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Letter from the Editor

In this issue of *Catwalk* we probe fashion-making politics, practices, and policies in Poland, Yorkshire, and Israel, as well in museum exhibition making.

The first article, 'Fashion Against the System: Barbara Hoff's Activity at *Przekrój* Magazine during the People's Republic of Poland,' was written by Dominika Łukoszek of the Institute of Philosophy at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. Łukoszek's groundbreaking article is a contribution to the history of fashion, bringing a story unknown to readers outside of Poland of the remarkable career of the self-described Polish 'dictator of fashion,' the journalist and designer Barbara Hoff. The voice of fashion in communist era Poland, Hoff educated generations of Polish women and men about what they should wear to be fashionable and recommended innovative Do-It-Yourself ways for them to look current. (Among my favourite Hoff innovations: how to modify sports shoes into ballerina flats.) At the time, Poles were largely excluded from trends in Western clothing and accessories because of shortages in materials and imports, restrictions on travel, and political-economic policies created by government officials who judged an interest in fashion to be a decadent, bourgeois artefact of capitalist societies. Hoff's avowed mission was to fight communism – and bad taste – with fashion.

'Made in Yorkshire: Harnessing the Zeitgeist,' by Kevin Almond, Head of Department for Fashion and Textiles, University of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, UK, resulted from the author's study of collaborative efforts among Yorkshire universities, government authorities, businesses, manufacturers, and museums to create a fashion label that combines heritage fabrics with cutting-edge, contemporary design to put a 'Made in Yorkshire' brand on the global fashion map. The article assesses the viability for creating a fashion brand beyond the confines of a major fashion city that can be both meaningful and economically feasible. As fashion has become a globalised industry, the established fashion powers of New York, London, Milan, and Paris have been joined by cities such as Shanghai, Los Angeles, Copenhagen, and Melbourne. However, there has been little expansion of fashion hubs beyond the nucleus of these major cities. Although many designers and consumers of fashion products exist in smaller provincial areas, urban giants continue to overshadow them for various reasons. Almond's in-depth qualitative investigation unearthed much of the history and culture of fashion in Yorkshire, and reveals how the county responds to and creates its own 'spirit of the times.'

No doubt those readers who are interested in fashion magazine imagery will appreciate reading about and looking at the darkly beguiling imagery of Adi Nes, one of Israel's most prominent and prestigiously awarded photographers. '*The Prisoners*. The Fashion Photography of Adi Nes: Refashioning Israeli Society,' authored by the art historian Nissim Gal, provides a deep reading of *The Prisoners* photo series that was first published in the men´s magazine *Vogue Hommes International* in September 2003 to commemorate the 9/11 World Trade Center Twin Towers disaster. Using the social theories of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Laura Mulvey, Judith Butler, among others, and the writings of Jean Genet, Gal, who is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Art History, University of Haifa, Israel, deftly demonstrates how Nes engages with the male body, its identity and its socio-political instability, particularly in the Israeli context. The connections represented in this twelve-part photo series among migrant workers, Palestinians, and Sephardi men in relationships that are charged with homoerotic overtones, can lead the way to an appreciation of heterogeneity and the alliances among distinct peoples from different socio-economic classes, sexualities, genders, races, and ethnicities. Of course, the fashions and the looks of the men doing the modelling are also of interest!

For the final article of the issue, 'Making Things Present: Exhibition-Maker Judith Clark and the Layered Meanings of Historical Dress in the Here and Now,' Sofia Pantouvaki, Professor of Costume Design for Theatre and Film at the School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University, Finland, and Donatella Barbieri, a Senior Research Fellow of Design for Performance, jointly at the London College of Fashion and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, examine the presentation of dress by the influential architecture trained exhibition-maker Judith Clark. With her evolving methodological enquiry, Clark's projects go to the core of displaying dress from the past in the present. In her professional practice she takes the dual role of curator and designer, building on concepts of dress from a combined starting point of 'making things present,' in the words of the philosopher and literary critic Walter Benjamin. From their origins in her experimental exhibitions in the Judith Clark Costume Gallery (1997-2003), a nine-by-four meter space in Notting Hill, London, to their installation in museums, Clark's exhibitions have dealt with the issues associated with the display of historical dress in a contemporary context, proposing a dialogic relationship between dress and audience, while addressing the absent body that once wore the garments. By re-defining the practice of presenting dress in exhibition, this process re-delineates the role of fashion curators, their co-creators, and spectators. Clark was interviewed for the article and what became clear to the authors is that looking at fashion curation as a creative action shifts the way historical dress is presented and is part of a new interdisciplinary movement which is re-writing the rules for not only future curators of historical dress, but for the ways in which historical dress can be read, understood, and interpreted.

Our Reviews section is devoted to recent exhibitions and books, and this issue's coverage is especially provocative, ranging from the history of punk and queer style to body-altering undergarments. Nathaniel Weiner, a regular reviewer for *Catwalk*, visited the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to ponder the Met's 2013 exhibition, *Punk: Chaos to Couture*, an exhibition I also visited. Michael R. Langkjær, a keen historian of music and fashion, visited the Victoria and Albert Museum in London to experience *David Bowie is….*, while Kim Cunningham and Lucy F. Collins took in *A Queer History of Fashion: From the Closet to the Catwalk* at The Museum at FIT in New York City. Leonard R. Koos, our Reviews Editor, had the pleasure of visiting the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris to see *La Mécanique des dessous: une histoire indiscrète de la silhouette* ('Behind the Seams: An Indiscreet History of the Silhouette'). In autumn 2013, I too had the pleasure of seeing the exhibition and also of trying on a crinoline in the last room of the show. Following the exhibitions section, Koos reviews the latest book by the historian of fashion Caroline Evans, *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900-1929*. The Reviews section also highlights Current and Forthcoming Exhibitions and Briefly Noted Books.

Special thanks to Elizabeth Kaino Hopper, Desiree Smal, Jess Berry, Laura Petican, Leonard R. Koos, and Lisa Howard for helping put the issue together.

Enjoy!

Jacque Lynn Foltyn, PhD
Chief Editor, *Catwalk: The Journal of Fashion, Beauty and Style*

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Fashion Against the System: Barbara Hoff's Activity at *Przekrój* Magazine during the People's Republic of Poland

Dominika Łukoszek

Abstract

Barbara Hoff worked as a fashion journalist for the weekly Polish magazine *Przekrój* (*Digest*) for forty-eight years (1954-2002). During those years she educated generations of Polish women and men about what one should wear to be fashionable. Significantly, her advice was concerned with how to achieve this effect in a country where until 1989 the fashion industry was controlled by a government that did not favour Western fashion on the streets. Hoff was an early instigator of Do-It-Yourself (DIY) clothing and encouraged her readers to be fashionable even with very humble means. For example, she turned sports shoes into ballerina flats. Hoff also popularized trends originating from Western fashion capitals by using photographs cut out from Western fashion magazines and modifying them with her simple hand drawings. These drawings allowed readers to understand which silhouettes were fashionable and how they could create a similar outfit at home out of available materials. From 1969, Barbara Hoff designed mass collections that were available in Centrum department stores in Warsaw. Her first collection consisted of 11,000 pieces and was a huge success. In 1977 she created clothes under her own brand, Hoffland. Very often she used textiles that nobody wanted or that were perceived as unsuitable for production. For much of her fashion work Hoff was badly paid or not paid at all, and she perceived her efforts as a way of fighting communism, her true mission. The primary source for the research presented in this article is Hoff's weekly fashion column in *Przekrój* from 1954-1989. The article focuses on her roles as fashion advisor, journalist and designer, and provides a historical overview of her work during a period when Poland existed as a country politically dependent on the USSR and when the aesthetic ideal was based on the communist clothing patterns of factory and farm workers. Barbara Hoff fought communism – and bad taste – with fashion.

Key Words

Barbara Hoff, *Przekrój,* People's Republic of Poland, Polish fashion, Polish fashion designers, history of fashion, politics of fashion, fashion journalism, communist clothing patterns.

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1. Introduction

Describing the activity in the field of promoting and creating fashion undertaken by Barbara Hoff, fashion advisor, fashion journalist, and fashion designer during the period of the People's Republic of Poland (1944-1989) is an understudied field. Hoff's profile is barely known, particularly in English-language fashion studies, and the aim of this article is to present her activities to a wider audience of fashion researchers. The thesis of this article is that in the research period presented here Barbara Hoff promoted and created fashion to fight communism. However, Hoff was not only using fashion as a subversive technique against the political system, first and foremost she was truly passionate about fashion. Her passion, obstinacy, and

strong belief that it is important to fight against bad taste made her the most recognizable fashion designer from the researched period. She was a brand herself.

Image 1: Barbara Hoff in Hoffland boutique, Warsaw, 1998.

Polish literature referring to Hoff is scarce. Justyna Jaworska, a researcher at the Institute of Polish Culture at the Warsaw University (Instytut Kultury Polskiej, Uniwersytet Warszawski), describes Barbara Hoff's fashion column in *Przekrój* in her book about the magazine; however, it concentrates only on the period 1945-1962, fashion is not the main topic of the book, and it is presented together with chapters about the savoir-vivre, art, or attitudes towards cuisine and alcohol in the articles published in the *Przekrój* during the period. Anna Pelka, a historian, also mentions Barbara Hoff in her book about Polish youth fashion in the period of the People's Republic of Poland. She interviewed individuals who were involved in creating fashion during the period, such as Hoff; Jerzy Antkowiak, a fashion designer for Moda Polska (Polish Fashion), an official state company to promote fashion; Grażyna Hase, a model for *Przekrój* and later a fashion designer for the clothing company Cora; the photographers Janusz Sobolewski and Tadeusz Rolke; and the fashion journalist Teresa Kuczyńska. She also describes fashion phenomena such as miniskirts, hippie subculture, the meaning of jeans, disco outfits, and punk. Maciej Chłopek, author of a monograph about *bikiniarze* ('bikini-men') in the years 1948-1956, a style referring to the American zoot suit and French zazous, has also written about fashion of the period.[1] Single articles, mostly in the popular press, have appeared about the fashion system in the People's Republic of Poland. However, there is a lack of systematic research on fashion designers and their role in 'dressing Poland.' Concerning the literature written in English, the fashion historian Djurdja Bartlett, in her book about fashion in Eastern Europe, briefly depicts Hoff as a fashion designer creating clothes for young women and as a person who advised them 'to achieve styles unobtainable in the shops.'[2] Indeed, young, slim girls were the main target for Hoff's designs, but she also wrote occasionally about men's fashion, and when she began to design clothes for her own brand under the name of Hoffland, she also created men's collections. She was not solely a women's fashion designer (Image 1).

To understand Barbara Hoff's profound influence on the evolution of Polish fashion, it is crucial to understand the importance of Hoff's activities during Poland's communist period, when all centres of design and all spheres of life were controlled by government institutions. The Communist Party had power over the economy, which in practice meant that government policy influenced all areas of life: production, consumption, employment, education, free time, and social and family relations. The party's decisions were particularly painful for Polish citizens after price increases were introduced because it resulted in the deterioration of living conditions of millions of people. When Poles rebelled against such government decisions there was no space for talks or negotiations. Instead, detention of those who protested followed and in the most dramatic moments, as in the city of Gdynia in December 1970, the army shot at the people. Life in a state where there is no freedom of speech and where the citizens have no trust in their government representatives does not encourage self-expression or standing out from the crowd. It is safer to be like everybody else in behaviour, in thinking, and self-presentation.

Clothing was one of the means used by government officials to promote the ideas of solidarity and equality, as well as community awareness. According to Pelka, 'Mass production of clothing, conforming to government recommendations, was supported by the centralization of design institutions and the nationalizations of industry and commerce.'[3] In such a system there was no place for individual designers who wanted to realize their own ideas, to create a clothing range according to their unique tastes and visions or for entrepreneurship. However, Hoff managed to design and manufacture her own collections, despite the difficulties, restrictions, and shortages of all the means needed to design and produce ranges of clothing. Throughout the years, Hoff defended her *idée fixe* that what people wear is important, and that they must have freedom of choice in terms of their dress and to be themselves.

The primary source for the research presented in this article is the weekly fashion column that Barbara Hoff co-created and created in *Przekrój* from 1954 until 1989. This article provides a historical overview of Hoff's work during the years when Poland existed as a country politically dependent on the USSR. It concentrates on Hoff's roles performed in *Przekrój*'s fashion column as fashion advisor, fashion journalist, and fashion designer. The article contextualizes Hoff's practice in relation to the political climate of the People's Republic of Poland, addresses Hoff's personal biography, presents the motivation for her interest in fashion, introduces the role of *Przekrój* as a medium presenting relatively independent content, highlights Hoff's activity as a fashion journalist for the magazine, and examines the role Hoff played as a fashion designer and the steps that led to the creation of her own brand, Hoffland, that existed from 1977 to 2007.

2. The People's Republic of Poland

The name 'People's Republic of Poland' (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa - PRL) refers to the period between 1944 and 1989 when Poland was under the political control of the former Soviet Union. Formally, the People's Republic of Poland was introduced after its constitution was enacted in 1952, but in the literature the term also includes the years before 1952; the period from 1944 until 1989 is treated as a whole. During those years Poland remained in the Soviet sphere of influence as a result of events connected with World War II. The conferences between the Big Three (Great Britain, USA and USSR) that took place in Tehran (1943), Yalta (1945), and Potsdam (1945) decided post-war Poland's borders and political system. According to the Yalta Conference resolutions, all the territories that Soviet troops went through on their march to conquer Germany would remain under the governance of the USSR. This decision was confirmed on 5 July 1945 when Great Britain and the USA acknowledged 'giving' Poland to the USSR by recognizing the Temporary Government of National Unity (Tymczasowy Rząd Jedności Narodowej). This meant that at the same time these states withdrew their support for a

democratic Polish government in London which was a continuation of the pre-war Polish government existing before the German invasion of 1939.[4] Formally, the People's Republic of Poland remained a separate country, but in reality it was not independent. Nothing could be organized without the consent of the Soviet government that decided Poland's internal and external politics.

The People's Republic of Poland, together with other countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Albania, and the countries of the former Yugoslavia), was a satellite state of the USSR and its system was founded on communist ideology. The political situation in Poland did not change until 4 June 1989 when the first partially free elections in the post-war period took place. The elections resulted from the so-called Polish Round Table Talks (Okrągły Stół) between the government representatives and members of the opposition. Surprisingly for the Communist Party, the opposition won the elections and consequently the first non-communistic government was formed with Tadeusz Mazowiecki serving as prime minister. The elections in 1989 symbolized the end of the Communist Party's governance and the beginnings of democracy in Poland.

