classics, London, England, 2003, pp 1, 5.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Melissa Miles and Jessica Neath, “Staging Japanese Femininity: Crosscultural Dressing in Australian Photography,” *Fashion Theory*, Volume 20, Issue 5, Routledge, London, England, 2016, pp 549–550.
- Daisuke Nishihara, “Said, Orientalism, and Japan,” *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, Volume 25, 2005, p 245.
- P L Pham, “On the Edge of the Orient: English Representations of Japan, circa 1895–1910,” *Japanese Studies*, Volume 19, Issue 2, Routledge, London, England, 1999, pp 163, 179.
- ¹¹ Miles and Neath, op cit.
- ¹² Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, England, 2002, p 102.
- ¹³ Kramer, op cit, p 14.
- ¹⁴ Liberty & Co, *Liberty’s Catalogues, 1881–1949: Fashion, Design, Furnishings*, Mindata, London, England, 1985, p 28.
- ¹⁵ *Liberty’s Catalogues, 1881–1949: Fashion, Design, Furnishings*. Courtesy of Brighton University, St Peter’s House Library, microfiche 745.2029/LIB.
- ¹⁶ Alison Adburgham, *Liberty’s: An Biography of a Shop*, Allen & Unwin, London, England, 1975, p 86.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ *Yoryu* union crepe is most likely the modern-day *Yoryu* crepe, a fabric usually made of silk or rayon with a pleated crinkle effect.
- ²⁰ *Kabe* crepe is a crepe fabric using *Kabe* yarn. It has a stiff texture and is normally used for the kimono obi (belt).
- ²¹ *Habutai* is a Japanese word meaning “soft as down.” A plain weave of silk that was originally handwoven from single warp yarns with filling yarns of hand-reeled silk, making it slightly irregular. It usually has a natural, ecru colour, and is known to wrinkle less than other fabrics.
- ²² Muslin is commonly a worsted muslin in Japan. Muslin was first imported into Japan in 1893, and Japanese production of the fabric began in 1905.
- ²³ *Yuzen* is a method of silk dyeing with a rice-paste coating that enables kimonos to be dyed with many colours. It was named after the artist Miyazaki Yuzensai of Kyoto, Japan.
- ²⁴ Kramer, op cit, p 12.
- ²⁵ Ibid, pp 12–14.
- ²⁶ Yokohama Museum of Art and Kyoto Costume Institute, ファッションとアート 麗しき東西交流 [*The Elegant Other: Crosscultural Encounters in Fashion and Art*], Rikuyosha, Tokyo, Japan, 2017, p 102.
- ²⁷ Elizabeth Kramer, “Not So Japan-Easy: The British Reception of Japanese Dress in the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Textile History*, Volume 44, Issue 1, Routledge, London, 2013, p 16.
- ²⁸ *Novelties in Japanese Articles*, Iida & Co, Yokohama, 1911, p 28. Courtesy of Takashimaya Historical Archive, Osaka, Japan.
- ²⁹ *Liberty’s Catalogues 1881–1949: Fashion, Design, Furnishings*, Mindata, London, 1985. Courtesy of Brighton University, St Peter’s House Library, microfiche 745.2029/LIB.
- ³⁰ Photography by Allie Yamaguchi.
- ³¹ Courtesy of Takashimaya Historical Archive, Osaka, Japan.
- ³² Takashi Hirota, 高島屋「貿易部」美術染織作品の記録写真集 [*Photo Albums of Exported Textiles Produced by Takashimaya*], Kyoto Women’s University Press, Kyoto, Japan, 2009, p 3.
- ³³ Lionel Lambourne, *Japonisme: Cultural Crossings between Japan and the West*, Phaidon, London, England, 2005, p 135.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid, p 138.
- ³⁶ Christopher Dresser, *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*, Longmans, Green and Co, London, England, 1882, p 442.

- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ Photography by Allie Yamaguchi.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Adburgham, op cit, p 22.
- ⁴¹ Photography by John Chase.
- ⁴² Annie Van Assche, et al, eds, *Fashioning Kimono: Dress in Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan*, V&A Publishing, London, 2005, p 78.
- ⁴³ *Novelties in Japanese Articles*, Iida & Co, Yokohama, Japan, 1911, p 24.
- ⁴⁴ Eriko Sakuragi, 明治・大正・昭和期の着物に見られる薔薇模様—日本国内における洋花の普及との関係 [Kimono of the Rose Design in the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa Periods: The Relationship between the Spread of Western Flowers in Japan], *Kyoritsu Women's University Journal*, Volume 62, Tokyo, Japan, 2016, p 21.
- ⁴⁵ Yumi Matsushita, 洋華模様の登場—大正・昭和時代のきものにおける表現 [“The Introduction of European Flowers: The Representation on Kimonos in Taisho and Showa Eras”], シックでモダンな装いの美 江戸から昭和- [*Kimono Beauty: The Chic and Modern Beauty of Fashion from the Edo to Showa Period*], Iwao Nagasaki, ed, Tokyo Bijutsu, Tokyo, Japan, 2013, pp 256-257.
- ⁴⁶ Taylor, op cit, p 272.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ Kramer, op cit, p 20.

Bibliography

Published Sources

- Adburgham, Alison, *Liberty's: a Biography of a Shop*, Allen & Unwin, London, England, 1975.
- Dresser, Christopher, *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*, Longmans, Green and Co, London, England, 1882.
- Hirota, Takashi, 高島屋「貿易部」美術染織作品の記録写真集 *Photograph Albums of Exported Textiles Produced by Takashimaya*, Kyoto Women's University Press, Kyoto, Japan, 2009.
- Kramer, Elizabeth, “Not So Japan-Easy: The British Reception of Japanese Dress in the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Textile History*, Volume 44, Issue 1, Routledge, London, England, 2013, pp 3-24.
- Lambourne, Lionel, *Japonisme: Cultural Crossings between Japan and the West*, Phaidon, London, England, 2005.
- Matsushita, Yumi, ‘洋花模様の登場—大正・昭和時代のきものにおける表現’ [“The Introduction of European Flowers — The Representation of Kimonos in the Taisho and Showa Era”], —シックでモダンな装いの美 江戸から昭和— [*Kimono Beauty: The Chic and Modern Beauty of Fashion Edo to Showa Period*], Tokyo Bijutsu, Tokyo, Japan, 2013.
- McDermott, Hiroko T, “Meiji Kyoto Textile Art and Takashimaya,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Volume 65, Issue 1, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan, 2010, pp 37-88.
- Miles, Melissa and Neath, Jessica, “Staging Japanese Femininity: Crosscultural Dressing in Australian Photography,” *Fashion Theory*, Volume 20, Issue 5, Taylor and Francis, London, England, 2016, pp 545-573.

Nishihara, Daisuke, "Said, Orientalism, and Japan," *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, Volume 25, The American University, Cairo, Egypt, 2005.

Pham, P L, "On the Edge of the Orient: English Representations of Japan, circa 1895-1910," *Japanese Studies*, Volume 19, Issue 2, Taylor and Francis, London, England, 1999, pp 163-181.

Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, Penguin Classics, London, England, 2003.

Sakuragi, Eriko, '明治・大正・昭和期の着物に見られる薔薇模様—日本国内における洋花の普及との関係— [Kimono of the Rose Design in the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa Periods: The Relationship between the Spread of Western Flowers in Japan], *Kyoritsu Women's University Journal*, Volume 62, Tokyo, Japan, 2016, pp 21-34.

Takashimaya, おかげにて 高島屋—八〇年史 [180 Years of Takashimaya], Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan, 2013.

Taylor, Lou, *The Study of Dress History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, England, 2002.

Van Assche, Annie, et al, eds, *Fashioning Kimono: Dress in Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan*, V&A Publishing, London, England, 2005.

Yokohama Museum of Art and Kyoto Costume Institute, ファッションとアート 麗しき東西交流 [The Elegant Other: Crosscultural Encounters in Fashion and Art], Rikuyosha, Tokyo, Japan, 2017.

Unpublished Sources

Iida & Co, *Novelties in Japanese Articles*, Iida & Co, Yokohama, Japan, 1911, Courtesy of Takashimaya Historical Archive, Osaka, Japan.

Liberty & Co, *Liberty's Catalogues 1881-1949: Fashion, Design, Furnishings*, Mindata, London, England, 1985, St Peters House Library, University of Brighton, Microfiche 745.2029/Lib.