In a system in which virtually every realm of a person's life was under control of the government, was fashion, which the communists considered a bourgeois artefact of capitalism, at all possible? Hoff's attitude was that it was feasible for Poles to follow fashion, i.e., follow Western trends, even if they had no chance of purchasing from a Western designer. By presenting new trends in fashion to the readers of *Przekrój* and by influencing the tastes of consumers by designing her own collections, Hoff showed that in a world of limited possibilities individuals could still find ways to create a 'window to the West' and convince others that there was a choice – even if only in such a trivial matter as what to wear. The image of Hoff that emerges from the collected materials I studied is of a determined and decisive person who had an unshakeable belief that what she was doing was right and desirable. Examining Hoff's activity via the pages of *Przekrój* gives an interesting image of a fashion journalist and designer who – contrary to her counterparts in Paris or London – had to struggle to find ways to present to her readers how to achieve fashionable Western 'looks' while using cheap textiles, giving DIY advice, and providing ways to re-use old clothes to create new ones. For Hoff, fashion was a means of fighting the aesthetic ideal promoted by the Soviet government's propaganda, based on the appearance of factory and farm workers, whose clothes were supposed to present a uniform 'classless' society and not emphasize a person's individuality. In the 1950s, when Hoff started her career, the women featured on propaganda posters were depicted as physically strong as men, wore work aprons, and sported scarves on their heads to keep their hair under control. The goal of such imagery was to promote the rebuilding of post-World War II Poland and not of the individual self. The poster of a woman driving a tractor is one of the best remembered images associated with this period of Polish history. The juxtaposition of this image with Hoff's ideas of fashionable dress is an example of the clash of two aesthetics that could not have been more different from each other.

3. Barbara Hoff: A Short Biography

Barbara Hoff was born in 1932 in Katowice, in Southern Poland. Her father was a lawyer and her mother was a housewife who took care of the family home with the help of servants. Barbara was supposed to follow her father's profession and become a lawyer but due to her 'inappropriate' social origin (explained below) she was rejected as a candidate by the law faculty at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. However, once she discovered art history, Hoff claims that she did not care about the law anymore.

To understand why Hoff engaged in fighting communism through fashion, it is crucial to discuss her family's history. In 1962 her father was taken by Secret Service officers (Urząd

Bezpieczeństwa - UB) for interrogation. For some time, Mr Hoff had anticipated such an arrest; he was a lawyer, his clients were being interrogated, and he felt that the UB was collecting evidence against him. Mr Hoff was not particularly careful in his behaviour. He openly – and critically – spoke about his views on the political situation in Poland.[5] Three days after arresting him, the UB officers informed Barbara and her mother that Mr Hoff had hanged himself in his jail cell by using strips of his own shirt. He was 56 years old. Hoff's family never received a satisfactory explanation about what had happened; when her husband's shirt was returned to Mrs Hoff, it was undamaged.[6]

The Hoff family was always against communism, and for Barbara, designing fashionable clothes for ordinary people was a mission she perceived as a 'breath of fresh air' that helped to avoid the conformity of 'sovietisation.'[7] In fulfilling this mission, Hoff worked as a fashion journalist for *Przekrój* from 1954. In the 1960s she began to design her own collections, and in 1977 her brand 'Hoffland' first appeared. Hoff was the first Polish fashion designer in the period after World War II to create clothing under her own name. Hoff also wrote articles about fashion for other newspapers and magazines, hosted radio and television broadcasts on fashion, designed costumes for films, and realized individual projects. In one interview she said:

> I was a fashion dictator. I wanted power. I love power and I always wanted to be a politician. In the past a political career for a person with my political views was impossible, but in fashion I ruled in a dictatorial manner. I wrote in a manner that did not tolerate opposition.[8]

It seems that Hoff's 'dictatorship' is still remembered after many years. By 'dictatorship,' Hoff meant not only in her role at *Przekrój* but in her roles at other periodicals in Poland (Hoff claims she wrote three fashion articles per week). Hoff was a confident woman, and her efforts in promoting fashion in Poland were appreciated in 2004 when she was chosen as one of the fifty most influential women in Polish history by the readers of *Polityka* (*Politics*, a weekly magazine). Hoff was the only fashion designer on the list.[9] Over the decades, different companies produced clothes for Polish members of society, and many designers created the clothes, but it is Hoff who is still remembered today. From where did the legend of Barbara Hoff come?

4. *Przekrój*

Created in April 1945, *Przekrój* is a magazine that still exists today. At its onset, it was conceived of as a humorous magazine and made its name as a publication that was not supposed to be taken seriously. Agnieszka Osiecka, a famous Polish writer, called *Przekrój* 'a school of laughter, tact and tenderness.'[10] This turned out to be an effective strategy, and the magazine managed to keep some sort of neutral position during the Soviet era. During most of those years the magazine's workers were relatively independent of the editorial control of the ruling Communist Party in Poland. Marian Eile, the first editor of *Przekrój* (1945-1969), wanted to create a 'window to the West,' and *Przekrój* published contemporary French literature, American advertisements, and gossip from England. Of course, such materials needed to be balanced by observing ideological dictates from Moscow; nevertheless, the editorial staff felt its mission was to civilize post-World War II Polish society.[11] Eile promoted an intelligent, non-communist lifestyle, and his avowed mission was to show a piece of the larger world to the Polish people, whom he viewed as 'locked' in the People's Republic of Poland. Over the years many famous Polish writers published their works in *Przekrój*, among them Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, Melchior Wańkowicz, Stanisław Lem, Sławomir Mrożek

and Witold Gombrowicz. After Eile left *Przekrój*, the profile of the magazine continued in the following decades.

Image 2: Photo session for Hoff's collection in 1967.
Photograph by Tadeusz Rolke. © Tadeusz Rolke/Agencja Gazeta

The idea to create such a magazine for Poland was very important, because Polish society after the war consisted mainly of working class people and farmers. Due to Germany's policy on Polish territory, many intellectuals had been killed during World War II.[12] As mentioned above, *Przekrój* was not totally free in choosing its content but it gave its readers a feeling of relative independence. During this period, few Polish citizens were allowed to travel to the West; the chances of receiving a passport were strictly limited and information coming from the Western world was censored, so any news from the larger world was warmly welcomed. The magazine presented trends from the West (mostly from France because Eile and Janina Ipohorska, a subeditor at *Przekrój*, were strong admirers of French culture), and anything Western was perceived as better, more sophisticated, whereas trends from the East, i.e., the USSR, were treated as poorer and imposed. The best proof of *Przekrój's* popularity was

its circulation; over the years the magazine was printed in amounts from 250,000 to a million copies, a number sometimes larger than that of the official government daily newspaper *Trybuna Ludu (People's Platform)*.[13]

A. Fashion in *Przekrój*

Barbara Hoff started working for *Przekrój* in 1954. In the beginning, she co-authored articles with Janina Ipohorska, another writer at the magazine, but within a few years the fashion column became Hoff's individual task. Initially, her column presented fashion trends, small-talk, and texts about fashion and lifestyle, but in later years it also presented the collections designed by Hoff herself. In the period researched, Hoff's fashion column took one page of the magazine (of sixteen in 1954 and of twenty-four in 1989), and occasionally a page-and-a-half or two pages. The photographs presenting contemporary fashion were published in colour, rarely in black and white. Pictures (photographs, Hoff's drawings, short comic strips) usually dominated over text.

When Hoff and Ipohorska worked together they used the pen names Lucynka and Paulinka. To illustrate their conversations and articles about fashion and lifestyle, they cut out photographs from Western magazines and created intriguing collages.[14] In an interview with Natalia Wrzesień, a journalist at the Internet website about fashion www.moda.com.pl, Hoff said she had access to British *Vogue* thanks to a milliner from Katowice, Mrs Pacanowska, who subscribed to the magazine.[15] During a conversation with Anna Pelka, Hoff also mentioned that *Przekrój* subscribed to *Elle*, but access to the magazine was limited, because everyone in the editorial staff wanted to read it. When it was impossible to get photographs of fashionable clothes, Hoff did the drawings herself. Her drawings were simple; they showed what was in vogue at the time and how to achieve the desired style.[16] It was her way of fighting the communist regime that perceived fashion as 'an ulcer on the healthy body' of socialism. According to Hoff, to wear elegant clothes was dangerous, because it showed that intelligent, educated, classy people were thwarting the ideological stance of the communist regime.[17]

Despite the anti-fashion attitude of the communist regime, Hoff's female readers not only wanted to read about fashion, first and foremost they wanted to know how to achieve a fashionable look. Initially, the designs that Hoff presented in her column were perceived as impossible to realize with the very humble amounts of materials available then in Poland. Yet this did not discourage Hoff. On the contrary, she wanted to demonstrate that it was still possible to follow Western trends. She bought textiles with her own money and asked her friend's mother to sew dresses, based on Hoff's drawings. Hoff herself never sewed clothes; she always said she suffered from 'needle phobia.'[18]

Hoff recalls that when she started working for *Przekrój* her first revolution was how to make fashionable ballerina flats out of the sports shoes (called *pepegi*) then available in shops. She advised readers to cut out the part with the laces and trim the remaining part with a ribbon; finally the 'new' shoes should be dyed black at home.[19] They were called *trumniaki* ('coffin shoes') and were an immediate success. Originally *trumniaki* were cardboard shoes that the deceased were buried in, but somehow people associated Hoff's idea with them and the name stuck.[20] Among her other memorable suggestions was the proposal about how to create the look of a white, see-through headscarf such as worn by the likes of Grace Kelly and Brigitte Bardot. Even if there was no proper material from which to make a headscarf, a woman, instructed Hoff, could always use *tetra* (a material that diapers were made of) and achieve a film star-like appearance. The success of this look was even noticed by a presenter on the Sunday evening news on television; he said he had noticed eighteen girls wearing similar headscarves in Warsaw on the day when Hoff published her advice.[21]

In 1958, Hoff wrote about jeans and introduced their Polish spelling (*dżins*). She advised against despising 'Polish jeans' because the chances of buying original jeans were rather small.[22] The textile that the Polish jeans were made from was called 'Texas.' Because trousers produced with the 'Texas' textile did not fade, wearers were unable to achieve the desired 'worn' effect, and so they were not treated as 'real jeans' by young people. If you wanted to buy actual denim trousers produced by Lee, Wrangler, or Levi's, the possibilities were the following: you could buy them at various bazaars from people who received jeans in parcels from their relatives living abroad, or you could buy them in 'Pewex' shops (Przedsiębiorstwo Eksportu Wewnętrznego – Internal Export Company), where various Western products were available. However, in that case people had to pay either in dollars or with special shopping coupons from PeKaO (Polish Savings Bank). If somebody was lucky enough to get a passport, then it was also possible to buy the dreamed of jeans abroad.[23] The ruling party was not satisfied with the growing popularity of jeans, especially among Polish youth, because the trousers were perceived as a product incompatible with communist ideology – although not as dangerous as 'imperialist Coca-Cola.'[24] In this respect, Barbara Hoff's writing about jeans was an instance of a conscious activity that aimed to show *Przekrój's* readers what was fashionable, ignoring the ruling party's point of view.

Trying to vary women's wardrobes, in Spring 1962 Hoff prepared drawings showing how a woman could transform one dress into five (or counting the 'original' dress – six) different outfits. With the help of buttons, jabot, necklace or belt, you could multiply the possibilities of creating a fashionable look with a single dress.[25] Hoff's seven ideas for fancy backs in a dress were useful not only for the summer season but also for the carnival period for evening dresses.[26] The idea of achieving maximum effect with minimum means was a regular theme of Hoff's column. During the period when large bosomed film stars such as Gina Lollobrigida, Anita Ekberg, Sophia Loren, Marilyn Monroe, and Brigitte Bardot were hugely popular, Hoff made a drawing 'from a bird's eye view' of how to 'wear your breasts.' 'A good bra is the basis of a good wardrobe' – she wrote.[27]

On one hand, it was important to suggest to female readers how to create a fashionable look out of nothing; on the other, how to snatch the glamour from the catwalk presented by the greatest designers. In 1966, when Yves Saint Laurent showed his 'Mondrian Dress' on the catwalk, Hoff informed her readers that the design was easy to create with small pieces of fabric. Another possibility for creating the 'Mondrian look,' Hoff advised, was to broaden a dress that was too small by using black pieces of textile and 'persuade oneself that one looks slim.'[28] She also drew a few potential solutions for how to use YSL's ideas and create your own 'Mondrian Dress.'[29] For the average Polish woman, the impossibility of buying an original YSL dress did not mean that she could not have a home-made version of one and be fashionable.

Following the newest fashion trends was problematic also for reasons other than shortages of desirable textiles and clothing. When in 1969 the minidress was in vogue, Hoff advised women to buy a tight men's T-shirt and dye it to the desired colour at home.[30] However, a year later she announced the end of the mini-fashion and wrote several pieces on how to alter the old dress and create a new fashionable, longer one. She also consoled her readers by advising that last season's clothes were not totally out of fashion yet, so they could still wear them.[31] In this kind of advice, the tension between fashion and common sense is apparent. On the one hand, Hoff was trying hard to convince her readers to wear fashionable clothes, to be as up-to-date as possible; on the other, she was aware of the fact that throwing away clothes that were still in good condition only because fashions had changed sounded absurd in a country that was struggling with continuous shortages of many products. All Hoff could do in that situation was to show 'ideals' of fashion from Paris and London and adapt them to the Polish reality as well as she could (Image 2).

Marian Eile, then editor-in-chief at *Przekrój*, was sometimes called to Warsaw to explain why Mrs Hoff presented 'imperialist' ideas that were against the communist system.[32] He used to explain that the fashion presented in *Przekrój* was indeed awful, but unfortunately there was no money to make anything better.[33]

In 1975, a new initiative appeared in *Przekrój*. Hoff decided to award a 'Golden Hand' for 'outstanding achievements in fashion or costumes in Poland.'[34] The decision shows how confident Hoff felt about her choices, but also the trust she enjoyed with *Przekrój's* editorial board. The award was given for five years only.[35] That Hoff's name was already an established brand that allowed her to judge others' achievements was clearly seen in 1968. In that year she designed the costumes for the film *Przekładaniec* (*Layer-Cake*), directed by Andrzej Wajda and based on Stanisław Lem's novel. All the people engaged in making the film were credited by using their names and surnames; only Hoff was signed as 'Hoff,' as her first name was evidently unnecessary. There was only one Hoff. In addition, her surname was written using her characteristic handwritten signature, familiar from *Przekrój*, while the others' names were given in standardized font.

In the mid-1970s, the circulation of *Przekrój* reached 700,000 copies. A decade earlier, 500,000 copies of *Przekrój* were printed, but this amount was distributed only by subscription, so many Poles simply borrowed the magazine from their family or friends who managed to get a copy of it; in the 1960s, probably one third of Poles were reading *Przekrój*.[36]

Throughout the years Hoff was writing about fashion for *Przekrój*, some topics appeared regularly in her column: ski clothing, beachwear, make-up innovations, hairstyle trends, ball dresses, and haute couture reviews. The reviews from Paris were possible thanks to Halina Kłobukowska, art director at the Moda Polska who visited the shows and reported on them to Hoff. While working for *Przekrój*, Hoff and Janina Ipohorska also wrote a book, *What to Wear?* (*Jak oni mają się ubierać*, 1958) that appeared on a national list of bestselling books.[37]

5. Hoffland

Being a fashion advisor, while important for Hoff did not satisfy her; she not only wanted to present contemporary fashion trends from the West but design them, to influence directly what people were wearing. Not interested in fulfilling individual orders, Hoff wanted to dress all of Poland. As early as 1956, Hoff's first designs appeared in *Przekrój* as '*Przekrój's* own collection.' While signed with Hoff's name, the 1956 designs were ideas only, patterns for Polish women to make at home with their own materials; they were not available for purchase as actual garments. The dresses she designed were made of fustian and cretonne, cheap materials available in the shops at the time.[38] She also designed clothes that were made of material used for making traditional Silesian folk costumes, and bought the red material used for making flags to make the frills for a dress.[39] In her eyes, every kind of textile could be used to create new clothes; it was only a matter of imagination and the conviction that it was possible to follow fashion trends, even if the government perceived it as an activity against the system. When blankets were available, Hoff made coats from them; when the available material was stained, she printed on it. She could always find a solution to help her readers become fashionable. This allowed people to express their individuality, to stand out from the crowd, and to question the aesthetic ideal emerging from the USSR of a working person in a shapeless outfit.

Over the years, Hoff's popularity as a fashion journalist and a fashion designer steadily grew. Her ideas presented in Przekrój were available to a wider public but the clothes she designed could only be bought in Warsaw. In 1967, to allow people from all over Poland to buy clothes designed by Hoff, *Przekrój* published four coupons that enabled ordering Hoff's dress via postal order (Image 3). This was meant to avoid accusations that the clothes were only

available in Warsaw.[40] But the idea behind the coupons was also an effective marketing strategy and created good publicity around this event. When Hoff designed velvet dresses, the organizers prepared 200 of them. But there were around 7,000 query letters from people who wanted to buy the dress, including from abroad and some contained rubles or dollars. Additional dresses were produced right away but there was not enough material to answer all the requests, and not enough paper and string to send the packages. The whole operation turned out to be a failure and, of course Hoff was blamed.[41]

Image 3: Velvet dress, designed by Hoff for *Przekrój,* to be sold via postal order. Photograph by Tadeusz Rolke, published in *Przekrój* in 1967 (no. 1180).

At this point, it is worth recognizing another Barbara, namely Barbara Hulanicki, the creator of the Biba brand, sold in the UK; unlike Hoff, Hulanicki was operating in a capitalist system, which contributed to the success of her Biba line. In May 1964 Barbara Hulanicki designed a pink gingham dress that was presented on a page in the UK *Daily Mirror*. The association with the dress worn by Brigitte Bardot when she wed Jacques Charrier in 1959 was

obvious, and the promise of looking like the famous actress was very tempting for many women. Biba's Postal Boutique was a mail order store and received around 17,000 orders for the Bardot dress, and this enabled Barbara Hulanicki to enter the British fashion design scene and open her first boutique.[42]

Image 4: Barbara Hoff, evening dress, black poplin, 1980, Museum of Textiles in Łódź.
© Image courtesy of The Museum of Textiles in Łódź

A similar initiative pursued by *Przekrój* in 1967 brought no commercial success to Barbara Hoff. Even if the event had been successful in terms of answering all the orders and bringing financial profits to the designer, it would have been impossible for Hoff to open her own private boutique as a result. Not in that period, and not under that regime, where private initiative was perceived as threatening the communist system. In a state ruled by the

Communist Party, the economy was particularly tightly controlled by the government. All companies employing more than a few workers were obliged to follow scenarios issued by a superior, and these established scenarios left no space for developing a large, private enterprise.[43]

When designing her first full collection, Hoff made a proposal to Józef Syroka, director of the clothing company Cora, offering to design a collection that would be sold at the Centrum department store in Warsaw. Her offer was very unusual as at that time Polish unions operated as go-betweens between national clothing companies and national shops, distributing consumer goods between regions, towns, and shops. There was still no place in the Polish system for an individual designer on a larger scale. Hoff discovered how to avoid being involved in the communist regime system of ordering and distributing clothes. A contract was signed between Cora (the producer of Hoff's collection) and the Centrum department store (which was to sell the collection) but Hoff's name was nowhere.[44] Syroka agreed to the offer without even seeing Hoff's drawings. The first collection designed by Hoff amounted to 11,000 items (eleven models, 1,000 pieces each). All the clothes were made of corduroy and in several colours. Photos of the collection appeared in *Przekrój*.[45] On the day when Hoff's clothes were to be sold in the Centrum department store, people stormed the shop, windows were broken, and the clothes were stolen from the mannequins; the *milicja* (the police in the communist regime) were called in to handle the situation. If the whole idea had turned out to be a failure, Hoff risked nothing, because she had no contract and her name was not mentioned in any document. For the manufacturer, the situation was also safe, because producing things that people did not want was not a problem, as long as the amount of goods produced reached the required level.[46]

For Hoff designing the actual clothes was the second step; the first was finding the available (usually undesirable) textiles. In that period there was no possibility for Hoff, as a fashion designer, to decide herself what textiles or prints she wanted to use. She was dependent on choices and decisions made by a person who planned the production of clothing. The challenge was to find a textile suitable for making the clothing, to find a factory that would make the garments in the required time-frame, and to place the collection in the shops before it went out of fashion. During her years of cooperation with different factories all over Poland, Hoff managed to convince some of the producers to create patterns and textiles that were fashionable. She sometimes suggested an idea for a new textile, and since it was produced 'outside the system,' it was not dependent on official orders.[47]

At the beginning of the 1970s the political situation in Poland changed. The government was more tolerant towards the West, Western products, and Western mass culture. It was easier to obtain Western magazines and travel to Western Europe.[48] Nevertheless, promoting the latest trends in fashion was still hindered occasionally, although no longer because of its 'imperialist origins.' For example, in 1972 Hoff promoted maxi dresses but the Communist Party's Central Committee (Komitet Centralny – KC) forbade selling dresses of this length because there were still miniskirts in storehouses that had to be sold first. Luckily for Hoff, the manager at the Centrum department store did not follow the KC's instructions and maxi dresses were sold. Selling the maxi dresses probably would not have been possible without Hoff's cunning idea of writing an article about a collection from Moscow where she presented a patterned maxi dress designed by a fashion designer from the USSR.[49] The maxi dress was accepted.

In April 1975, *Przekrój* celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. For the occasion, Hoff designed a collection that was available not only in Warsaw but in stores in chosen cities all over Poland: in Kraków, Lublin, Gdańsk, Katowice, Wrocław, Opole, Łódź, Poznań, Szczecin, Olsztyn, and Kielce.[50] *Przekrój's* readers finally could buy clothes designed by Hoff in cities other than Warsaw. They were still not available for everyone, but at least it was possible to buy them outside the capital.

In one of her 1976 collections, Hoff designed leather shoes with rounded toes, inspired by the boots worn by Brazilian peasants.[51] This model was created in cooperation with the Polish factory Radoskór from Radom. At first the factory personnel could not believe that shoes could be made of this kind of leather (tanned cowhide). The employees at Radoskór had never seen Italian shoes and most of them had never visited Warsaw or any other big city. To convince them to produce shoes with a material different from what they were used to was a real battle. Hoff also had to explain her idea to government officials because the shoe producers were sceptical about manufacturing such 'strange' shoes. Again, she got her way and the shoes appeared in the shops. It was a success, because in the People's Republic of Poland there were always problems with buying well-designed, good-quality shoes, and tanned cowhide leather was available in large amounts because nobody had thought it was suitable for shoe production.[52] Nevertheless, it was a Pyrrhic victory, Radoskór produced only 1,000 pairs of the boots, and Hoff knew this was not enough for the demand for the shoes.

Image 5: Barbara Hoff, quilted woman's jacket (*kufajka*), blue cotton with pink lining, 1980, Museum of Textiles in Łódź. © Image courtesy of Museum of Textiles in Łódź

From November 1976 until May 1977, Hoff reported to her readers on the problems connected with the 'shoe battle.' Finally, another shoe producing company (Spółdzielnia Pracy 'Narew' from Pułtusk) decided to manufacture shoes designed by Hoff, but there was a difference in quality. The shoes made by Radoskór were more durable because they were stitched, not glued, so their quality was much better. Hoff defended Radoskór and wrote in

Przekrój's February 1977 issue that 'Radoskór does not want to (cannot) give us more.'[53] This one sentence might have been a small hint regarding the political-economic situation in Poland in these months. In June 1976 the government introduced price increases that resulted in strikes in many factories, mostly in the city of Radom. According to official data, 634 people were arrested in Radom and sentenced to ten years in prison. Thanks to the civil protests against such severe punishment, most of the arrested were released by March 1977, and this might explain why Radoskór 'could not' produce more shoes designed by Hoff; the workers might have been arrested.

Image 6: Barbara Hoff, red flannel dress with Hoffland-logo, 1985/1986, Museum of Textiles in Łódź. © Image courtesy of The Museum of Textiles in Łódź

At first the collections designed by Hoff were simply called '*Przekrój's* Own Collection' or 'Hoff's Collection.' The name Hoffland appeared first in the 1970s as a result of a contest held in 1977. Students from the Warsaw Academy of Arts were supposed to design a booth for Hoff, and the winning project was to be financed by the department store Centrum. Three

students – Barbara Danicka, Barbara Kontkiewicz, and Ewa Siwek – won the contest and invented the name Hoffland, and so the brand name appeared.[54]

In the first half of 1980 the press started signalling that there were more and more serious problems with supplies. Hoff did not engage in political discussions in her column, but in the period of economizing with materials she alluded to the fact that the comeback of miniskirts 'is easy to accept for well-known reasons.'[55] Two years later she openly wrote an article 'Do You Have to be Fat?,' in which she mentioned that writing about obese people had been a very sensitive topic because of food shortages and economic crisis. 'I could not write: let's not eat that much, because the word *food* was forbidden.'[56] On the one hand she warmly recommended staying fit and taking care of one's weight, while on the other she encouraged plump ladies to be fashionable and supported them with a list of advice telling them how to look good. The article ended with a strong statement: 'Big is beautiful.'[57] (For clothes designed in the 1980s by Hoff, see Images, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 from the collection of the Museum of Textiles in Łódź.)[58]

In each collection Hoff tried to design something avant-garde, because, as she once claimed, 'ordinary clothing is boring for me.'[59] In the 1980s she created a shirt for women based on a man's tailcoat.[60] Sometimes the shirts were buttoned on the back with one button only, and sometimes a part of her shirt could be rolled up. But the avant-garde designs were a small part of a collection because it was – in her words – 'amateurish.' Asymmetrical clothes also did not sell very well.[61]

Image 7: Barbara Hoff, pink cotton women's overalls, 1980, Museum of Textiles in Łódź. © Image courtesy The Museum of Textiles in Łódź

From the initial 11,000 items in her collection in 1969, the production reached its peak in 1981 with 200,000 items, the best ever year for Hoffland. [62] The clothes designed by Hoff were so in demand that counterfeit Hoffland products appeared on the black market. Hoff was furious and wrote in one of her fashion columns how to distinguish the originals from the fakes; in the case of one jumper, Hoff noted that the original Hoffland jumpers were in black, white and cyclamen and added that 'original Hoffland products are more fashionable and cheaper.' [63]

Images 8 and 9: Barbara Hoff, sapphire-blue women's jumper and skirt, flannel, 1985/1986, Museum of Textiles in Łódź. © Image courtesy of The Museum of Textiles

Hoff did not earn much money from her writing and designing. During the first years of her fashion career, she designed clothes for free; as mentioned above, for some years her name was not included in any contract. She worked with dozens of factories by driving to them in her own car and working out the details. The fact is Hoff could not be paid as a designer because she was not a member of the artists-designers union. Only people who had studied at an arts university could be members of this union, whereas Hoff had studied art history at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. With such a diploma she could not be accepted as a member. Moreover, *Przekrój* paid her poorly because the editorial board thought she earned a great deal of money for designing the collections for Hoffland. The situation began to change in the 1970s when artists successfully fought the government for higher wages. As Poland's most prolific designer, Hoff could now design for a fee, as an artist-designer. Because of the artists' intervention, Hoff's business enterprises became regulated; not only was she now a member of the union for artist-designers, she was even given a position on the union's board. She also received a part-time job as a designer for Centrum. [64]

6. Conclusions

Barbara Hoff created the first 'fast' fashion brand in Poland, Hoffland. The clothes she created were intended for mass consumption and they were not intended to survive for years. [65] 'It is not worth getting out of bed to make ten items,' she used to say. [66] Hoff was aware of the

fact that her dream of dressing the whole of Poland had its limitations, but nonetheless she declared, 'Maybe we are unable to create clothes for all, but at least we try.'[67] Despite the economic and political limitations placed on her efforts, Hoff never gave up. Her idea was always to design fashionable and affordable clothing, and followed the rule: 'use the cheapest fabrics but the most up-to-date cut and style.' This was the source of her success.[68]

Research into Hoff's fashion-oriented activities is essential, not only to document her achievements but also to discover other fashion designers, clothing companies and manufacturers who were involved in dressing Poland in the period 1944-1989. There can be no doubt that during the People's Republic of Poland, Hoff's column in *Przekrój* was an absolute oracle in terms of fashion.'[69] The symbolic date of the end of communism in Poland is 4 June 1989. After 1989, Barbara Hoff thought about retiring. The regime had collapsed, there was no enemy to fight, and the colonization of minds carried out by the USSR had come to an end. However, she quickly discovered that together with democracy came a wave of bad taste, so she decided to continue her work. She wrote about fashion in *Przekrój* until 2002 and designed clothes for Hoffland until 2007.[70] A collection of clothes created since 1979 by Barbara Hoff for Hoffland has been archived in a department of Poland's National Museum in the Design Centre in Otwock.[71] In April 2013 in an interview with Monika Zieleniewska for the fashion website www.fashionweare.com, Hoff said that she was against any proposal to organize a retrospective exhibition of her work as long as she is alive.[72]

If Barbara Hoff had been given a chance to create clothing in a capitalist country instead of in a communist one, she would probably be a rich woman today. Certainly she had entrepreneurial talent. After 1989, she received an offer to sell Hoffland, but she declined that offer and still owns the copyrights to the brand name today. While it is difficult to assess how far Hoff changed the style of Polish women and men through the decades, how reading her column regularly influenced the choices of her readers, or how ordinary Polish citizens used her DIY advice in creating their own wardrobes, Hoff certainly influenced fashion in Poland. Her belief that what she was doing was right, her dedication and persistence, and her presence in the memory of many people put her in forty-fourth place on the list of the fifty most influential women in Polish history. Would she be there if she had not seduced them with her ideas about fashion?