Copyright © 2017 Allie Yamaguchi
Email: allyama122@gmail.com

Allie Yamaguchi, MA, is an international scholar who specialises in English and Japanese dress history between 1870 and 1920. She studied English literature at Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo, and then trained as a dress historian at the University of Brighton through an MA in the History of Design and Material Culture. Her particular interest is in crosscultural design and consumption between the East and West. She hopes to return to Brighton to continue her studies at the PhD level.

Book Reviews

Lydia Edwards, *How to Read a Dress: A Guide to Changing Fashion from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*, Bloomsbury Academic, New York, United States, 2017, Index, 200 Colour Illustrations, Glossary, 216 pp, Paperback, £21.24.

The author recognises that few museums now show Western fashion chronologically and that the opportunities for seeing how fashion has evolved and developed through the ages is limited. The book therefore aims to fill this gap. She takes us through the centuries, from 1550 to 1970, highlighting how various elements of shape, design, construction and fabrics have changed and progressed but also those which hark back to earlier times. The book specifically refers to nonbifurcated garments and therefore finishes at a time when the dress becomes less dominant in women's fashions.

Each chapter covers a span of years and begins with an introduction to the period in question. It then provides images of dresses from the period with markers highlighting particular elements of note. The examples used are mainly extant costumes although the chapters relating to earlier periods use pictures simply due to the scarcity of extant items. The use of images from costumes held by Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, the McCord Museum, Montreal, and the Swan Guildford History Society provides a welcome insight into collections that are not so widely shown.

The first two chapters (1550–1600 and 1610–1699) highlight the fact that extant examples are rare and consequently reliance is placed on other sources such as pictures, which can give a slightly skewed view as they usually only depict the wealthy. Chapter 3 (1710–1790) covers the mantua, sack-back, robe à la française, and robe à la polonaise. Chapter 4 (1790–1837) focuses on the empire line and the neoclassical style. Chapter 5 (1837–1869) refers to the transitional nature of the times from heavy skirts and long tight-laced bodies to the lighter, although larger, crinoline. Chapter 6 (1870–1889) examines the three silhouette shapes that reflect the period – the bustle, the more natural form then followed by the shelf bustle. Chapter 7 (1890–1916) sees the loss of the supported skirt replaced by simpler, flowing lines with leg-of-mutton sleeves followed by the different silhouette provided by the S-bend corset. Chapter 8 (1918–1929) covers the period known for shorter hemlines, bare arms, dropped waists, and short hair often worn with cloche hats. Chapter 9 (1930–1946) depicts the more widely adopted use of the two-piece suit for women and examines the rising influence of film stars on fashion trends. Chapter 10 (1947–1959) shows the effect of continued rationing on fashion and the counter to that with the rise of the New Look. Chapter 11 (1960–1970) brings us closer to the modern day with the growing emphasis placed on youth fashion and the rise of the mini skirt.

The general principle of this book is excellent and provides a much-needed overview particularly as there are so many period dramas on various media exciting wider interest in the field of dress history. However, there are small niggles in the way the book has been compiled. For instance, chapters are arranged chronologically but with divisions that are not always obvious 1550–1600 but 1610–1699 and 1710–1790. There is probably not a lot happening in the missing ten years but why exclude them? In the introductory pages of each chapter, images in the text are often referred to as “here” when the image itself is several pages away and with no number relating it back to the text. The main images could sometimes be larger and the occasional insets might have been better, in some instances, to reveal the costume from a different angle or as a close-up as some labels refer to things that are not seen. Some of the glossary definitions are misleading, for instance the definition of twin set as a “fitted cardigan and slim line skirt” (p 195) differs to how the term is usually denoted as a matching jumper and cardigan set. Maybe this is different in Australia where the author resides but this should be acknowledged. Also,

the glossary includes terms that are not referred to in the main text but does not include others that are that would benefit from a quick reference.

This book is a perfect introduction to the world of dress history and provides a good stimulus for further study. For those with specialist knowledge of particular periods, it provides a quick and easily accessed reference for the main points of other periods.

Copyright © 2017 Alison Fairhurst
Email: alisonfairhurst@btinternet.com

Alison Fairhurst gained her PhD for her research into the materials, construction and conservation of women's shoes in the eighteenth century. Her doctoral research included the examination of more than 100 pairs of extant shoes from various collections and highlighted the importance of object-based research. She has a BA and MA in the conservation of historic objects and has spent several years working as a textile conservator with The Landi Company. Her interests include anything dress or textile related but particularly those dating from 1500-1800.

Andrew Bolton, *Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States, Distributed by Yale University Press, London, England, 2017, 205 Colour Illustrations, 248 pp, Hardback with Slipcase, £35.

This is the catalogue to accompany the exhibition of the same name, which was held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, New York, from 4 May 2017 to 4 September 2017. The book examines the work of the Japanese fashion designer, Rei Kawakubo, widely recognized as one of the most prominent and influential fashion designers of the past 40 years. Although there have been several exhibitions on contemporary fashion, she is the first fashion designer, while still alive, to be celebrated with an exhibition at the Costume Institute since the great Yves Saint Laurent in 1983. Approximately 120 examples of her womenswear for her label, Comme des Garçons, are featured in the book. They date from her debut in Paris in 1981 to 2017 and are organized into eight themes: Fashion/Antifashion, Design/Not Design, Model/Multiple, Then/Now, High/Low, Self/Other, Object/Subject, Clothes/Not Clothes. These themes provide fascinating insights into Rei Kawakubo's experiments in oppositions and the spaces between boundaries, "the art of the in-between" and provide her with an opportunity to question conventional interpretations of such dichotomies.

To take one example, Fashion/Antifashion focuses on Rei Kawakubo's early 1980s fashion collections with which she made her Western debut in Paris. Here she disrupted the era's wave of glamorous power suits with her loose-fitting, lopsided garments accentuated with holes and shredded fabric that created excess space, a void between skin and fabric, between body and clothes. Many critics in Paris reacted with shock and disdain. Viewed more than 30 years on, these all black collections which at the time challenged traditional fashion orthodoxies with their asymmetry, deconstruction, drapery, play on proportions, unusual materials and textures, now not only seem wearable but also perfectly demonstrate her impact on defining and transforming the fashion aesthetics of our time. She supplanted the assumption that fashion was always to be approached with the intention of creating perfectly made clothes in the old tradition of those that flatter the body.

Andrew Bolton provides, in his lavishly illustrated catalogue, scholarly, thought-provoking texts which help to illuminate a pathway to this visionary fashion designer. For Rei Kawakubo's rise to the top of the fashion avant-garde was an unconventional one. Rather than training in fashion, she studied fine arts and the history of aesthetics in both Asian and Western art. Andrew Bolton also reflects on the philosophical ideas which are of paramount importance to Rei Kawakubo.

This is a multifaceted book for which additional context would have been helpful, especially for readers not all that familiar with the work of Rei Kawakubo. A glossary of the vocabulary of Rei Kawakubo's fashions, including her fabrics, the building blocks of her designs, would have been an excellent complement to the texts. There were other Japanese fashion designers who attracted attention in the Western fashion world in the 1980s. Some elaboration would have been useful for showing how rich a period this was for Japanese fashion designers and the new directions in fashion that were taking place.

Copyright © 2017 Alice Mackrell
Email: aamackrell@googlemail.com

Dr Alice Mackrell received an MA with Distinction in the History of Dress and her PhD in the History of Art from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. She is the author of several books, including *Art and Fashion: the Impact of Art on Fashion* and *Fashion on Art*. She has also contributed entries to *The Dictionary of Art* and to *The Fashion Book*.

Aileen Ribeiro, *Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion, 1600–1914*, Yale University Press, London, England, 2017, Notes, Bibliography, Credits, Index, 170 Colour Illustrations, 80 Black-and-White Illustrations, 572 pp, Hardback, £55.

This beautiful book is a real treat to read through as well as to dip into, ravishing pictures, beautifully designed and written, it will inform and delight established scholars as much as new students of dress history. To look at clothing through the eyes of the artists who represent it – with the scholarly background of Aileen Ribeiro and the breadth of her knowledge, combined with her skillful choice of images, with details where necessary – makes this book a joy. The structure of the material means that one can dip in and just read a section independently, although the chances are high that you will find yourself reading on.