Notes

[1] Maciej Chłopek, *Bikiniarze. Pierwsza polska subkultura* [*Bikini-Men: The First Polish Subculture* – all translations of Polish titles by: Dominika Łukoszek] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie 'Żak,' 2005). A zoot suit was a piece of clothing derived from the African and Latino minority in the US that was adopted by American teenagers as a symbol of youth counterculture, hedonism and the revolt against existing values. The zoot suit looked as if it was too big for its wearer and was based on traditional suits from the 30s. According to Chłopek, the first zoot suits appeared in the 30s and the style evolved in the 40s and 50s in the US and Europe. Among the countries in Europe that first adopted the zoot suit was France. This happened due to the huge popularity of jazz in the 40s that came to Europe from the US. In Paris people who were jazz lovers, who dressed in a distinctive way, and represented an eccentric life-style were called 'zazous.' Their style was characterized by loose jackets, colourful ties, and tight, half-calf length trousers. The zazous' nonconformist attitude towards life and anglophile approach challenged the German propaganda in the period of the occupation of France. The Polish *bikiniarz* (bikini-man) referred to the style and values represented by zoot suiters.

[2] Djurdja Bartlett, *FashionEast: The Spectre that Haunted Socialism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 255.
[3] Pelka, Anna, 'Snapshot: Polish Youth under Socialism,' in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, vol. 9 of *East Europe, Russia and the Caucasus*, ed. Djurdja Bartlett (Oxford: Berg, 2011), 236.
[4] In June 1940, the British government invited the Polish president and Polish government to England. When World War II broke out in Sept 1939 the Polish government first evacuated to Romania and later to Paris and Angers in France. From June 1940 the representatives were in London. For additional information about the history of Poland and its relations with Russia and the former Soviet Union, see the following: Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, vol. 2, revised 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Between Nazis and Soviets: Occupation Politics in* Poland*, 1939-1947* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004); Krystyna Kersten, *The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland, 1943-1948*, trans. John Micgiel and Michael H. Bernhard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
[5] In the 1960s, the ruling party started intimidating independent lawyers, particularly those who were active before World War II. Mr Hoff specialised in civil law but several times he also defended his clients in criminal lawsuits. Hoff remembers that one of his clients was a manager in a mine where a gas explosion took place. As a person responsible for the safety in the mine, the manager was to be sentenced to death but Mr Hoff defended him and he was not convicted. The gas explosion was not the manager's fault but it was a result of unrealistic goals of how much coal should be mined. The norms for the coal mining were imposed by the government, and it was not possible for the manager to question their decisions; the norms had to be reached, no matter if they were realistic or not.
[6] Marcin Kołodziejczyk, 'Hoff misja'['Hoff: a mission'], *Polityka. Sztuka życia*, 20 April 2011, 34-39.
[7] Aneta Borowiec, ed., *Kobiety, które igrały z PRLem* [*Women Who Court People's Republic of Poland*], (Warszawa: Agora SA, 2012), 39-54.
[8] Ibid., 46.
[9] Joanna Podgórska, 'Po niej już nigdy nie było tak samo' ['It Was Never the Same after Her'], Polityka, 6 June 2004, 80-82.
[10] Agnieszka Osiecka, *Szpetni czterdziestoletni* [*Ugly in their Forties*], (Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka SA, 2008), 54.
[11] Justyna Jaworska, *Cywilizacja Przekroju: Misja obyczajowa w magazynie ilustrowanym* [*Przekrój's Civilisation: Moral Mission in an Illustrated Magazine*], (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2008), 72.
[12] An example of such action was the arresting 183 employees of Jagiellonian University in and Kraków taking them to concentration camps in November 1939. A second wave of terror took place a year later, in November 1940, when during 'AB Action' (Akcja AB) many outstanding representatives of Polish society were executed by a firing squad in the Kampinos Forests (Puszcza Kampinoska)Wojciech Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2005* [*History of Poland 1914-2005*], (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2006), 95.
[13] Wiesław Kot, *PRL: Jak cudnie się żyło!* [*People's Republic of Poland: How Wonderful Life Was!*], (Poznań: Publicat, 2008), 115.
[14] Joanna Sabak, 'PRL ubierał się u Hoff' ['People's Republic of Poland was Dressed by Hoff'], *Gazeta Praca* – online version, 13 September 2010, accessed 3 June 2013, http://gazetapraca.pl/gazetapraca/1,90443,8370544,PRL_ubieral_sie_u_Hoff.html/.

[15] Natalia Wrzesień, 'Barbara Hoff. Rozmowa z Barbarą Hoff i Robertem Kuleszą' ['Barbara Hoff. Interview with Barbara Hoff and Robert Kulesza'], *Moda* – webpage about fashion business, January 26, 2010, accessed 3 June 2013, http://www.moda.com.pl/moda/projektanci/17011/Barbara_Hoff/.
[16] Anna Pelka, *Teksas-land: Moda młodzieżowa w PRL* [*Teksas-Land: Youth Fashion in the People's Republic of Poland*] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Trio, 2007), 41-42.
[17] Borowiec, *Kobiety, które*, 44.
[18] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 41.
[19] Borowiec, *Kobiety, które*, 39-40.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Piotr Rypson, 'Dziwny igłowstręt: Rozmowa z Barbarą Hoff' ['A Weird Needle Phobia: A Conversation with Barbara Hoff'], *Piktogram* no. 16, 2011/2012, 52. A photograph of Brigitte Bardot and an illustration of headscarves appeared in Hoff's article in *Przekrój* in 1959 (*Przekrój* no. 749, 16 August 1959, 16-17). But the white Bardot-style headscarf was also mentioned a few months later in 1960 in a dialogue between Lucynka and Paulinka (*Przekrój* no. 779, 13 March 1960, 20). It is difficult to state which situation Hoff is recalling in the quoted interview.
[22] Barbara Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 700, 7 September 1958, 17.
[23] The history of jeans as workers' clothing was simply unknown to Polish politicians at that time, and when jeans appeared in the 1950s they were already a fashion statement, a symbol of youth rebellion and nobody thought about their origin.
[24] Marek Hendrykowski, *Film i moda* [*Film and Fashion*], (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2011), 145, 152.
[25] Hoff, *Przekrój*, no. 893, 20 May 1962, 16.
[26] Ibid., no. 897, 17 June 1962, 16.
[27] Ibid., no. 857, 10 September 1961, 16-17.
[28] Ibid., no.1090, 27 February 1966, 12.
[29] Ibid., no.1094, 27 March 1966, 12.
[30] Ibid., no.1259, 25 May 1969, 12.
[31] Ibid., no. 1324, 23 August 1970, 12; no. 1330, 4 October 1970, 12.
[32] Kołodziejczak, 'Hoff misja.'
[33] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 45.
[34] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 1552, 5 January 1975, 21.
[35] The recipients of a 'Golden Hand' were Magdalena Telesławska (in 1975), Ewa Starowieyska (in 1976), Spółdzielnia Cepelii 'Nowa Praca Niewidomych' (in 1977), Maryla Rodowicz (in 1978), Jadwiga Grabowska (in 1979), and Artur Turalski (in 1980).
[36] Krystyna Kiszelewska, ed., *Czasopisma społeczno-kulturalne w okresie PRL* [*Social-Cultural Periodicals in the Period of People's Republic of Poland*] (Liszki: Platan, 2011), 202.
[37] Rypson, 'Dziwny igłowstręt,' 52.
[38] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 580, 20 May 1956, 12.
[39] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 41.
[40] The coupons were published in the following issues of *Przekrój*: no. 1179, 12 November 1967, 12; no. 1180, 19 November 1967, 12; no. 1181, 26 November 1967, 12; no. 1183, 10 Dec 1967, 12.
[41] Joanna Solska, 'Hoff bez landu' ['Hoff without Land'], *Polityka*, 30 June 2007, 42-44; Sabak, 'PRL ubierał się u Hoff.'
[42] Alwyn W. Turner, *Biba: The Biba Experience* (Suffolk: Antique Collectors Club, 2007), 12.

[43] Hanna Świda-Ziemba, *Młodzież PRL: Portrety pokoleń w kontekście historii* [*Youth in the People's Republic of Poland: The Portrait of Generations in Historical Context*] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2010), 54.
[44] Rypson, 'Dziwny igłowstręt,'55.
[45] Hoff, *Przekrój* no.1268, 27 July 1969, 12.
[46] Borowiec, *Kobiety, które,* 50.
[47] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 43-44.
[48] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 45-46.
[49] Sabak, 'PRL ubierał się u Hoff.' This information might refer to an article Barbara Hoff wrote in 1972. Polish Fashion Group had a delegation from Russia as guests. Russian designs were part of a collection prepared for GUM – a famous department store in Moscow. One of the models was wearing a flower-patterned maxi dress (*Przekrój* no.1430, 3 September 1972, 21).
[50] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 1566, 13 April 1975, 21.
[51] Ibid., *Przekrój* no. 1651, 28 November 1976, 21.
[52] Wrzesień, 'Barbara Hoff.'
[53] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 1663, 20 February 1977, 21.
[54] Rypson, 'Dziwny igłowstręt,' 54; Barbara Hoff, *Przekrój* no.1682, 3 July 1977, 21.
[55] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 1818, 10 February 1980, 21.
[56] Ibid., *Przekrój* no. 1940, 18 August 1982, 21.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Muzeum Włókiennictwa w Łodzi.
[59] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 48.
[60] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 2143, 6 July 1986, 21.
[61] Pelka, *Teksas-land*, 48; asymmetrical blouses were presented in Hoff's collection in 1986 (*Przekrój* no. 2142, 29 June 1986, 21).
[62] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 1843, 3 August 1981, 21.
[63] Ibid., *Przekrój* no.2144, 13 July 1986, 21.
[64] Kołodziejczak, 'Hoff misja,' Solska, 'Hoff bez landu.'
[65] From what I saw in the Museum of Textile in Łódź, some clothes were more durable than others.
[66] Rypson, 'Dziwny igłowstręt,' 57.
[67] Hoff, *Przekrój* no. 1838, 29 June 1980, 21.
[68] Pelka, 'Snapshot: Polish Youth under Socialism,' 236.
[69] Hendrykowski, *Moda i film*, 115.
[70] Sabak, 'PRL ubierał się u Hoff.'
[71] Piotr Sarzyński, 'Niepospolite rzeczy pospolite' ['Uncommon Common Objects'], *Polityka*, 31 January 2009, 56-58.
[72] Monika Zieleniewska, 'Moda kapeluszników: Barbara Hoff o związkach mody ze sztuką,' ['Hatmakers' Fashion: Barbara Hoff on Relationships between Fashion and Art'], *Fashionweare*, last modified 29 April 2013, http://fashionweare.com/loza_mistrzow/moda-kapelusznik%C3%B3w-barbara-hoff-o-zwi%C4%85zkach-mody-ze-sztuk%C4%85-370.

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Made in Yorkshire: Harnessing the Zeitgeist

Kevin Almond

Abstract

A meeting at The Textile Centre of Excellence in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, UK in March 2012, inspired this research. It was initiated by Rita Britton, the outspoken owner of the independent fashion boutique Pollyanna, based in Barnsley, South Yorkshire. During conversations with the fashion journalist Colin McDowell and with Bill Skidmore, the president of the Huddersfield Textile Society, Britton spoke of her vision of creating a fashion label that combined the use of Yorkshire heritage fabrics with cutting-edge, contemporary design. The range would be designed, produced and marketed in the Yorkshire region, capitalising on the manufacturing and design skills within the county. The intention of the endeavour is to put the concept of a Made in Yorkshire brand on the global fashion map. According to Veronica Manlow, an expert of fashion branding, 'Cultural branding is seen as the most effective means by which brands can be infused with enduring meanings that enable them to become icons.'[1] This article explores this idea by assessing the viability for creating a fashion brand beyond the confines of a major fashion city that can be both meaningful and economically feasible. As fashion has become a globalised industry the established fashion powers of New York, London, Milan, and Paris have been joined by cities such as Shanghai, Los Angeles, Copenhagen, and Melbourne. However, there has been little expansion of fashion hubs beyond the nucleus of major cities. Although many designers and consumers of fashion products exist in smaller provincial areas, urban giants overshadow them. Regional centres often lack the sophistication and financial incentives of cosmopolitan municipals, and fashion designers located in them have to tap into different cultures and traditions in order to be inspired. Fashion perpetually attempts to harness the zeitgeist or the 'spirit of the times,' which is centred in a general cultural, intellectual, ethical, spiritual, or political climate. In-depth qualitative investigations through questionnaires and interviews unearthed much of the history and culture of fashion in Yorkshire and reveals how the county responds to and creates its own 'spirit of the times.'

Key Words

Yorkshire, fashion, fashion city, fashion hub, textiles, design, production, brand, fashion label, region, heritage, style, zeitgeist, Harris Tweed.

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1. Introduction

The article investigates both historical and contemporary fashion activity within the Yorkshire region in the UK. The objective is to identify whether Yorkshire is a viable centre for the design and production of fashionable clothing. My research revealed a relative lack of enquiry addressing the growth of fashion products within global provinces. It seeks to redress this absence by focusing upon the Yorkshire region as a case study. The investigation aims to encourage a greater appreciation for the branding and marketing of regions as sustainable fashion entities on the worldwide stage.

Yorkshire is the largest county in England, situated in the north. Because of its size, it is

subdivided into four sections known as the East, West, North, and South Riding of Yorkshire. The county combines substantial acres of unspoiled countryside, from the acknowledged beauty of the famed Yorkshire Dales (Image 1) to the bleaker aspects of the Pennines hill range and the Yorkshire coast. There are combinations of industrial and market towns and five cities in total: Hull, York, Leeds, Bradford, and Sheffield, which vary in size. Leeds is the largest city and is the main regional shopping centre for Yorkshire and the approximately 3.2 million people who live there. There are roughly 1,000 retail outlets in Leeds with the most upmarket shopping area being the Victoria Quarter, which houses many designer stores.[2] The Victoria Quarter is also a stylish venue for fashion-oriented exhibitions such as the annual *British Wool Week*, an exhibition organized by the *Campaign for Wool*.[3] The cities of Bradford and Sheffield have an industrial heritage for textiles and steel, respectively. Hull is predominantly a fishing port and York, originally founded by the Romans, offers a multitude of historic attractions. York Minster, the most famous, is the largest gothic cathedral in Northern Europe.

Image 1: Yorkshire Dales, June 2013. © Photo courtesy of Kevin Almond

Yorkshire is in the fortunate position of having a variety of natural resources, including soft quality water that helps to clean raw wool. These resources were a huge asset with the rapid growth of the textile industry during the Industrial Revolution as wool was imported in vast quantities for the manufacture of worsted cloth in Leeds, Bradford, and Huddersfield. Locally mined coal provided the power the industry needed, and the cool, humid climate was ideal for textile manufacturing. In 1711, Leeds opened the 'First White Cloth Hall,' which became an exchange hub for the trade of un-dyed cloth, contributing to Leeds becoming an established centre of the British woollen industry.[4] By the late eighteenth century, merchants in Leeds were responsible for 30 per cent of the UK's woollen exports, leading to the expansion of the city's textile manufacturing industry during the nineteenth century and eventually to Leeds becoming a nucleus for clothing manufacture.

Yorkshire today is a thriving region that seeks to capitalize on its rich heritage. Its reputation derives from the culture of its people, a collective product of a number of historical values and beliefs about life in the region, illustrating the type of people who live there. Yorkshire's literature, art, culture, and landscape combine to establish its reputation. For instance, the literary work of the Bronte sisters,[5] who lived in a remote Yorkshire village in the early part of the nineteenth century, often employed the stormy Yorkshire moors as a background to their famous novels. It could be argued that Emily Bronte's 1847 novel *Wuthering Heights* [6] should be considered a foundation to depict life in Yorkshire, illustrating through its characters the type of people who have resided there. Interestingly, the unworldly and archaic 'Eee bah gum'[7] dialect of an archetypal Yorkshire person contradicts wildly with the more sophisticated language used in cosmopolitan fashion circles. This makes the argument for Yorkshire being taken seriously as an urbane fashion entity challenging. The region today has a mixed economy that combines traditional industries from the service-based to textile manufacturing and coal mining, as well as the tourist industries that exploit the urban and rural mix. The challenge in packaging the region as a viable fashion entity arguably lies in the careful distillation of its heritage, combining the traditional with the new. This research seeks to further investigate these possibilities.

Image 2: Rita Britton in her store Pollyanna, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, 2012. © Photo courtesy of Kevin Almond

2. Methodology and Literature Review

Through conducting this enquiry I learnt a great deal about fashion in the Yorkshire region. I was also able to draw on my own experience as a fashion designer and lecturer. I focused on historical research and on qualitative investigations. Object-based research developed my knowledge of the intellectual and social value of fashionable clothes through an increased awareness of how the clothes were designed, produced and worn within the region and in what circumstances. This included examination of garments in retail outlets, museum collections, archives, and photography. I also distributed questionnaires and conducted semi-structured interviews with fashion students, academics, costume curators, designers, and followers of fashion. My rationale for this open approach was to allow those I interviewed to bring up new thoughts and ideas. Interviewees included Rita Britton, an independent Yorkshire retailer (Image 2); Colin McDowell, the fashion journalist and commentator; Natalie Raw, a costume curator at Leeds Museums and Galleries; Lee Hicken, a creative consultant of Hebe Media; Bernadette Gledhill, who owns a Yorkshire based model agency; and Lee Mason, a Yorkshire based entrepreneur, fashion designer, and manufacturer. During the interviews, there was generally a framework of themes to be explored, structured around the interviewees' thoughts and opinions related to historical and contemporary fashion within Yorkshire.

Following theory about the creative economy and the aesthetic marketplace, I explored how regional economic development depends on the creative activity of the area and 'a region's ability to foster three main ingredients: tolerance, talent and technology.'[8] The urban studies theorist, Richard Florida argues that tolerance attracts a diversity of talented people with ideas and skills and this incubates creative thinking.[9] It creates a dynamic reputation in which creative businesses flourish and from which economic growth and job creation grows. The UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) describes the creative industries as 'Those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.'[10] In the context of fashion businesses, the aesthetic qualities of a region's commodities are concentrated in order to influence how designs are selected, promoted, distributed, and sold. The sociologist Joanne Entwistle describes how below.

> Aesthetic commodities are more nebulous than other sorts of products, such as vegetables, since they are concerned with properties of "beauty," "style" or "design," which are effervescent categories that change over time and across different social spaces.[11]

I explore how the district of Yorkshire could exploit its heritage of skill and craft inherent in the region's 'tolerance, talent and technology,'[12] in order to generate credible fashion products that are economically viable while incorporating 'effervescent' factors of 'beauty,' 'style,' and 'design.' In *The Warhol Economy*, the cultural economist Elizabeth Currid argues that the creative industries in New York, such as fashion, art, and music drive the economy forward. Currid describes how an urban economy is developed through the vibrant creative practices of artistic communities within the city.[13] I transpose her theory about an urban, social, cultural, and economic mix to the urban and rural regional mix within Yorkshire and explore how creative potential can be manipulated through packaging a region's traditional heritage and culture as a fashion concern. The regional mix demonstrates how creative industries could potentially be a major component in a new knowledge economy,[14] capable of delivering regional fashion regeneration through initiatives linked to exploitation of creative and cultural heritage.

I also examined literature that focused upon fashion marketing, promotion, and branding, discussing both the theory and practice of marketing in the fashion industry. I wanted to develop my understanding of brands and how they are communicated, launched, and evaluated. This approach helped me compare ideas discussed with interviewees about the marketing of Yorkshire fashion as a branded label and the process of communicating the value of the product to a potential customer base. Linking these to theories about the creative economy and the aesthetic marketplace helped to contextualize ways in which Yorkshire fashion could be identified as a source of economic revitalization, exploited on a more global basis. These ideas have been particularly explored by Florida, who emphasises how investment in culture and technology are key ingredients to attracting and maintaining a local creative class which links directly to the economy. As Florida has observed, the creative industries have become increasingly important to economic well-being, which suggests that 'Human creativity is the ultimate economic resource.'[15]

Image 3: Burton staff day out to Morecambe, Lancashire, 1960s.
© Photo courtesy of Leeds Museums and Galleries

In order to contextualise Yorkshire within an aesthetic marketplace, my research also investigated the historical, social, business, and visual growth of fashion design and production in the Yorkshire region. Established during the Industrial Revolution, Yorkshire's weaving industry has long set the benchmark for high quality Made in England cloth. The region's mills continue to produce the majority of England's worsted and woollen fabric and are used by many of the world's great fashion brands, including Burberry, Prada, Gucci and the tailors on London's Savile Row. Yorkshire cloth was recently showcased in a collaboration between ten of Yorkshire's leading textile mills and a sophisticated in-store display presented under the collective brand 'Yorkshire Textiles,' launched at the prestigious Harvey Nichols store in Leeds in 2010. The literature review identified the history of textiles within Yorkshire. There proved

to be little documentation through books or journal articles about the subject, and much information was discovered through Internet sites. From these sites I gathered data about exhibitions, fashion, and textile shows and events and was able to follow up the information gathered by visiting exhibitions or arranging to speak with individuals associated with them. I then formulated a specific questionnaire exploring ways in which fashion products have been designed, marketed, and consumed within Yorkshire. I sent the questionnaire to over two hundred fashion students and academics in a large West Yorkshire fashion and costume department at University of Huddersfield as well as to members of the Northern Society of Costume and Textiles (I presented this at their bi-annual meeting 24 April 2012). I ultimately received seventy-four responses from students and academics and twenty-six responses from costume society members. Their responses provided me with many valuable voices and oral histories related to fashion (and textiles) produced within Yorkshire. The respondents were asked to jot down any thoughts, however long or short. The questions included:

- What does the phrase 'Made in Yorkshire' mean to you in relation to fashion?
- Do you have any significant thoughts or memories about 'Fashion in Yorkshire,' i.e., any significant retailers or shops?
- Where did you/do you go to 'dress up,' (i.e., social events or shopping occasions when you dressed up)?
- How do you think a fashion brand such as 'Made in Yorkshire' could compete at the top end of the global fashion market?

Image 4: Burton shop, Leeds, West Yorkshire, 1960s.

I wanted to discover perceptions of Yorkshire as a fashion centre and whether the interviewees thought that fashion ideas and products can be successfully established beyond cosmopolitan and municipal centres. I also asked my respondents for their memories of fashion in Yorkshire, i.e., significant retailers, designers and dressmakers. During my interview with the costume curator Natalie Raw I was allowed access to archival material about the department stores Marshall and Snelgrove (in Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Harrogate, and York), Marks & Spencer, Burton, Hainsworth, and the Leeds Tailoring archive (Images 3 & 4). My aim was to develop an understanding of both the historical and contemporary context of fashion and the aesthetic marketplace within Yorkshire. The main objectives were to:

- Identify the significance of the heritage of fashion within the Yorkshire region.
- Identify contemporary initiatives that promote the design, production, and consumption of fashion within Yorkshire.
- Identify the feasibility for establishing a 'Made in Yorkshire' fashion brand.
- Develop further ideas for fashion research related to the development of fashion within provinces around the world and how this impacts upon design, production, and consumption.

3. Yorkshire's Fashion Heritage

When asked whether Yorkshire was perceived to be a fashion centre, Rita Britton answered 'No, but it is our job to turn it into one.'[16] She felt it is more important as a textile centre than a fashion centre. Britton noted that if Yorkshire considered its exquisite textiles and developed more exciting things this could be used to support the establishment of a Made in Yorkshire brand. The basis of the initiative could be likened to sliding back a glass door to reveal the quality and craft from which Yorkshire fashion could trade. Britton discussed fashion brands and labels that have been established beyond international locales such as Carpe Diem, from the Perugia region of central Italy, whose designer Maurizio Altieri focuses on the artisanship and craftsmanship of the garment.[17] A questionnaire response from a member of the Northern Society of Costume and Textiles emphasised how 'Fashion and quality may in some sense seem opposites in a Yorkshire context. Fashion equates to transience and disposability – quality endures.'[18] The response seems to encapsulate the spirit of Britton's ideas, as well as Florida's concepts about the creative economy, and highlights her belief that quality fashion products can be established by capitalising on the heritage and cultural aesthetics within a region and the economic potential of human creativity in order to develop new and exciting ideas merging tradition with innovation.

In the initial meeting at The Textile Centre of Excellence in Huddersfield the assembled party discussed ideas about the development of a Made in Yorkshire brand. The initiative could potentially establish a uniquely supportive environment where new designers benefit from a wide range of services to support the creation of top quality products in the Yorkshire region. Support could be provided by key partners and include the sourcing of Yorkshire-produced fabrics from the top manufacturers, the provision of Yorkshire-based manufacturing/CMT capacity, commercial testing and distribution through top retail outlets, and potentially business start-up grants. Establishing such a brand could potentially create an increased number of new business starts and jobs, with higher than average chances of success through ongoing support from an expert network. The development of increased quality manufacturing capacity could also serve to re-establish a proportion of prestige manufacturing back to the UK and the region from overseas. Resourcing would help to repatriate the fashion and textile industries and its

wealth of skills, which Maurice Bennett CBE, Joint Chairman of Long Tall Sally and Kookai, described as a 'Lost heritage we have allowed to slip away.'[19]

My research revealed other similar initiatives within Yorkshire. I attended a meeting of the Leeds Fashion Design and Manufacturing Hub (LFDMH) at the Melbourne Street Studios in Leeds in September 2012.[20] In an email sent to me on 29 August 2012, members at the Hub revealed that the initiative had worked with the Business Support Team of Leeds City Council to deliver a vision for a centre of fashion design and manufacture. It was supported by an 'Active promotional programme and a wider network of facilities, including prime retail locations and high profile gallery and event space.'[21] To make this vision a reality the initiative had decided to look for designers, manufacturers, and machinists to participate in the development of the Leeds Fashion Design and Manufacturing Hub to be based at Melbourne Street Studios. The initial discussion focused upon a Made in Leeds concept. In the talks, however, I was able to emphasize the wider initiatives in Yorkshire that are developing an inclusive Yorkshire fashion brand. I observed that focusing solely on Leeds was perhaps too narrow a vision and excluded the fashion design and manufacturing potential of the region as a whole.