The book design, by Gillian Malpas, to whom the book is dedicated, is glorious. The use of the title page from the publication, *Aglaiia*, for the contents page of this volume is delightful. For the end papers, they have used a magnificent picture from a private collection: *At Evening Time*, by George Elgar Hicks, 1864 (p 307). This is an example of the less well-known works of art used frequently in this book, in this case to demonstrate the narrative morality stories so popular in the mid nineteenth century, which would be difficult for us to untangle without the expertise of the author. We are treated to lovely big plates, showing excellent detail, by artists whose work has been neglected because the paintings are in remote galleries or who are considered “minor” painters, such as *Memories and Regrets*, by Alfred Stevens, circa 1874 (p 315). We also see more familiar work given proper space. For instance, the detail of *The Gallery of HMS Calcutta*, by James Tissot, 1876 (p 299) shows the cut and construction of the muslin of the women’s dresses, that I had never appreciated before.

The illustrations are not confined to those painters who give all the details of the toilette and fabrics. Of Watteau, an artist not primarily interested in detail or in depicting the patterned fabrics of the fashion, Ribeiro tellingly writes, “He was able to extract the essence of style – in this he was a natural artist of fashion.” (p 155) *La Plage à Trouville*, by Eugène Boudin, 1863 (p 322), shows the Empress Eugénie and her ladies walking along the beach in Normandy, their kilted-up crinolines suggested rather than meticulously rendered. The figures are dwarfed by the sky and the sea beyond them. To ensure that we can see how well the dress in this painting is indicated, we are also given a fashion plate (p 323), a Winterhalter portrait, 1854 (pp 320–321), and a dramatic sketch of the Empress Eugénie by Constantine Guys, mid 1850s (p 319 and p 327).

For a young student of dress history in the mid 1970s, collecting picture postcards from every gallery I ever visited was my method of building a personal dress history collection. It was Dr Ribeiro (as she then was) who introduced us to the concept of looking beyond pictures to diary entries, written journals, contemporary novels, and *Punch* cartoons as equally valuable tools of research. She does not disappoint in this book, with rigorous background research in contemporary written sources, as we would expect, illustrations from magazines where they help, but also forays into music where she speaks with authority on the works of Handel and Mozart to illustrate the interest in the East and in Turkey in particular (p 226).

Nor does she neglect actual objects. She has selected the finest examples of real clothes; the silk stockings (intriguingly “whereabouts unknown,” p 193) so close to those revealed in Hogarth’s Scene 3 from *A Rake’s Progress* (pp 192–193); the portrait *Virginia Dalrymple*, by George Frederick Watts, 1872, and the dress depicted in it (p 437); the dress, detail of the fabric, and the painting *Friederike Maria Beer-Monti*, by Gustav Klimt (pp 500–501); and many more examples. In the section, *Masquerade*, we even learn that the rhinoceros in Longhi’s painting was named Clara (p 205). There is simply no end to what you can learn from this lovely book.

Copyright © 2017 Janet Mayo
Email: birchmayo@yahoo.co.uk

Janet Mayo's first degree was in theology at Birmingham University. She followed it with an MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, in History of Dress. Janet wrote her dissertation on aesthetic dress at the end of the nineteenth century. This combination of degrees led to the publication of *A History of Ecclesiastical Dress*, published by BT Batsford, London. Janet worked as a costume supervisor in the theatre and opera, finally head of costume at the National Theatre. In Brussels, Janet worked in the textiles department of the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History.

Geraldine Biddle-Perry, *Dressing for Austerity: Aspiration, Leisure and Fashion in Postwar Britain*, IB Tauris, London, England, 2017, 26 Black-and-White Illustrations, 256 pp, Hardback, £64.

The central argument in Biddle-Perry's book seems to be that wartime clothing controls were continued for many years afterwards, not simply as a way of ensuring stable economic postwar recovery, as the British public were told, but as part of a wider socialist agenda where austerity was part of a political and moral identity. For example, she makes a strong case that the practical and plain open-necked shirt, windjammer, and shorts worn by Honor Blackman in the 1949 film, *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike*, directed by Ralph Smart, shows her to be part of a new postwar generation of young, skilled workers, embracing healthy outdoor leisure pursuits, impervious to the displays of wealth and idleness exemplified by the Bentley-driving young man who tries to woo her away from her cycling boyfriend.

At the other end of the class divide from the Bentley driver – despoiling this classless utopia – is the image of the spiv, in a broad shouldered, chalk striped, double-breasted demobilisation suit. Refreshingly, Biddle-Perry devotes a whole chapter (Chapter 2) to the often-ignored menswear of this period, in particular, all the layers of meaning inherent in the demob suit. As wartime clothing controls, and the practical problems associated with mass demobilisation of both men and women, underpin the key arguments in the book, much time is spent explaining the rationale and ethos of the Utility scheme and other austerity clothing controls, using, amongst other sources, Geraldine Howell's *Wartime Fashion: From Haute Couture to Homemade, 1939-1945* (Berg, London, 2012) and Judy Attfield's *Utility Reassessed: The Role of Ethics in the Practice of Design* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1999). But not the original government files. Sadly, she repeats the oft-stated error that Norman Hartnell contributed to the Board of Trade's Utility couturier prototype scheme, but she does recognise and discuss the myth of a new kind of fashion democracy, promoted by the propaganda of the time and much subsequent writing on the subject.

The introduction states that the time period in focus is 1944-1951, just a little longer than Kynaston's time period of 1945-1951 (David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain 1945-1951*, Bloomsbury, London, 2007) so some readers may be disappointed to discover just how much of the early part of the book is devoted to wartime regulations. The thoroughness of the research is in no doubt, but the book has the air of a PhD, far from the easy writing style of Kynaston. Here is an example: "Symbolic and sartorial hybridisation disrupted the distinctions between fashionable desire and utilitarian function that were the foundation of institutional strategies to structure working-class preferences and choices into stable and expedient demands" (pp 115-116).

Wartime controls of clothing and food, which were welcome in wartime as "fair shares" for all, became more problematic in peacetime. As peace arrived, even before the revelation of Dior's New Look of 1947, there was a rejection of the ubiquitous, square-shouldered, "British tailor-made" wartime suit, or simple rayon knee-length frock, adopted by women of all classes during the war. What is never quite satisfactorily articulated is how both utility regulations and Attlee's postwar socialist agenda, epitomised by the minimalist wartime look, and the stark modernist architecture of the new towns that were to come, were able to accommodate fashions that, at their heart, were rooted in a luxuriant, indulgent, celebration of old-fashioned femininity.

Most of us with an interest in this period will have seen a Pathé news clip of Harold Wilson, as President of the Board of Trade, reluctant to abolish industry controls which he saw as a fundamental tool in economic recovery, saying that "if women want these new skirts [the New Look]... they will have to have far fewer of them." Biddle-Perry discusses these contradictory forces, controlling production and controlling consumption, in great detail and with great precision, but in places it can feel as glum as Wilson. It is at its liveliest when using Mass Observation diaries of the time or films from the 1940s. It

is then when we get a real whiff of the grey days of daily life in the 1940s, combined with a sense of limitless optimism for the future, a paradox that defines austerity.

Copyright © 2017 Marie McLoughlin
Email: M.McLoughlin@brighton.ac.uk

Dr Marie McLoughlin is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Brighton where she teaches Critical Studies to students of Fashion, Textiles, and Fashion Communication. She initially trained and worked as a designer before completing an MA, *Utility and Austerity Clothing: Class and Controls in Britain in the 1940s*, supervised by Judy Attfield at Winchester School of Art. Her PhD at Brighton, *Fashion, the Art School, and the Role of Muriel Pemberton in Degree Level Fashion Education*, focused on the founder of the fashion department at St Martin's School of Art. She is currently coediting, with Professor Lou Taylor, a book on Paris couture fashion in wartime.

Louise Coffey-Webb, *Managing Costume Collections: An Essential Primer*, Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, United States, 2016, Index, 56 Illustrations, Appendices, 184 pp, Paperback, £22.95.

Published as part of the Costume Society of America's series intended to stimulate scholarship in the field of costume, this book focuses on the care and management of garments across a wide variety of collections. Aimed at nonspecialists, interested in "implementing the best practice circumstances might allow" (p 5), it sets out to provide a holistic approach to problem solving, whatever the goal of the collection in question.

It is arranged into four chapters, looking at collections management, record keeping, controlling the environment, and exhibition and display considerations; covering a range of techniques for costume organization, care, maintenance, storage, and outreach. Importantly, it explains not only what must be done to manage a costume collection, but also *why*. Through "seeking to promote the accepted 'preservation gold standard'" (p xviii), it could prove useful for organisations making the case to secure funding to improve their resources. However, the author also empathises with the challenges – financial, physical, intellectual, or political – that face a dress custodian and offers practical, cost-effective solutions to ensure "a baseline level of care exists to counter any manager's set of personal constraints" (p xviii). It is, therefore, a timely readdress of the approach to collections management in a culture of increasing funding cuts.

The content is well researched across a variety of American institutions and an excellent glossary of terms, careful explanation, and easily digestible sections of text render the subject eminently accessible. It is very much targeted at a United States audience; however, the author includes numerous references to internationally relevant online resources. Images are low quality but plentiful, and pertinently placed to illustrate key points, while comprehensive appendices – including sample forms and a thorough select bibliography – make this an invaluable at-a-glance guide for both nonspecialists and experienced practitioners wishing to refresh their memory. However, given the generally encouraging and inclusive tone of the writing, there are two anomalies: the author's remarks on the importance of ensuring for the purposes of descriptive cataloguing that "your volunteer, intern, or worker does not suffer from dyslexia" (p 49) and that they are not colour blind (p 60), seem an unnecessary and impolitic addition to the text, and contradictory to public organisations' mission to be open to all.

A word of caution is necessary, for there are inevitably omissions. For example, the section exploring storage is less comprehensive in its explanation of boxing garments, and does not mention techniques such as using "sausages," referenced elsewhere, to support the folds of the garment. It takes the time to go into detail about the storage of different accessories, such as stockings, hats, shoes, fans, parasols, and jewellery; but it omits gloves. Similarly, it recommends considering "the addition of a holding area" (p 110) to separate incoming objects from existing collections, but if it intends to promote the "gold standard" it could be more emphatic about how integral quarantine procedures are to an integrated pest management strategy. This is perhaps the result of attempting to cover so much ground across collections with competing requirements – from preservation and education, to entertainment and profit-making – but this is less a criticism, than an observation regarding the unenviable task Coffey-Webb faced in writing this book.

This text will date as the goal posts around best practice change with time, fashion, the latest preservation studies, and availability of new materials. Readers must also allow for differences in opinion and

organisational preference. However, the value to be gained from this all-purpose primer arguably outweighs any disparities with current practice further down the line. This is a book for those who care for dress collections without in-house expertise, or for practitioners who must act as collections manager, curator, preventive conservator, and registrar in one. It is ideal for students of dress history to keep close at hand, not least because it offers particularly excellent guidance regarding basic collections care, such as object handling. I would recommend this book as an invaluable jumping off point for consideration of collections management, and would urge fellow practitioners to keep it in mind as a convenient point of reference.

Copyright © 2017 Georgina Ripley
Email: G.Ripley@nms.ac.uk

Georgina Ripley is curator of modern and contemporary fashion and textiles at National Museums Scotland (NMS). She was the lead curator for the permanent Fashion & Style gallery which opened in 2016 and cocurated *Express Yourself: Contemporary Jewellery* (2014). She has contributed to exhibitions at NMS including *Jean Muir: A Fashion Icon* (2008–2009), *Mary Queen of Scots* (2013), and *The House of Annie Lennox* (2012), a Victoria and Albert Museum Touring Exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Georgina has previous experience working with the Royal Academy of Arts, the Warner Textile Archive, Museums Galleries Scotland, and the National Galleries of Scotland.

Alison Matthews David, *Fashion Victims: The Dangers of Dress Past and Present*, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, London, England, 2017, Index, 111 Colour Illustrations, 220 pp, Paperback, £18.99.

This paperback edition of *Fashion Victims*, following the hardback version published in 2015, explores how clothing which is meant to “shield our fragile, yielding flesh from danger often fails spectacularly in this important task, killing its producers and wearers” (p 4). Fashion Historian, Alison Matthews David, successfully combines extensively researched chapters with a wealth of illustrations, photographs, and fashion plates to bring the narrative of dangerous dress alive. The text focuses on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe and North America with the early chapters investigating the dangers of dress, and the later ones considering the human cost of early industrial capitalism. The story it tells is fascinating and engaging, chronicling tales of diseased dress, mercury-laden fur, and combustible crinolines.

Chapter One initially explores why “parasites have caused more deaths than weapons” (p 28) in drawn-out battles like the Napoleonic and Crimean Wars. Matthews David investigates the spread of typhus through louse-ridden military uniforms, and how more sinisterly infected “smallpox blankets” were used by the British for “germ warfare.” The chapter concludes with discussions around women’s long cylindrical skirts which were required attire for women in public but in reality were literally sweeping the streets.

In Chapter Two Matthews David investigates chronic poisoning, suffered by hatters when using mercury to turn rabbit fur into malleable felt for men’s hats, uncovering the grisly reality behind cultural icons such as Lewis Carroll’s eccentric Mad Hatter. Discussions then move on to demand for felt hats which peaked at 2 million in 1825, and was maintained by wearers for both practical warmth reasons, and as a signifier of social standing. Surprisingly, mercury was never officially banned in the United Kingdom and was still being used by some hatters as late as 1966.

Chapters Three and Four examine harmful colourants that transformed sartorial landscapes. Matthews David details the Victorians’ use of arsenic to make green tints for artificial flowers when creating headdresses and how the makers of the headdresses suffered with “colic, anaemia and constant headaches” (p 72). Furthermore, she discusses how certain luxury fashion houses still do not use green dye today, quoting the 2005 documentary *Signe Chanel*, when the head of couture comments “seamstresses do not like green” because of its superstitious link to bad luck. Chapter Four details the commercial development of red and purple aniline dyes and how many derivatives of the dyes were toxic and easily absorbed into the skin causing illnesses and sometimes death.

Later chapters move discussions onto accidents caused by early industrial technologies. The tone is still anecdotal, in parts, but addresses the more serious political and social issues facing fashion consumerism. Matthews David draws on some real life examples such as the American dancer, Isadora Duncan, strangled by her own shawl in 1927. Also, the twentieth-century hobble skirt appeared at a key moment in the suffrage movement. The text quotes the feminist Charlotte Perkins’s scathing indictment of the skirt “grown women cheerfully submit to being hampered by a sheathing garment ... the extreme result of which was death” (p 137).

Additionally, gender differences are also drawn into the discussions. Matthews David argues that men’s fashion reflected mobility and power, assuring their safety whereas, by contrast, women’s fashion privileged fashion over function, an example being the crinoline skirt. They were mass produced from 1856 to 1860 and worn by all social classes. They were also responsible for many accidents, due to their highly combustible nature, the most famous victims being Oscar Wilde’s two half-sisters. Unfortunately,

one sister's crinoline skirt was set alight as she passed by a fire, and the other sister died trying to save her.

Fashion Victims is a compelling and thought-provoking book with a great selection of illustrations. Matthews David has succeeded in creating an accessible academic text and important historical work, which dress historians will find invaluable. It acts as an introduction to many topics on the historical deadly dangers of fashion which, at times, can be meandering but also forces the reader to reexamine the detrimental consequences of luxury and fast-fashion production and consumption. As Matthews David concludes "we need fewer fashion victims and more fashion saviours."

Copyright © 2017 Tara Tierney
Email: taratierney73@hotmail.com

Tara Tierney holds an MA in the History and Culture of Fashion, from London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London. Her dissertation focused on the early British House Music culture, 1987–1991, and explored women's identity within this culture through dress and the roles women held. Her present position is at Net-A-Porter, where she manages the digitisation and annotation of the Net-A-Porter Catwalk Archive, which is a collection of over 5500 hours of catwalk footage and interviews, covering all four major fashion weeks, 1979–2010.

Timothy Godbold, *Military Style Invades Fashion*, Phaidon Press, London, England, 2016, 154 Colour Illustrations, Chronology, 208 pp, Hardback, £24.95.

Military Style Invades Fashion charts the influence military dress has had on fashion throughout history, focusing on this relationship during the twenty-first century. This is a fast-paced introduction to military-inspired fashion, prompted by the author's own history that offers a different, if not very personal perspective on the topic.

The book begins with a preface by Godbold, where he argues that the connections between military dress and fashionable dress are considerable, even drawing parallels with his own clothing. Following that is an introduction by Colin McDowell, who introduces and defines what is meant by both military and fashion. McDowell then gives a whistle-stop tour of military-inspired fashion, including both visual culture and military history, from the fifteenth century onward.