Image 5: Marshall and Snelgrove garment label, circa 1930s.
© Photo courtesy of Leeds Museums and Galleries

To contextualise the development of a Made in Yorkshire brand, my research identified the historical growth of Yorkshire's fashion and textile heritage and its legacy of skills and technologies through both oral and written histories. I also considered its economic impact locally, nationally, and globally. I discovered two short films that discussed the industrial clothing and textile heritage of two Yorkshire centres during the post-World War II years, Huddersfield and Leeds. It is interesting to compare the footage of the films as both provide historical narratives about the production of clothing and textiles within the region. The

Huddersfield film *Looking at Britain: Industrial Town*, filmed in 1962 for the British Film Institute, provided a survey of the industrial and social life of Huddersfield.[22] The second film, *From the Same Cloth: A Family History of Clothing Manufacture in Leeds*, profiles the Zimmerman family who ran a series of clothing factories in Leeds throughout the mid to late twentieth century.[23] Both films provide a resume of thriving industries steeped in the heritage of mass clothing manufacture. Huddersfield is described as an internationally renowned centre of excellence due to the quality of light engineering and textiles produced within the town, whilst Leeds from the 1950s to the 1980s is depicted as 'totally dependent on the clothing industry; it was just a boom time; it was easy to get the fabrics, get the labour and easy to produce.'[24] Each film emphasises how thousands of men and women were involved in the clothing (not necessarily fashion orientated) and related textile industries in small, medium, and large companies. David Zimmerman, who established the Leeds clothing factories, discussed how Leeds was a powerhouse for clothing with many bespoke tailors working for individual companies. I interviewed the clothing manufacturer and entrepreneur Lee Mason, who revealed how some of Yorkshire's manufacturers swung between the pendulums of both fashion related and more ordinary clothing related production.[25] For several years Mason was managing director of Heaton's Factory in Leeds, a business that produced ranges of leather, sheepskin, and corporate uniforms. He also established the fashion label 'Lee Mason,' which sold to several department stores in Europe including Dickins & Jones in London. Heaton's Factory had a contract with the Parisian fabric merchants Dormeuil, which promoted and sold ranges of fashionable cloth globally. Lee Mason's career mirrors those of other Yorkshire entrepreneurs who balanced fashion businesses during the boom time from the 1950s to the 1980s. These industries also supported thousands of small businesses connected to it. Sadly by the late 1990s, because of globalisation and the search for lower cost manufacturing overseas, the clothing business in Leeds and the Yorkshire region was in terminal decline becoming what the banks termed a 'Sunset industry.'[26]

I sent the same questionnaire as that sent to fashion students and academics to members of the Northern Society of Costume and Textiles, and asked them to jot down any significant recollections about Yorkshire based designers and retailers. Many from the Society remembered Marshall and Snelgrove, a department store originally opened by a Yorkshire man James Marshall in Oxford Street, London in 1837 (Images 5 & 6). The store had branches in Leeds, York, Harrogate, Sheffield, and Bradford and was in business until the 1970s. A book published in 1950 by the fashion journalist Alison Settle, described the impact of this luxury store beyond London, as it expanded by opening stores in fashionable areas of regional cities.

> Today shopping out of London is as keen a business, as smart and competitive as it is in Oxford Street or might be in Regent Street or Bond Street. Life is swifter and more mingled; women no longer come up to London "for the season" if rich or "for a stay" if moderately well off.[27]

Settle analysed the needs of customers regionally, emphasising that taste away from London was in danger of being regulated by London. Marshall and Snelgrove stores were designed to be individual and were promoted as understanding the sartorial needs of their regional customers, for example, 'Why women want certain types of specialised goods for life that is lived in that district, with its special functions, its differences of climate.'[28] The store claimed to understand the nuances of changing fashions, yet had a policy for keeping costs low whilst offering fantastic quality.

Image 6: Marshall and Snelgrove, Leeds, West Yorkshire, circa 1930s.

Reflections from members of the Costume and Textile Society gave a picture of retailers and dressmakers, social events and shopping occasions both attended and 'dressed up' for in Yorkshire. They also captured how fashion was appropriated, understood, and promulgated within the region. Since the average age of the Society members was over sixty years of age, it was possible to gather data recording family memories stretching back throughout the twentieth century. One respondent reminisced about shopping in Leeds.

> Department stores such as Schofields and Marshall and Snelgrove held frequent fashion shows, which showed current "high" fashions and examples of designer items. For those of us who may not have been able to aspire to the original, it was possible to make our own versions, sometimes aided by the quickly available *Vogue* patterns, thereby sporting high fashion at affordable costs.[29]

For followers of fashion, the above reminiscence demonstrates how fashionable looks could be achieved through affordable home-dressmaking techniques that made fashion accessible on lower incomes. Other Society members recalled stores that were fashion conscious yet inexpensive, including Bickers in Dewsbury and other outlets for shoes, hats, and accessories.

> In the seventies Hewlett's (family based firm outside Bradford) had original couture and cutting-edge fashion. I purchased many items from here, including items for before, during, and after my honeymoon. Nick Hewlett (son of the family) subsequently opened Hewlett's in Harrogate and central Manchester – both successful until his early, untimely death. C&A store (Leeds) provided much up to date fashion at very reasonable prices.[30]

4. Contemporary Yorkshire Fashion

As emphasised in the methodology/literature review, my initial attempts to investigate contemporary fashion enterprises in Yorkshire revealed little documentation. This was a challenge because I had to delve deeper to unearth information. I wanted to discover designers who operated within the area and what sort of initiatives had been set up to promote and market Yorkshire fashion. As noted above, the Internet proved to be the most useful tool in this process. The website for Hebe Media – Leeds Fashion Scene (Hebe Media, 2011 parts 1 and 2) demonstrated how the company attempted to pitch Leeds as a global fashion city.[31] Leeds is the largest metropolis within Yorkshire and boasts independent designer boutiques (Vivienne Westwood, Paul Smith, Oliver Sweeney, Mulberry, etc.), the luxury stores Harvey Nichols and Flannels as well as many well-known high street retailers (Whistles, Jigsaw, All Saints, etc.). When Hebe Media was formed in 2009, its vision was to drive Leeds into the list of emerging, exciting, international cities and acknowledged there were some great stories and brands to have emerged from the city and from the Yorkshire region. As the creative consultant for Hebe Media Lee Hicken said:

> Our Head of Fashion, Shang Ting and I both studied Fashion Marketing and Communication at Instituto Europeo di Design in Barcelona and, after graduation, we both had a number of offers to take jobs in established "fashion cities" such as New York, London and Shanghai. We made the decision to come to Leeds because we saw the city as a blank canvas.[32]

Hebe Media began to research fashion activity within the Leeds area, unearthing much information. As with many large cities, Leeds, they found, had a creative, fashion-oriented community that included designers, artists, DJs, models, musicians, actors, marketers, photographers, stylists, etc. This fashion hub centred on the luxury department store Harvey Nichols, which gave Yorkshire a huge boost to its fashion credibility when it opened its first regional store in Leeds in 1996. The store produces many fashion events within the city such as Fashion vs. Football, fashion shows and collaborations with Yorkshire textile mills. *The Leeds Guide w*ebsite detailed events which also centred on the thriving bar and club culture within the city. Hebe Media identified several designers with businesses in Leeds and discussed the challenges faced in facilitating and supporting the path of a 'talented young designer' to 'important fashion brand,' particularly beyond the nucleus of a major capital. Hebe Media recognized their business initiative would include nurturing some of the raw talent in the city and helping them with manufacturing facilities with the goal of establishing a successful company/brand based in Leeds. These objectives were expanded and explored in the Made in Leeds meeting I attended at the Leeds Fashion Design and Manufacturing Hub at the

Melbourne Street Studios in Leeds in September 2012.

Historically, several independent dressmakers and tailors have established businesses in Yorkshire. One of the better-known dressmaking houses was that of Madame Clapham (established by Emily Clapham 1856-1952) who ran a dressmaking salon in Hull from 1887 to 1952. By the 1890s this was highly regarded and attracted worldwide patronage for the quality and style of ladies' fashion produced. Clapham was able to maintain a high profile clientele of the wealthy and the titled and compete with London fashion houses of the period, without advertising.[33] The success of her business was established through personal recommendations based on the quality and craftsmanship of the products. As a marketing campaign for contemporary Yorkshire fashion enterprises, this has a similarity to the Carpe Diem philosophy which relies on the artisanship and craftsmanship of the garments to build its reputation.

I discovered several contemporary fashion designers and retailers operating within Yorkshire of which I was unaware. These businesses produce ranges of clothing, shoes, and accessories manufactured in Yorkshire and are often sold from boutiques such as Aqua Couture or boutiques named after the designer such as Nicholas Deakins and Dawn Stretton. The retailers Marks & Spencer and Burton were both established in Leeds at the end of the nineteenth century and remain large scale multiples today.

Rita Britton's iconic boutique in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, is arguably the most established and well-known independent store within the region. Established in 1967, Pollyanna remains at the forefront of designer wear retailing for men and women and was one of the first stores in the UK to stock designers from Japan such as Junya Watanabe, Issey Miyake, Comme Des Garcons, and Yohji Yamamoto. This decision paved the way for the Japanese revolution in fashion in the 1980s from which other retailers followed suite. The store sells other labels such as Carpe Diem, Yves Saint Laurent, and Lanvin as well as Rita's own range Nomad, a luxurious collection designed and produced in-store. There are several other independent retailers selling designer clothing throughout the region in shopping centres such as those in Harrogate (Lynx and Julie Fitzmaurice, etc.) but none who have the vision to be hailed by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London as arguably one of the 'Leading shops in the world.'[34]

The Textile Centre of Excellence in Huddersfield initiated the first 'Yorkshire Fashion Week' in 2009 with an aim to:

> Raise awareness of, promote and showcase regional design and manufacturing talent, attract greater numbers of ambitious students to regional universities and colleges who want to study fashion design or launch their own collections, develop links between design and manufacturing bases to maximize commercial exploitation of exciting, emerging regional design talent.[35]

The event was launched with great fanfare at a special parliamentary event and was attended by Members of Parliament and the Yorkshire-born designer Christopher Bailey (now chief creative director at Burberry). As Bill Macbeth, managing director of The Textile Centre of Excellence, said:

> Many people know Yorkshire already has an enviable history of textile production but we believe it also has an enviable future in fashion design and production. It's clear we have an immense pool of talent in the region that we need to encourage but we also want to make sure the local economy enjoys the benefits in terms of jobs by developing links between designers, textile producers and creative hubs such as our own Textile Centre of Excellence.[36]

Yorkshire galleries and museums have curated exhibitions, celebrating fashion and textiles produced within the region. Three new galleries opened in the historic Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills in 2011. These venues have showcased Yorkshire's contribution to the global fashion industry by exhibiting products made with fabrics from local mills. They have also focused upon cutting edge and time-honoured techniques that focus upon the skills involved in making clothes. Led by Leeds Fashion Works, an initiative aimed at linking the region's fashion and textile-related activity, the galleries jointly emphasise the importance of the region's fashion industry while using fashion to develop educational opportunities. According to Suzy Shepherd, the co-founder of Leeds Fashion Works:

> So many of Yorkshire's economic roots can be linked to textiles; however, there is a common misconception that the industry has disappeared. The reality is that the mills have shifted from mass production to high-end niche markets and are producing some of the finest cloth in the world.[37]

Image 7: Graduate outfits from University of Huddersfield fashion students, Made in Hainsworth cloth, *Behind the Seams*, Armley Mills, Leeds, West Yorkshire, 2012. © Photo courtesy of Kevin Almond

Behind the Seams, a permanent exhibition in the largest gallery at Armley Mills, opened in 2011. The exhibition celebrates those people who work out of the limelight using their practical skills to turn design ideas into luxury products and highlights different craft related career paths. Suzy Shepherd also collaborated with the University of Huddersfield fashion department when she selected eight outfits from graduate collections (Image 7). These are made up in Hainsworth cloth and celebrate Yorkshire fabric and fashion design and were added to the exhibition in 2012.

The role of higher education in contributing to the development of Yorkshire's fashion identity has been considerable. With the expansion of the UK higher education sector in the late 1990s, many Yorkshire universities and colleges developed undergraduate fashion programmes. The initiatives developed by these new programmes tapped into local industries through sponsored projects, which helped to increase the profile of Yorkshire as a credible fashion

entity. Several graduates have a set up their own labels in the region and employed skilled local crafts people. University of Huddersfield fashion students participated in a live project with Armley Mills in 2012 that drew on the collection of menswear held in Leeds Museums and Galleries as well as on existing research on the Leeds tailoring industry through its association with companies such as Burton and Hepworth's (Images 8 & 9).The project asked students to investigate this heritage to inspire the design of a range of contemporary tailored garments, which were amalgamated with the historical garments in a curated exhibition. The work of Huddersfield fashion students was also celebrated in an exhibition with Huddersfield Art Gallery called *Insufficient Allure, The Art of Creative Pattern Cutting*, which emphasised the role of the pattern cutter, which many view to be as significant as the role of the fashion designer within the industry (Image 10). [38] The exhibition inspired a peer reviewed conference 'The First International Symposium for Creative Pattern Cutting' held 6-7 February 2013, University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, UK. Although Huddersfield is not associated with innovation in fashionable garments, the event was the first global event to promote contemporary research into creative cut and its significance within the fashion industry. It provided a platform for pattern cutters, fashion designers, students, and educators to explore the impact and direction for creative pattern cutting within a Yorkshire setting.

Image 8: Armley Mills tailoring exhibition, Leeds, West Yorkshire, June 2012.

The fashion department at University of Leeds established 'The Yorkshire Fashion Archive' with an avowed purpose to provide a 'unique historical and cultural record of Yorkshire life' and document 'clothing produced, purchased and worn by Yorkshire folk' in the twentieth century. According to its curators, 'The collection reflects changing social attitudes and multi-cultural influences, economic prosperity, global trends and the regional technical excellence in textiles and clothing over a 100 year period.'[39] In 2012 the Archive collaborated with the Woolmark Company and asked University of Leeds fashion students to choose vintage clothing from the collection and rework it to make a contemporary fashion statement; this was exhibited in the *Wool Re-Fashioned* exhibition from 7 September to 12 November 2012. The garments were produced in donated fabric from Woolmark and formed part of an exhibition at the nineteenth-century industrial mill 'Salts Mill' in Saltaire, West Yorkshire. Each garment was presented next to the vintage garment showcasing old designs and new inspirations. The vintage garments were displayed with captions detailing information about the original Yorkshire-based wearer and their recollections about their purchase and where it was worn, which served to build up a picture of fashionable life within the region from the preceding one hundred years.

Image 9: Burton Tailoring Factory, Leeds, West Yorkshire, 1930s.