The rest of the book is divided into seven themes Godbold has identified as having an aesthetic influence on the twenty-first century, followed by a timeline charting events mentioned in the text. Each of the seven sections (Ceremony, Campaign, Legionnaire, Dazzle, Nautical, East Meets West, and Notorious) comprises a maximum of two pages of text introducing the theme and summarizing its history, followed by a series of photos of twenty-first century catwalk, street, and celebrity fashion relating to that theme. In most of these series of photos, a historical example is included for comparison and to visually validate the connection between the historic-centred text and the modern photos. Quotes from modern sources are also used to reinforce the connection between military style and contemporary fashion. The majority of these quotes come from journalistic sources such as newspapers, which lends another unexpected level to the analysis of the relationship between the two subjects.

I found the format of this book confusing. The hardback and lavish illustrations of modern fashion led me to think this book was intended to be a sumptuous coffee table book, but the historic narrative-centred text, the timeline at the end, and its small octavo size make it feel more research focused. However, none of the text is referenced, which makes it difficult to take seriously as a researched work. In terms of format, this is a book that is confused at what it is trying to do, and who its intended audience is.

I think this book would have benefited from having a greater number of historic images to compare with the twentieth-century ones, instead of the historical side being mostly confined to text. Each side of the story is being displayed in a totally different way, which makes them difficult to reconcile and gives the book a bit of a split personality.

I would also have appreciated an explanation as to why the author chose the themes he did. Military-inspired fashion has the scope to be an extremely wide topic, but the selection of both quite specific and broad areas led me to wonder at the selection process.

This book is a good introduction to the relationship between military history, military dress, and fashionable dress, and the abundant photographs help get the message across clearly and visually. It could be used solely as a visual survey of twenty-first-century military-inspired fashion without any of the text. Its lack of referencing and the whistle-stop pace throughout the text makes it less useful as a research resource, and more valuable as a visual guide.

I think this book is worth looking at, even if it is just for the large number of full-page, high-quality colour photographs, but I would suggest looking at it and reading the introduction in a library before investing in it or relying on it as a research resource.

Copyright © 2017 Emma Treleaven
Email: emmatreleaven@gmail.com

Emma Treleaven is the Exhibitions Assistant at Bletchley Park, the home of British codebreaking and a birthplace of modern information technology. She completed her Master's degree in Museum Studies at University College London and has an Undergraduate degree in Fashion History and Theory from Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. Her recent work has focused on the connections between object-based research, making processes, fashion history, and the use of dress in twentieth-century espionage.

Recent PhD Theses

The Association of Dress Historians is proud to support scholarship in dress history through its international conferences, events such as curators' tours, and publication of *The Journal of Dress History*. We are passionate about sharing our knowledge with you. Our mission is to start conversations, encourage the exchange of ideas, and expose new and exciting research in the field to all who appreciate the discipline. To that end, the following is a selection of recently completed PhD theses, more of which can be researched, for free, through the British Library portal, <http://ethos.bl.uk>. This theses list is not exhaustive, and we kindly invite ADH members and friends to submit additional titles to include in future issues of *The Journal of Dress History*. Please contact journal@dresshistorians.org.

Carlgren, Maria, *Birgittaskolorna. Modeateljéer och sömnadsskolor mellan tradition och förnyelse [The Birgitta Schools: Fashion Studios and Dressmaking Schools between Tradition and Renewal]* PhD Thesis, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 2016

The purpose of the study is to examine, compare and analyse the Birgitta Schools. These were two fashion studios and dressmaking schools in Stockholm directed by Emy Fick (1876–1959) and Elisabeth Glantzberg (1873–1951). Together, they started and ran the Birgitta School from 1910 until 1914. However, a rift caused them to divide the business in two but keeping similar names and structure of their schools. From 1914 until the middle of the 1930s, Fick ran the Saint Birgitta School and Glantzberg was head of the Birgitta School. The analyses are made through various visual artefacts such as trademarks, photographs and clothes, as well as through surveys of the persons connected with the Schools. The aim is to bring forth what happened inside the walls of the Schools, but it is also to examine how the works related to the contemporary discourse in which femininity as well as fashion, modernism and modernity were negotiated. With a base in a gender theoretic perspective, the results have primarily been reached through the tools of cultural sociology. The ideas of Pierre Bourdieu are of particular interest; not least, the concepts of capital, habitus and social fields have been fruitful. A complement to these theories is the cultural sociological views of Howard Becker; here, a broader scope for individuals to act and a more inclusive perspective are provided. Judith Butler's performativity theory has also been useful since she argues that identity and gender are "made" through the acts of people. In this making of gender, the clothes we wear are significant. The body that is in focus in this study is thus the social body; this body consists of the physical body along with clothes and the person's symbolic capital and habitus, and the interplay of constructed social and symbolic forces. The study shows that Emy Fick held conservative values; her views were close to the norm, a complementary and essentialist view of men and women predominant in Swedish society in the beginning of the twentieth century. In this respect, Fick and the Saint Birgitta School is considered to be orthodox, defending the doxa. In Yvonne Hirdman's terms, Saint Birgitta School made women who acted according to this norm. In the study of Glantzberg's several examples are found that the Birgitta School instead appeared to have been a room of challenge, to which a range of open-minded, radical, independent and educated women were connected. The women who were associated with the Birgitta School tended to act against conventional norms in society. Glantzberg also commissioned the modernist artists Siri Derkert and Valle Rosenberg to create fashion collections. The Birgitta School and Elisabeth Glantzberg is thereby considered as heterodox, since contemporary views were challenged and questioned. Nonetheless, both Birgitta Schools expressed modernity – although in different degrees. Together, the Saint Birgitta School and the Birgitta School illustrate the "whirlpool" of modernity – in which different attitudes to, and experiences of modern life existed side by side.

Durkee, Dana Ann, *Social Mobility and the Worsted Weavers of Norwich, circa 1450–1530*
PhD Thesis, Durham University, England, 2017

This thesis explores the question of social mobility in late medieval English towns, using the worsted weavers of Norwich as a case study. Social stratification is a key topic in medieval urban history, and the question of rising oligarchy and class conflict have influenced the way historians understand the institutional and constitutional development of late medieval English towns. This study employs a dual approach to the question of whether commercial success created an urban environment conducive to social and occupational mobility for craftsmen. It first considers the development of Norfolk's native worsted cloth industry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It then uses a prosopographical analysis of the worsted weavers to consider whether the commercial success of worsted cloth was creating the opportunity for social mobility among urban artisans. This study finds that opportunities for social mobility were indeed increasing in the late fifteenth century. The thesis has been divided into two parts. The first part examines the economic and institutional context for the fifteenth-century commercial revival of worsted cloths in overseas trade. It also considers the way that the regional production of worsteds became regulated by the Guild of Worsted Weavers in Norwich. It then considers the constitutional development of craft guilds in Norwich in the fifteenth century, and their integration as public institutions. The second part of the thesis examines the lives of Norwich's worsted weavers between circa 1450 and 1530. It uses the framework of an "artisanal cursus honorum" to consider the various ways in which the worsted weavers, both individually and as a group, advanced professionally, socially, and economically.

Fairhurst, Alison R G, *The Materials, Construction, and Conservation of Eighteenth-Century Women's Shoes*
PhD Thesis, The University of Lincoln, England, 2015

This thesis analyses a 12% sample of the 900 extant pairs of eighteenth-century women's shoes in British museums and argues that shoes are a valuable but currently underused historical resource. The analysis is supported by both primary and secondary literature and contemporary images and much of the research is presented in a visual format such as images, diagrams and tables. The thesis revolves around the following questions: What can women's shoes tell us about eighteenth-century culture? How can object based analysis of shoes enhance our current understanding of women's footwear in the eighteenth century? How can we characterise materials, construction and manufacture of such shoes based on extant examples? What implications do these findings have for conservators and others responsible for the survival and management of the extant corpus? By recording the complexity of shoes as composite objects and examining how they are made; from what and how their components were processed and manufactured the thesis greatly increases the current available knowledge. It proposes a methodology for studying shoes and recording subsequent findings. The thesis also recognises the potential of shoes as historical sources. In addition it examines how we might seek to manage shoes as heritage assets in the future and acknowledges the significant role of the conservator in this. A holistic approach involving both curators and conservators in the decision-making process relating to conservation and preservation is given. The appendices give full details of the sampled shoes and show the completed survey forms.

Ffoulkes, Fiona Lesley, *The Métier of the Fashion Merchant (marchande de modes): Luxury and the Changing Parisian Clothing System, 1795–1855*
PhD Thesis, The University of Southampton, England, 2017

Fashion merchants were acknowledged as the highest status trade and dynamic agents for change within the production and consumption of women's clothing in the eighteenth century but their position in the nineteenth century has not previously been considered. This thesis examines how the trade evolved in Paris between 1795 and 1855 considering factors such as gender, finance and location in the context of political, economic and social change. The findings challenge the idea that significant change only

occurred before 1789 or after 1860. Fashion merchants used novelty, luxury and taste to produce fashionable merchandise, particularly headgear, from a range of authentic and substitute materials that stimulated consumer demand across different social levels. Engaging with debates about gender and the public sphere, the investigation demonstrates that, although there were successful male merchants, women continued to dominate the sector. Married women did not retreat from business, instead their husbands could be helpmeets and the *métier* was often the focus of the family economy. Continuity was found in the use of credit in trade, the high status of the fashion merchant, the importance of reputation and the value of location and premises. Change was shown in production, sales and promotional strategies including advertising and the increasing importance of headwear to French industry was acknowledged by its inclusion in the industry exhibitions of 1851 and 1855.

**Kang, Zi Young, *Reproduction of Historic Costumes using 3D Apparel CAD*
PhD Thesis, The University of Leeds, England, 2016**

The progress of digital technology has brought about many changes. In the world of fashion, 3D apparel CAD is attracting attention as the most promising product which reduces time and cost in the design process through virtual simulation. This study highlights the potential of its technology and tries to extend the boundaries of its practical use through the simulation of historical dresses. The aim of this study is to identify the desirable factors for digital costume development, to produce accurate reproductions of digital clothing from historical sources and to investigate the implications of developing it for online exhibitory and educational materials. In order to achieve this, this study went through following process. First, the theoretical background of the digital clothing technology, 3D apparel CAD and museum and new media was established through the review of various materials. Second, the desirable concepts for effective digital costume were drawn from the analysis of earlier digital costume projects considering the constraints of costume collections and limitations of the data on museum websites: faithful reproduction, virtual fabrication and interactive and stereographic display. Third, design development was carried out for the embodiment of the concepts based on two costumes in the Museum of London: (1) preparation which provided foundation data with physical counterparts, (2) digital reproduction which generated digital costumes with simulations and (3) application development where simulations were embodied into a platform. Fourth, evaluation of the outcomes was carried with different groups of participants. The evaluation results indicated that the outcomes functioned as an effective information delivery method and had suitability and applicability for exhibitory and educational use. However, further improvement particularly in the faithfulness of current digital costumes and more consideration for the concerns for virtual and intangible nature were pointed out to be required. Nevertheless digital costumes were reviewed to bring notable benefits in complete or partial replacement of the relics, presentation of invisible features, release of physical constraints on appreciation and provision of integrated and comprehensive information. This study expects that use of digital costumes may assist museums in terms of preservation, documentation and exhibition of costume collections giving new possibility especially to the endangered garments lying in the dark.

Kobayashi, Kazuo, *Indian Cotton Textiles and the Senegal River Valley in a Globalising World: Production, Trade, and Consumption, 1750-1850*

PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, England, 2016

This thesis addresses how and why West African consumers, especially those along the Senegal River valley, imported and consumed Indian cotton textiles from the eighteenth to mid nineteenth century, despite the fact that they produced textiles of various kinds. Using quantitative and qualitative sources collected from France, India, Senegal and the United Kingdom, the thesis fulfils this gap in the existing literature. Throughout this study, it will be shown that local textile production and consumption in West Africa based on factor endowments and natural environment shaped consumer demand and preferences for Indian cotton textiles whose quality was perceived to be more suitable to the life of inhabitants in

the region (especially in the savannah and desert areas) than European textiles. In addition, Indian textiles not only suited conspicuous consumption among Africans but also regional economies in which cloth was used as an exchange medium. In the eighteenth century, West African demand for Indian cotton textiles of various types was central to the purchase by European merchants of slaves along coastal areas of West Africa. In the early nineteenth century, which witnessed the transition from the Atlantic slave trade to the trade in commercial agriculture, dark-blue cotton textiles produced in Pondicherry, called “guinées,” were of essential importance in the trade in gum Arabic in the lower Senegal River as a currency that replaced a domestically-produced cloth currency. The gum from the region was indispensable in the development of the textile industry in Western Europe at that time. This regional demand influenced the Euro-West African trade and the procurements by Europeans of cotton textiles in India. The thesis argues that historically constructed consumer agency in pre-colonial West Africa had global repercussions from the eighteenth to mid nineteenth century.

Marshman, Ian James, *Making Your Mark in Britannia: An Investigation into the Use of Signet Rings and Intaglios in Roman Britain*

PhD Thesis, The University of Leicester, England, 2016

This project presents and analyses all of the signet rings and intaglios so far unearthed in Roman Britain to reinterpret how they were used and their role within provincial society. These small artefacts have traditionally been regarded as attractive but relatively insignificant minor objets d’art, with little relevance to the wider discourses of Romanists. This thesis attempts a more critical examination of how they were used and their role within provincial Roman society. I argue that signet rings were an essential element in provincial society that should no longer be overlooked. This project builds on the pioneering Corpus assembled by Martin Henig in the 1970s, including more recent discoveries and more than doubling the material available to him. This combined body of evidence includes 2,012 signet rings and intaglios, making it one of the largest contextualised assemblages of these objects ever studied. It also benefits from the results of developer funded archaeology and the advent of recording by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, enabling us to create a richer and more detailed picture how they were used. My approach has been to resituate these objects in terms of the archaeological context in which they were found, but also to consider them as functional as well as decorative objects. When studied in this way signet rings provide a unique perspective on the identity of their wearers, and how they wanted to present themselves to others. I have found growing evidence for the use of signet rings amongst local elites before the Roman invasion of Britain, and it is clear that they had a role to play in negotiating identity after the conquest. I have also been able to identify trends in the way that different communities used signet rings, both as regards their imagery and materiality. It is also apparent that in some parts of Britain these objects remained a feature of a type of dress and the hallmark of a society that remained alien to their inhabitants throughout the Roman period. However, for those who chose to wear them, signet rings could be more than just objects but reflections of themselves.

Romano, Alexis, *Prêt-à-Porter, Paris and the Image of Women, 1945-1968*

PhD Thesis, The Courtauld Institute of Art, England, 2016

The first critical history of French readymade fashion, this thesis addresses gaps in French art and design history. In particular, it studies the development of the French readymade clothing industry between 1945 and 1968, and asks how it connects to the history of post-war France, and to conceptions of national and gender identities, through the cross-analysis of imagery, archival materials and oral histories. It focuses on images as a means to discern shifting conceptions of fashion, modernity and identity over the course of the period studied. It notes several strands of imagery and representational tropes in relation to readymade dress in magazines including *Elle*, *Vogue* and *Jardin des Modes*, and the roles of photographers and journalists such as Peter Knapp, Lionel Kazan, Fouli Elia, Claude Brouet and Simone Baron. It studies these representations in the context of women’s lives and contradictory notions of

modern feminine identity. It analyses the significance of manufacturers and brands such as Albert Lempereur, Weill, Germaine et Jane and Chloé and groups including the Fédération de l'industrie du vêtement féminin in the 1940s and 1950s, and examines how these and other players, including the fashion press, fostered the industry's development. It considers this in relation to post-war reconstruction, modernisation, national identity and international exchanges, in particular the Franco-American relationship. Its study of industry identity, creative ideologies, and new branding and advertising techniques in the 1950s shows how the industry set the stage for later conceptions of readymade dress, and in particular, stylisme in the 1960s. It considers designers such as Emmanuelle Khanh and Sonia Rykiel in its study of the constant reinvention of the industry to counter increasing standardisation. This exposes connections to both 1960s artistic production and industrial design, as well as illustrates the multilayered image of the industry, which drew on made-to-measure discourses such as individualism, in addition to those of technology and modernisation. Due to its connection to systems of manufacture and increased visualisation in imagery, this thesis views readymade clothing as a framework in which to discern consumers' complex understanding of modernity, and how this shifted along with global and technological transitions between 1945 and 1968. In contrast to most studies that focus on haute couture, it shows how fashion related to women's lives and in turn, how women related to wider currents of modernity and national issues, such as industrialisation, and modes of thought including Structuralism, Existentialism and Deconstruction.