5. Fashionability in Yorkshire

Separate interviews with the fashion journalist Colin McDowell, the fashion retailer Rita Britton, and the costume curator at Leeds Museums and Galleries Natalie Raw, revealed differing opinions about fashion and fashionability in Yorkshire. Colin McDowell claims that Yorkshire has no profile as a fashion centre. 'Apart from Rita's shop, Yorkshire had no more claim to being a fashion centre than any other county,' he observed.[40] On recent visits to Yorkshire, McDowell had viewed the streets of Leeds, Huddersfield, and Sheffield and said that he had not seen anybody he would call really fashionable, which he viewed as a reflection of the economic situation of many and also to the fact that in England, traditionally, men and women outside the narrow confines of London's West End and Knightsbridge do not dress in a

way he would term as 'fashionable.' According to McDowell, there are few places in the UK with a strong restaurant culture and social life where people regularly and frequently visit outside the home. Rita Britton agrees with McDowell's view but thinks it is the job of Yorkshire people to turn the county into a fashion centre by leading the times, not merely harnessing them. She feels that in ways similar to creative groups such as the Arts and Crafts Movement[41] and the Beatniks,[42] it is important to establish an individual identity through underground movements that would drive a return to quality and handcrafting. Natalie Raw claims that people do not really know about Yorkshire and its fashion history, particularly in relation to manufacturing, and are therefore surprised about how much goes on. She notes that textile companies such as Abraham Moone and Bower Roebuck & Co. Ltd. are pitching themselves as luxury brands, mainly because of the huge costs of UK production, which dictate that its products must be considered luxurious because of their prices. Colin McDowell's perspective is that for Yorkshire to have a fashion society huge numbers of people are required to play the fashion game at all levels, from the super wealthy and leisured to young kids who make their own fashions. Outside of London, even for the young fashionista, he says fashion is about 'Topshop, not a little Saint Martin's fashion graduate working in a chicken shed in Dalston' (Dalston is in East London).[43] According to McDowell, it is difficult for a fashion designer to make a living outside of London. Research disproves his claim, through historical and contemporary analysis. For instance in 1950 the view from the standpoint of Marshall and Snelgrove was that 'Shopping out of London is as keen a business, as smart and competitive as it is in Oxford Street or might be in Regent Street or Bond Street.'

Image 10: University of Huddersfield 'Insufficient Allure: The Art of Creative Pattern Cutting,' Huddersfield Art Gallery, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire 7 April-2 June 2012.

At the inaugural meeting for Made in Yorkshire in March 2012, the discussion centred around how the initiative could promote strategic product areas to make an impact on the current market. For example, it was recognised that the Chinese desire Western fashion labels but operate on a huge scale, placing large and multiple orders, which would necessitate a guaranteed infrastructure for manufacturing. A Made in Yorkshire initiative could create a supportive environment to attract such a market with key partners via an 'Enterprise Foundation' model and include sourcing of Yorkshire produced fabrics, manufacturing capacity, investment, matching business involvement, and business start-up grants. [44] Such an initiative would require access to a network of support for manufacturing and planning, marketing advice and export, business development and financial planning. Top-end retailers would be needed and the biggest challenge would be manufacturing the garments. This optimism is a stark contrast to the redundancies suffered by the Leeds clothing industries in the late 1980s after being recognised for decades as a 'Power house for fashion,' operating on a mass-manufacture scale.[45] The success of such an endeavour could only be measured by its potential ability to create a Made in Yorkshire brand in the imaginations of global consumers.

6. Branding 'Made in Yorkshire'

Arguably, many individual countries are already branded as fashion entities. This helps build fashion identities which impact on the economy and exploit 'Human creativity as the ultimate economic resource.'[46] Consider the Made in Italy label which has become a symbol of elegance and refinement throughout the world.'[47] The fashion historian Valerie Steele has observed:

> Not only are there fine quality clothes "Made in Italy," there also exists a conceptual category known as the "Italian look" which is internationally recognized as a signifier of refined opulence and deluxe modernity, of casual, expensive, sexy elegance. Yet within this category, there is room for a variety of individual styles each of which apparently express some aspect of what foreigners perceive as la dolce vita.[48]

In contrast, a Made in Britain look is described by McDermott as 'Beyond fashion: an enduring image that dresses an attitude and a lifestyle, and that continues to combine quality and tradition with the contemporary and the new.'[49] It could be suggested that each fashion-producing province within a country operates within these conceptual constraints. For instance a Made in Yorkshire brand could be described as an extension of a Made in Britain look as it capitalizes on the local industries and traditions of its combined regions in order to establish an individual slant to its identity.

In the initial discussions with Rita Britton about Made in Yorkshire, she recognized there could be a much greater initiative relating to the production of fashion within the region. In buying collections for her expansive client base she identified a new way of branding beginning to emerge within the fashion industry. Several of the labels she sourced, including the Perugia-based, Italian label Carpe Diem, were focusing on exclusive ways of marketing their products, creating an aura for style and quality. They selected which stores they wanted to sell to and dictated which stores could buy which stock. This opposed the traditional notion of the retailer placing the order for the product, determining which styles would be ordered. Maurizio Altieri, the creator of Carpe Diem, says he wants to remove himself from the fake glitter of selling fashion through his approach to crafting clothes.

> The design philosophy from day one was creating timeless, utilitarian, hand-made clothes from the highest quality fabrics that have undergone unique treatments These included leathers that have been washed, distressed, crushed, and buried in soil for months, silver sterling buttons, 12-gauge over dyed cashmere, and hard cottons. The pride in craftsmanship techniques and attention to detail is on par with one that goes into fabric development – all garments are hand-made, the pants are lined, seams are carefully distressed. The result of this industrious labour is that the soul of the maker can truly be seen in the clothes. The garments, displayed on meat hooks come with their own tube cases – a sign of respect for a garment.[50]

Carpe Diem refuses to advertise, produce seasonal collections and fashion shows, and engage in other activities that are expected of a fashion house. Maurizio believes this philosophy enforces an appreciation of the garment itself, the purest and most beautiful reason for creating clothes. Britton argues that such an approach could be the building block from which to develop fashion brands within Yorkshire. The concept could help to create labels that combine the use of heritage Yorkshire fabrics with a craft approach. Ranges could be designed, produced and marketed, capitalizing on the craft and skill inherent in the manufacturing and design skills within the Yorkshire region. Whilst maintaining a strong sense of British style this approach to fashion design and manufacture would be merged with an individual Yorkshire identity that would 'Combine quality and tradition with the contemporary and the new.'[51]

7. Conclusion

The careful planning and infrastructure of a Made in Yorkshire enterprise, modelled in some way on the business concept of Carpe Diem, suggest the possibilities for developing credible fashion brands beyond major cities. Further research could investigate and compare additional fashion initiatives in emerging fashion cities and provinces beyond the big five capitals of New York, London, Milan, Paris, and Tokyo. 'Fashioning the City: Exploring Fashion Cultures, Structures and Systems,' a conference held at the Royal College of Art in London, 19-21 September 2012, attempted to address this. Describing how catwalk images can immediately be accessed globally and how off-shore production can de-value the legitimacy of fashion products, Nathaniel Dafydd Beard, the conference chair, commented:

> Is it still possible to trust labels such as "Made in Italy" or "Made in Britain," while cities such as Amsterdam, Antwerp, Copenhagen, Barcelona, Dakar, Seoul or Sydney, amongst others, are increasingly asserting themselves as "alternatives" to the "Big Five" Fashion Capitals, with their own distinct fashion cultures.[52]

By harnessing the zeitgeist of globalism, not only can more discrete countries be individually branded, so can particular regions within them, which are developing their own distinct fashion slant. Such branding could build distinctive fashion looks and positively impact local economies.

The initial stages of this research were presented at the 'Fashioning the City' conference as a working paper. My paper was placed in a session named 'Marketing Fashion and Place: Managing Legacies of Local Reputations and Identities.'[53] The other papers in the session focused on the branding of cities not normally associated with fashion. In 'What's in a Name? The Marketing of the Antwerp 6,' Emmanuelle Dirix described how six designers from the Antwerp Academy (including Dries van Noten and Ann Demeulemeester) transformed Belgium

and in particular Antwerp into 'the world's unlikeliest fashion capital.'[54] In 'Lisbon as an Emerging Creative City: A Site for Fashion Cross Contaminations,' Alexandra Cabral explained how Lisbon could merge its unique fashion and art cultures in a cultural fusion to turn the city into a 'reference in the field of fashion cross-contamination approaches,' boosting investment in the creative economy.[55] The fashion initiatives described in all three papers adhere to Currid's ideas about the importance of cultural economy.[56] As discussed in the methodology of this article, this could be transposed to the urban and rural mix of regions such as Yorkshire. By tapping into the social, cultural, and economic environment of a region it can begin to brand its fashion potential in order to result in economic gain.

Future research could focus in greater depth upon fashion-producing provinces, globally. This could expand a global notion of fashion design and production and help to develop greater opportunities for talented designers and manufacturers within much wider geographical expanses. It could pave the way for greater credibility and subsequent economic value in the design, production, and consumption of these products. In *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Florida produces an overall ranking of regions in the USA according to a creativity index. This statistical argument includes a discussion of a creative class concentration and a talent index. Florida argues that those regions with more vibrant cultural scenes have greater potential for economic growth and a strong job market. Future research that produces such data on a global basis is needed and identified enterprises could be upheld as exemplars. For instance, the UK company, The Harris Tweed Authority, which has produced loosely woven wool in remote hamlets off the West Coast of Scotland for generations, today has a wide-reaching fashion credibility.[57] Rocketed to fashion prominence by Vivienne Westwood in her 'Harris Tweed' collection in 1987, Harris Tweed was recently used in a funky menswear collection sold by the fashion retailer Topman (*Autumn/Winter* 2012). The correlation between creative concentration and growth here lies with the creativity of the weavers and the ways in which the fashion industry exploits this creativity. The Made in Yorkshire brand, produced amid the vast traditional heritage of the Yorkshire region, could emulate this example in order to catapult itself into global fashion prominence. Arguably, there are many other undiscovered worldwide fashion industries poised for similar recognition on a global fashion map, and their struggles and successes could be assessed according to a creativity index to measure their potential impact.

The next steps for the research could be to broaden the sample by issuing the questionnaire used in this case study of Yorkshire to explore the ways in which fashion is designed, marketed, and consumed outside the district. This would gauge opinions from those who reside in different regions in other parts of the world who work in provincial fashion industries. Additional research could also establish ways to support further a greater recognition for the branding and marketing of regions as viable fashion entities on the global stage.

Notes

[1] Veronica B. Manlow, 'Creating an American Mythology: A Comparison of Branding Strategies in Three Fashion Firms,' *The Journal of Fashion Practice* 3, no. 1 (2011): 86.
[2] 'V Q Victoria Quarter,' *Victoria Quarter*, accessed 16 October 2013, http://www.v-q.co.uk/.
[3] British Wool Week is organized by The Campaign for Wool whose patron is HRH the Prince of Wales. It is an initiative by British wool producers to celebrate the fibre. Various events are held throughout the UK and globally to promote the natural, renewable and biodegradable benefits of wool.

[4] The 1st White Cloth Hall is a Grade II* listed building in the city centre of Leeds, UK. Built in 1711 its purpose was to sell white undyed cloth.
[5] The Bronte sisters: Charlotte (1816-1855), Emily (1818-1848) and Anne (1820-1849) were part of a literary family of poets and novelists who lived in the village of Haworth in West Yorkshire. Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* are accepted as masterpieces of literature.
[6] Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights* (London: Penguin Books, 2003).
[7] 'Eee bah gum' is Yorkshire dialect. It is an exclamation of surprise roughly translated as 'Goodness me.'
[8] Thomas R. Sadler, 'The Rise of the Creative Class,' *The Journal of Socio-Economics* 34, no. 1 (2005): 133.
[9] Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 249.
[10] Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (2001), *Second Mapping Document*: *Creative Industries, Department for Culture, Media and Sport* (London*:* Creative Industries, 2001).
[11] Joanne Entwistle, *The Aesthetic Economy of Fashion: Marketing Values in Clothing and Modeling* (Oxford: Berg, 2009), 55.
[12] Sadler, 'The Rise of the Creative Class,' 133.
[13] Elizabeth Currid, *The Warhol Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 2.
[14] A 'Knowledge Economy' uses knowledge technologies to produce economic benefits as well as job creation.
[15] Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 249.
[16] Rita Britton, interview by Kevin Almond, 17 April 2012.
[17] 'Designer Profile: Maurizio Altieri of Carpe Diem,' *Fashion Critic* (blog), January 2006, http://fashion-critic.blogspot.co.uk/2006/01/designer-profile-maurizio-altieri-of.html.
[18] Questionnaire response from a member of The Northern Society of Costume and Textiles on 30 April 2012.
[19] Maurice Bennett, 'Supply Chain Challenges' (presentation, ASBCI Facing Fashion's Supply Chain Challenges, Leeds, UK, 15 March 2012).
[20] 'Leeds Fashion Design and Manufacturing Hub,' *Eventbrite*, accessed 25 November 2012. http://www.eventbrite.com/event/4195613192/?ref=enivte&invite=MjQwMzE4MC9zdXp5Lm1hc29uQGxlZWRzLWFydC5hYy51ay8w.
[21] Melbourne Street Studios, email message to Kevin Almond, 29 August 2012.
[22] *Looking at Britain: Industrial Town*, directed by Nigel Hemsley (1962; London: Production Company Impact for British Film Institute, 2012), DVD.
[23] David Zimmerman, narrator, *From the Same Cloth: A Family History of Clothing Manufacture in Leeds*, dir. David Zimmerman (Leeds: Hebe Media, 2012), DVD.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Lee Mason, interview by Kevin Almond, 30 November 2012.
[26] Zimmerman, *From the Same Cloth.*
[27] Alison Settle, *A Family of Shops* (Margate: The Thanet Press, 1950), 5.
[28] Ibid., 7.
[29] Questionnaire response, member of The Northern Society of Costume and Textiles on 30 April 2012.
[30] Ibid.
[31] 'Leeds Fashion Scene Part 1,' *Hebe Media* (blog), 25 October 2011,

http://www.hebemedia.com/everything-blog/2011/10/25/leeds-fashion-scene-part-1.html; 'Leeds Fashion Scene Part 2,' *Hebe Media* (blog), 27 October 2011, http://www.hebemedia.com/everything-blog/2011/10/27/leeds-fashion-scene-part-2.html.
[32] 'Leeds Fashion Scene Part 1,' *Hebe Media* (blog), 25 January 2011, http://www.hebemedia.com/everything-blog/2011/10/25/leeds-fashion-scene-part-1.html.
[33] 'Madame Clapham: Hull's Celebrated Dressmaker, *Hull Museums Collections*, accessed 19 March 2012, http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/museumcollections/collections/storydetail.php?irn=405.
[34] 'Pollyanna' (Rita Britton's shop), accessed 20 December 2012, http://www.polyanna.com/.
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[36] Ibid.
[37] Fiona Ferguson, 'Behind the Seams,' *The Leeds Guide*, accessed 2 June 2012, http://www.leedsguide.co.uk/review/review/behind-the-seams/18687.
[38] Kevin Almond and Kathryn Brennand, 'Insufficient Allure: The Art of Creative Pattern Cutting,' *ROTOR*, no. 1 (2012): 8.
[39] 'Yorkshire Fashion Archive,' *University of Leeds*, accessed 19 March 2012, http://www.yorkshirefashionarchive.org/.
[40] Colin McDowell, e-mail message to author, 25 March 2012.
[41] Mary Greensted, *The Arts and Craft Movement in Britain* (London: Shire, 2010).
[42] Alan Bisbort, *Beatniks: A Guide to an American Subculture* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2009).
[43] Colin McDowell, e-mail message.
[44] An Enterprise Foundation model drives the establishment of new forms of business that create social and economic value.
[45] Zimmerman, *From the Same Cloth.*
[46] Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, xiii.
[47] Ellen McIntyre, 'The Methods and Motives of Manipulation: The Fascist Regimes and the Fashioning of Women' (Undergraduate diss., University of Huddersfield, 2012).
[48] Valerie Steele, *The Italian Look* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 92.
[49] Catherine McDermott, *Made in Britain* (London: Octopus Publishing, 2002), 1.
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[52] Beard, Nathaniel Dafydd. 'Fashioning the City: Exploring Fashion Cultures, Structures and Systems,' accessed 7 December 2012, http://fashioningthecity.wordpress.com/about/.
[53] Kevin Almond, 'Made in Yorkshire: Harnessing the Zeitgeist' (presentation, Fashioning the City: Exploring Fashion Cultures, Structures and Systems, Royal College of Art, London, 19-21 September 2012).
[54] Emmanuelle Dirix, 'What's in a Name? The Marketing of the Antwerp 6' (presentation, Fashioning the City).
[55] Alexandra Cabral, 'Lisbon as an Emerging Creative City: A Site for Fashion Cross Contaminations' (presentation, Fashioning the City).
[56] Currid, *The Warhol Economy*, 1.
[57] Lara Platman, *Harris Tweed* (London: Frances Lincoln Limited, 2011).