Stephenson, Kate, *"It's Not for the Sake of a Ribboned Coat:" A History of British School Uniform* PhD Thesis, The University of York, England, 2016

Despite a good deal of work on the history of education, uniforms and children's clothes as separate fields of research, the development of school uniform is an area that has received little meaningful academic attention to date. School uniform is a visibly prominent reflection of, not only, institutional values, but also of wider views and an indicator of cultural change. This thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach to recreate the five hundred year history of British school uniform using archival, commercial and autobiographical sources to discuss trends in design, adoption and change across a wide range of educational institutions. In doing so the importance of social factors and constructs on the education system and school appearances have become apparent, most notable amongst these are class and gender, but also nationalism and religion. This broad approach enables a wider spectrum of influences and processes to be analysed and their impact seen over a longer time period, allowing connections to be made that might, otherwise, have been missed through close focus. The resulting wide temporal framework can also act as a basis in which future research may be situated.

Wagstaff, Bethany Joy, *Redressing Clothing in the Hebrew Bible: Material-Cultural Approaches* PhD Thesis, The University of Exeter, England, 2017

Despite the dynamic portrayal of clothes in the Hebrew Bible scholars continue to interpret them as flat and inert objects. They are often overlooked or reduced to background details in the biblical texts. However, this thesis will demonstrate that the biblical writers' depictions of clothes are not incidental and should not be reduced to such depictions. This thesis employs a multidisciplinary approach to develop and challenge existing approaches to the clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible. It will fall into two main parts. In the first part, I draw insights from material-cultural theories to reconfigure ways of thinking about clothing as material objects, and reassessing the relationships between people and objects. Having challenged some of the broader conceptions of clothing, I will turn to interrogate the material and visual evidence for clothing and textiles from ancient Syro-Palestinian and ancient West Asian cultures to construct a perspective of the social and material impact of clothing in the culture in which the biblical texts were constructed and formed. In the second part, I will examine the biblical writers' depiction of clothing through two case studies: Joseph's ketonet passim (Genesis 37) and Elijah's adderet (1 Kings 19 and 2 Kings 2). These analyses will draw from the insights made in the first part of this thesis

to reassess and challenge the conventional scholarly interpretations of clothing in these texts. In this thesis, I argue that clothes are employed in powerful ways as material objects which construct and develop the social, religious and material dimensions of the text. They are also intimately entangled in relationships with the characters portrayed by the biblical writers and can even be considered as extensions of the people with whom they are engaged. Clothes manifest their own agency and power, which can transform other persons and objects through their performance and movement in a biblical text.

Walter, Helen, *Artist, Professional, Gentleman: Designing the Body of the Actor-Manager, 1870-1900* PhD Thesis, The Royal College of Art, England, 2015

In the historical record of British theatre in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the figures of London's actor-managers are constantly present. As such, over the intervening century, they have been subjected to detailed historical enquiry by any number of different scholars in terms of their theatrical achievements, management styles, and their role in the changing nature of theatre in this period. However, despite the vast amount of extant visual material pertaining to these individuals in British, and other, collections, little attention has been paid to the image of the actor-manager in this period, and still less to the role of the body in the legacy of such figures. Given the nature of the actor's craft as body-orientated, the explicitly visual nature of theatre in this period, and a burgeoning mass-media industry intent on the dissemination of such images, from a design history perspective this historiographical gap is surprising. Taking as its starting point the contention that the primacy of London's actor-managers in this period was not, despite the claims of some contemporaries, an inevitable result of natural talent, but rather the outcome of carefully mediated verbal and visual discourses of theatrical and social achievements, this thesis examines how the framing of the body in such texts and images contributed to the legacy of the actor-manager as the central figure of late-Victorian theatre for a number of different audiences. It does this by using a synthetic approach which encompasses a number of distinct disciplines, including theoretical perspectives on the body, theatre historical scholarship that informs the context of the primary material, and design historical narratives of production and consumption. Ultimately, however, it is led by the depiction of actor-managers in the late nineteenth century, and the manifestation of multi-valent identities through the body, which constructed them for popular and critical consumption as artists, professionals and gentlemen of the late-Victorian era.

Advisory Board

The following biographies represent the members of the Advisory Board of The Journal of Dress History, in alphabetical order.

Sylvia Ayton, MBE, *Independent Scholar*

Sylvia Ayton received a very thorough training at Walthamstow School of Art and Royal College of Art. Her early work as a fashion designer included designing BEA air hostess uniforms in 1959, clothing for B Altman and Co (New York), Count Down and Pallisades stores (London). In 1964, she formed a partnership with Zandra Rhodes to open Fulham Road Clothes Shop in London. She joined Wallis Fashion Group as outerwear designer in 1969 and remained until 2002. In 1990 she was awarded the MBE for services to the fashion industry, whilst continuing to work as an external examiner and part-time lecturer to many BA (Hons) fashion courses. In 1980 she became a Fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts Manufacture and Commerce, and was a Member of the Jury of RSA Student Design Awards (Fashion). She is also a former Chairman of the Costume Society.

Cally Blackman, MA, *Central Saint Martins*

Cally Blackman is the author of *100 Years of Fashion Illustration* (2007), *100 Years of Menswear* (2009) and *100 Years of Fashion* (2012) and coauthor of *Portrait of Fashion* (2015) for the National Portrait Gallery. She has published articles in peer-reviewed journals *Costume* and *Textile History* and contributed to exhibition catalogues for The Victoria and Albert Museum and Palais Galliera. She has written for *Acne Paper*, broadcast on BBC Radio 4 and lectured widely. She has taught on the Fashion History and Theory BA Pathway at Central Saint Martins for over a decade, contributes to MA programmes at CSM, London College of Fashion, Sothebys Institute, and the The Victoria and Albert Museum Education Department. She was Chairman of CHODA (Courtauld History of Dress Association) 2000–2005 and a Trustee of the Costume Society, 2005–2010.

Penelope Byrde Ruddock, MA, FMA, *Independent Scholar*

Penelope Byrde Ruddock read Modern History at St Andrews University before specialising in the history of dress for her MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She was a curator at the Museum of Costume and Fashion Research Centre in Bath for almost thirty years until she retired in 2002. She was joint editor of *Costume*, the dress studies journal published by the Costume Society, for five years and she is an Associate Lecturer at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London where she specialises in dress in eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature. She has written several books on the history of fashion: *The Male Image. Men's Fashions in Britain 1300–1970*; *A Visual History of Costume: The Twentieth Century*; *Nineteenth Century Fashion*; and *Jane Austen Fashion*.

Caroline de Guitaut, MA, MVO, AMA, *Royal Collection Trust*

Caroline de Guitaut is currently Senior Curator of Decorative Arts, Royal Collection Trust, London. She is a curator with more than 25 years' experience of caring for, displaying, and researching one of the world's greatest art collections. She is curator of high profile exhibitions of decorative arts and fashion at The Queen's Galleries in London and Edinburgh and at Buckingham Palace since 2002. Her

publications include books, exhibition catalogues, and articles in peer-reviewed journals. She is a regular lecturer in museums and galleries in the UK and internationally. She is a Member of the Victorian Order, an Associate of the Museums Association, and a Trustee of the Royal School of Needlework.

Thomas P Gates, MA, MSLS, MAEd, *Kent State University*

Thomas P Gates attended the Cleveland Institute of Art and Case Western Reserve University, receiving a bachelors' degree in art history from the latter. He received Masters' degrees in art history and librarianship from the University of Southern California. He also received a Master's degree in art education from the University of New Mexico. After receiving a Rockefeller Fellowship in museum and community studies at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, he assisted with exhibitions at the museum's Downtown Centre and curated a mobile exhibition for the U.S. Bicentennial in 1976 sponsored by the California Historical Society. In 1996 he developed the June F Mohler Fashion Library for the School of Fashion Design and Merchandising, assuming responsibilities as head librarian when it opened in 1997. He achieved rank of tenured associate professor in 1998. Gates' interest in the history of the built environment and American mid century high-end retail apparel resulted in published as well as invitational papers in scholarly organizations such as The Society of American City and Regional Planning History; Western Reserve Society of Architectural Historians; The Costume Society of America; The Art Libraries Society of North America/Ohio Valley Chapter; The Association of Architecture School Librarians; and The Association of Dress Historians.

Alex Kerr, PhD, FBS, *The Burgon Society*

Alex Kerr has spent much of his career as a lecturer in medieval studies, later combining this with academic administrative roles. He holds a BA in medieval and modern languages from Oxford University, and an MA and a PhD in medieval studies from Reading University. Since 2001 he has also been Director of a consultancy providing training courses in communication skills. From 2001 to 2013 he was Managing Editor of the journal *Contemporary Review*. So far as dress history is concerned, he is an independent researcher and has published several articles on the history of academic dress. He is a Trustee and Fellow of The Burgon Society, an educational charity for the study of academic dress, its design, history and practice. He was Editor of its *Transactions*, an annual scholarly journal, from 2003 to 2010, and is now the Society's Secretary.

Jenny Lister, MA, *Victoria and Albert Museum*

Jenny Lister is Curator of Fashion and Textiles at The Victoria and Albert Museum, from 2004. She has curated their exhibitions *60s Fashion* (2006) and *Grace Kelly: Style Icon* (2010). Her publications include *The V&A Gallery of Fashion* (2013), with Claire Wilcox, *London Society Fashion 1905-1925: the Wardrobe of Heather Firbank* (2015) and *May Morris* (2017), with Anna Mason, Jan Marsh, et al. Her other research interests include the British shawl industry and Mary Quant.

Timothy Long, MA, *Museum of London*

Timothy Long is Curator of Fashion and Decorative Arts at the Museum of London. His career began at the Chicago History Museum in 1999 as a costume collection manager, before becoming curator of costume in 2006. In 2011, he returned to school for an MA, History and Culture of Fashion at London College of Fashion. Following the completion of his degree, he became a curator at the Museum of London in 2013. His publication record includes Chicago History Museum exhibition catalogues – *Dior: The New Look*, *Chic Chicago*, *Charles James: Genius Deconstructed* and *I Do! Chicago Ties the Knot* – investigations on Etruscan dress for the British Museum Technical Bulletin (2014). More recently, he wrote a book titled *Charles James: Designer in Detail*, and a chapter on the same designer

for *London Couture: British Luxury 1923–1975*, both through V&A Publishing (2015). For more information, please visit www.Timothyalong.com.

Jane Malcolm–Davies, PhD, *University of Copenhagen*

Jane Malcolm–Davies is a Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellow at the Centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen. She is codirector of The Tudor Tailor, which researches and retails publications and products aimed at improving reproduction historical dress for pedagogical projects. She was a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of the Highlands and Islands (Centre for Interpretation Studies) and the University of Southampton. She lectured in entrepreneurship and heritage management at the University of Surrey, introduced costumed interpreters at Hampton Court Palace (1992 to 2004), coordinated training for the front-of-house team at Buckingham Palace each summer (2000 to 2010) and is currently coaching guides for the new National Army Museum.

Scott Hughes Myerly, PhD, *University of Southern Indiana*

Scott Hughes Myerly was born in Des Moines, Iowa and has a Bachelor's Degree in European History from the University of California at Los Angeles. He earned a Master's Degree in American History and Museum Studies from the University of Delaware, and a Doctorate in Military History from the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. His book *British Military Spectacle from the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Harvard University Press, 1996) was a finalist for the Longman/History Today Book of the Year. He is now retired and specialises in British Army dress, circa 1783–1857.

Susan North, PhD, *Victoria and Albert Museum*

Susan North is the curator of fashion before 1800 at The Victoria and Albert Museum. She has a BA in Art History from Carleton University in Ottawa, an MA in Dress History from the Courtauld Institute and a PhD from Queen Mary, University of London. She worked for the National Gallery of Canada and the National Archives of Canada, before joining The Victoria and Albert Museum in 1995. She has coauthored several V&A publications relating to early modern dress, as well as cocurating *Style and Splendour: Queen Maud of Norway's Wardrobe* in 2005.

Martin Pel, *Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums*

Martin Pel is curator of fashion and textiles at Royal Pavilion and Museums in Brighton and has curated for them a number of exhibitions, including *Subversive Design* (2013) and *Fashion Cities Africa* (2016). He has published on dress and fashion history including *The Biba Years 1963–1975* (2014, V&A Publishing) and has just coedited with Professor Amy de la Haye *Gluck: Art and Identity*, published by Yale in 2017 to accompany an exhibition of the same name.

Anna Reynolds, MA, *Royal Collection Trust*

Anna Reynolds is Senior Curator of Paintings at Royal Collection Trust, where she has worked since 2008. She is part of the curatorial team with responsibility for temporary exhibitions at The Queen's Gallery in London and The Queen's Gallery in Edinburgh, as well as the permanent display of approximately 8,000 paintings across royal residences including Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Her exhibitions and accompanying publications include *In Fine Style – The Art of Tudor and Stuart Fashion* (2013), *Royal Childhood* (2014), *A Royal Welcome* (2015) and *Portrait of the Artist* (2016). In 2017–2018 she will be the Polaire Weissman fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York studying John Singer Sargent and fashion. Anna holds an

undergraduate degree from Cambridge University, a Diploma from Christie's Education, and a Master's in the History of Art from the Courtauld Institute.

Aileen Ribeiro, PhD, *Courtauld Institute of Art*

Aileen Ribeiro read history at King's College, London, followed by postgraduate study (MA and PhD) at The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She was Head of the History of Dress Section at The Courtauld Institute from 1975 to 2009; appointed Professor in the History of Art at the University of London in 2000, she is now Professor Emeritus. She lectures widely in Great Britain, Europe and North America, and has acted as costume consultant/contributor to many major exhibitions. These include Reynolds (Royal Academy of Arts, London: 1986); Winterhalter and the Courts of Europe 1830 to 1870 (National Portrait Gallery, London: 1987 and the Petit Palais, Paris: 1988); Goya: La imagen de la mujer (Prado, Madrid: 2001 and National Gallery of Art, Washington: 2002); Whistler, Women and Fashion (Frick Collection, New York: 2003). Recent contributions to exhibition catalogues include an essay on Renoir's use of fashion in his painting *La Loge*, in *Renoir at the Theatre: Looking at La Loge* (Courtauld Institute 2008); an essay on Gainsborough's portrait of Ann Ford in *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman* (Cincinnati Art Museum 2010); an essay on Gustave Caillebotte's painting *Paris Street, Rainy Day for Impressionism, Fashion and Modernity* (Paris, New York and Chicago 2012), and an essay on dress in Liotard in Jean-Etienne Liotard (National Gallery of Scotland and The Royal Academy of Arts 2015). In addition, she has published many books and articles on various aspects of the history of dress, including *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750-1820* (1995); *Dress and Morality* (2003); *Fashion and Fiction. Dress in Art and Literature in Stuart England* (2006); *Facing Beauty. Painted Women and Cosmetic Art* (2011) and (with Cally Blackman) *A Portrait of Fashion. Six Centuries of Dress at the National Portrait Gallery* (2015). Her most recent book is *Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion 1600-1914* (2016).

Georgina Ripley, MA, *National Museums Scotland*

Georgina Ripley is curator of modern and contemporary fashion and textiles at National Museums Scotland (NMS). Her research interests currently include Jean Muir (fl. 1962-1995), contemporary menswear, and new technologies in fashion. She is working towards a major temporary exhibition for NMS in 2020. She was the lead curator for the permanent Fashion and Style gallery which opened at the museum in 2016 and cocurated *Express Yourself: Contemporary Jewellery* (2014). She has contributed to exhibitions at NMS including *Jean Muir: A Fashion Icon* (2008-2009) and *Mary Queen of Scots* (2013), and *The House of Annie Lennox* (2012), a Victoria and Albert Museum Touring Exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. She has previous experience working with the Royal Academy of Arts, the Warner Textile Archive, Museums Galleries Scotland and the National Galleries of Scotland.

Gary Watt, MA, NTF, *University of Warwick*

Gary Watt is a Professor of Law at The University of Warwick, a National Teaching Fellow, and cofounding editor of the journal *Law and Humanities*. Specialising in performative rhetoric, he was named UK "Law Teacher of the Year" in 2009 and has for many years led rhetoric workshops for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Professor Watt's monographs include *Equity Stirring* (Oxford: Hart, 2009); *Dress, Law and Naked Truth* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2013); and *Shakespeare's Acts of Will: Law, Testament and Properties of Performance* (Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2016). He has written for *The Times Literary Supplement* and collaborated with composer Antony Pitts for BBC Radio 3 and for The Song Company of Australia.

Rainer Wenrich, PhD, *Catholic University, Eichstaett-Ingolstadt*

Rainer Wenrich, PhD, Professor and Chair of Art Education and Didactics of Art, Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. He achieved his PhD on the topic of Art and Fashion in the twentieth century. His research interests are visual studies, costume history, and fashion theory. As a Professor for Art Education he lectured at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich and as a visiting scholar at Columbia University, New York. He is the author of many articles and books in the field of art education and fashion studies. In 2015 he edited *The Mediality of Fashion*, published by Transcript, Bielefeld, Germany.