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The Prisoners. The Fashion Photography of Adi Nes: Refashioning Israeli Society

Nissim Gal

Abstract

The Israeli photographer Adi Nes engages with the male body, its identity and its socio-political instability, particularly in the Israeli context. This article focuses on his twelve-photo series *The Prisoners*, commissioned and published by the men's magazine *Vogue Hommes International* for its September 2003 issue, commemorating the 9/11 World Trade Center Twin Towers disaster which took place on 11 September 2001 in New York City. The connections represented in these photographs among migrant workers, Palestinians, and Sephardi men in relationships that are charged with homoerotic overtones, can lead the way to an appreciation of heterogeneity and the alliances among distinct peoples from different socio-economic classes, sexualities, genders, races, and ethnicities. Following a general presentation of the series, the article outlines the well-known discourse by the philosopher/sociologist Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), the writings of Jean Genet, and others concerning the prison, to demonstrate that the prison in these photographs turns into a means for queer, socio-economic, cultural, and political criticism. The photos show how in the framework of supervision and punishment, brutality and even dehumanization, solidarity and change may take place; they rewrite the perceptions of subject and object and social and sexual power relations but also the relations of subordination among the authorities/gaolers and subalterns/prisoners and the communities they represent. Following 'Coldness and Cruelty' (1967), by the philosopher Gilles Deleuze, the article concludes that *The Prisoners* series should be seen as an act of fashion photography offering spectators access to different representations of desire, other scripts, or a new fantastic, sexual, and political option. These images constitute a set through which desire is introduced into a scene through which the subject can experience desire that enables the crossing of his ethnic, gender, and/or socio-political specificity.

Key Words

Adi Nes, *Vogue Hommes International*, fashion, Israel, Palestine, Middle East, Arab, homoeroticism, queer studies, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze.

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1. Introduction

The photographic series titled *The Prisoners* is composed of twelve photos. It was commissioned and published by the men's fashion magazine *Vogue Hommes International* for its September 2003 issue, commemorating the Twin Towers disaster which took place on 11 September 2001 in New York City.[1] *The Prisoners* series was part of special section titled 'Six Cities, Six Viewpoints, Six Stories,' from the Middle East, comprising Cairo, Tel Aviv, Beirut, Istanbul, Ramallah, and Kuwait City. The photographer Adi Nes, chosen by the editor to represent Israel, dressed his models (amateur actors and ordinary people) in designer clothing such as featured in Louis Vuitton's and Hugo Boss's Fall/Winter 2003-2004 fashion collections.[2] This series of fashion photographs, which was styled by Paul Mather, manifests the complex human and power relations existing between men, represented here as prisoners.

The photographs were taken near the Dead Sea in Israel in a compound simulating a prison.[3] This is a cinematic/photographic set, not a real prison.[4]

Nes engages with the male body and identity and its instability, particularly in the Israeli context. His subjects can be read as representing the fluidity of gender boundaries and even non-identitarian queer visual politics. In a 2004 interview published in *Haaretz*, Nes said:

> The framework story of the project is prison, as a metaphor for Israeli society….A prison that contains a representation of population groups in Israel. I decided to photograph people from real life, not models, as part of the concept that fashion is a part of life.[5]

The photographer's personal background in regard to the series relates to the period in which he served as a reserve duty soldier in a detention facility. According to Nes, he was also stimulated by images of camps and prisons that had appeared in the media at that time.[6]

Image 1: Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes

The photographs represent different groups: Sephardim or Mizrahim (Jews of Middle-Eastern descent), Ashkenazim (Jews of East-European or Western origin), Palestinians, immigrant workers, and so on. As a result of the cell arrangement of the prison and the confrontational nature of some of the pictures, at first glance it may seem that each represented group is imprisoned in its own self-definition. This visual interweaving stimulates in the viewer the sense that any hope for the future of Israeli society can only come from accepting this mixture of those defined as minorities or marginal.

The change in Israeli society, if we accept this pictorial series as the key to understanding its reality, will not come from a transformation or a modification in the priorities of the Israeli hegemonic group, or from a shift in its consciousness. Rather, the series suggests that change will occur only through the marginal groups, through those who are truly aware of the oppression embodied in the social situation. Any attempt to evaluate the significance of this series must take into account the medium of photography, and the context in which these images appeared as part of the history of present-day Israeli society: Israeli occupation, power relations between Israelis and Palestinians, and the global world after 11 September 2001 that constituted the background for commissioning this work.

Image 2: Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[7]

The sociologist Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi characterized the sixth decade of Israel's existence, at the turn of the twenty-first century, as a decade of boredom and stupor; if only because nothing 'took the Israelis out of their apathy.' She explains:

> The Social stage was filled with a procession of migrant workers and their Hebrew-speaking but legally unrecognized Israeli children; single mothers;

> people with disabilities; poor; sick; and hungry Palestinians at and beyond the checkpoints; homeless Gush Katif evacuees; victims of terror and of road accidents; residents of the North left defenceless in a war; residents of the South whose homes had become the front line; unprotected worker of sub-contractors and employment agencies; the unemployed and those whose income insurance had been discontinued. All had become see-through citizens whose lives were cheap and whose fate no longer engaged the government. As if from behind a thin but impenetrable veil, Israeli society regarded them all with the same glazed, phlegmatic look.[8]

This phenomenon of numbness reflected the unease characterizing the turn-of-the-century in Israel. Arab citizens were killed in demonstrations in October 2000 by police officers, migrant workers were deported, the second Intifada broke out, there were a large number of suicide attacks against Israelis inside Israel and abroad, the Israeli army began a series of military attacks against the Palestinian areas, Israel began building the separation barrier between Israel and the Palestinians, and attempts to mediate between the parties failed again and again.

Against this background, photography presents a critical stage for the discovery of a new consciousness that will lead the way to an egalitarian society. The connection in these photographs among migrant workers, Palestinians, and Sephardi men in relationships that are partly charged with homoerotic tones, threatens the one-dimensionality of the ethos of the Israeli male. It is a connection that encourages heterogeneity and alliances between distinct peoples from different class affiliations, genders, and ethnicities. The inquiry of the series within the framework of queer studies as formulated by Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Samuel Chambers, Roger Cook and others is aimed at revealing the way it represents the socio-political reality in Israeli society, and Israel's relations with its minorities and with those it occupies.

The socio-political perspective of Israel is based on the perception that in the geo-political space of Israel-Palestine, there is room for only one sovereign autonomous national subject: that is, the Israeli identity. In this monocular vision, any other agents or identities surrounding this identity are nothing but a cluster of objects with varying degrees of functionality or foreignness. This article is aimed at the imaginary dichotomy between sexual or gender politics and material politics.[9] The meeting point of the last two is reflected through the politics inherent in the visual action manifested in *The Prisoners* by Nes.

2. Fashion Politics

The question that arises is if the purpose of the photos is critical and political, why choose to place them within the field of commercial fashion photography? This decision seemingly locates the series within the niche of beauty, style, temptation, emotion, and fantasy, a move that ostensibly reduces the ethical weight of the photos. According to the cultural theorist Angela McRobbie:

> of all the forms of the consumer culture, fashion seems to be the least open to self-scrutiny and political debate. This is because the editors deem that fashion must steer well clear of politics, and fashion journalists are expected to go along with this….Fashion-as-politics is only conceivable as a catchy idea for a "fashion story."

'It seems,' she writes rather scopophobically, 'that the overwhelming emphasis is on images, indicating that the magazines are primarily "to-be-looked-at."'[10]

The starting point, and the burden of proof of this article is to show how these alleged characteristics of fashion photography as spectacular and as a marketing means, etc., relate equally to concrete reality, critical ideology, social spaces, and pressing political issues. Contrasting them in opposition creates a false presentation, separating between, on the one hand, social documentary photography that deals with critical realism and is in constant search after the truth, and, on the other hand, fashion photography pledged to consumer society and in quest of the aesthetic, artifice, and illusory beauty. Such a dichotomous approach assumes that photography is an object whose final meaning lies in the photograph alone, and that fashion photography is enslaved by its consumer context. My reading below suggests a different approach, that viewers of fashion photography, such as the readers of this article, have the ability to read and to rewrite the content to which they are exposed. I follow the photography curator Charlotte Cotton and the media and communication scholars John Hartley and Ellie Rennie who call those consumers endowed with this visual and textual literacy 'imaginative consumers.' Fashion photography, in their view, is a media node that in addition to its appeal to consumerism embraces art, documentary projects, journalism, beauty, passion, and so forth.[11]

Moreover, the choice to examine Israeli society and its treatment of various minorities from the perspective of fashion is not arbitrary. Questions of gender, politics, and space are possible to answer through the prism of identity. Identity, as suggested by the sociologist Georg Simmel, is closely linked to fashion. Clothing is a constitutive element in how we define and produce ourselves, even if its focus is on the question of consumption.[12] The fashion world enables us to perceive the ongoing changes in subjectivity and identity's instability. The way our fashion selections are constantly changing is evidence that our subjectivity is in a constant process of reformation; each time it approaches consolidation, it is driven to change again. National identity is sometimes used as a preferred platform for the fashion world. Thus, fashion and lifestyle collections are often presented in relation to national categories, as for example, in Japanese design, a fashion magazine that is dedicated to British innovations in fashion, a fashion show presenting a collection that seeks to establish an ethnic African-American identity, and so on. However, at the same time that nationalism is present in the fashion field, as in Western culture in general, it is still possible to see how fashion magazines have turned a critical gaze upon the sterile, unifying, and oppressive image of modern nationalism. Once photographers turned to presenting fashion relating to intimacy, the common man, and daily life (as for example in Corinne Day's photos showing 'grotty English icons from punk records'), they challenged the oppressive idealist status of nationalism through the representation of those who deviate from the central narrative that constitutes the nation.[13] Nes' *The Prisoners* series joins this critical side of fashion photography.

3. Prison

The Prisoners series combines elements of fiction and non-fiction; it shows the process of arrest, interrogation and imprisonment in a photographic space that represents an area of detention. The prison becomes a site for reflection and transformation. However, before we turn to the hermeneutic process in order to assess the specificity of the images and the way the series represents queer politics, we should consider the setting of the prison.

The prison is the most highly regulated institution in modern society, and, yet, as the literary critic Victor Brombert wrote, 'haunts our civilization.'[14] It has become a major image both materially and metaphorically by which to depict social situations and has aroused the curiosity of countless authors, writers, and artists who make use of its image not only to write about themselves but to examine the society in which they live. It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1978 the critic H. Bruce Franklin wrote, 'In our society the two main competing intellectual centres may be the universities and the prisons.'[15] Throughout the twentieth century,

the prison became or continued to be, as I will show below, a means of social criticism for a broad range of writers, including Jean Genet, Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, among others.

Prima facie, *The Prisoners* photos embody the demand and the normative purpose of the prison: that is, the rehabilitation of criminals into law-abiding citizens by silencing, enslaving, segregating, and subordinating them to discipline. Ultimately, the photos represent precisely the prisoners' sexual, ethnic, and political differences and otherness in a way that makes them an alternative model for the society that imprisons them. During the detention process, as exemplified in this series, these individuals are arrested, examined, photographed, measured, give up their civilian clothes, and receive their uniforms. Their names are converted to anonymous numbers. They embody directly the ways in which each individual is routinely subjected to power relations and enforcement structures, what the philosopher Giorgio Agamben would call a 'State of Exception.'[16] This process echoes the way fashion unifies the various tones and specificities of individuals, and it is precisely this analogy between prison and the world of fashion that opens the way for possible cracks in the control and force of power.

Fashion, which subjects, unifies, and at times represses specificity, holds within it the reverse potential to form singularity and difference. The dialectical process of standardization and uniqueness is the product of the specific nature of fashion, described by Simmel as its 'transitory character.[17]Although 'fashion per se is indeed immortal,' every one of its performances or 'each individual fashion stamps it as being transitory,' he observed.[18] Once the majority adopts a certain fashion or a certain style become fashionable, it ceases to be attractive or fashionable, and hence they move on to the next trend. According to Simmel:

> The very character of fashion demands that it should be exercised at one time only by a portion of the given group, the great majority being merely on the road to adopting it. As soon as an example has been universally adopted, that is, as soon as anything that was originally done only by a few has really come to be practiced by all – as is the case in certain portions of our apparel and in various forms of social conduct – we no longer speak of fashion. As fashion spreads, it gradually goes to its doom.[19]

Like prison, a recognized symbol of a policing or disciplinary force, the fashion world too disciplines us, defining what is right for us to wear or the ideal body to better present ourselves, an ideal that is by definition impossible to realize.[20] Once this ideal becomes realizable, it will change immediately, because, as Simmel demonstrates, the fashion world recognizes what is realized as an act against its transitory value.

The sociologist Andrew Ross claims that certain fashions can reverse the unifying pattern of the fashion world. Hip-hop singers, for example, produce their own high fashion in an act of 'sartorial terrorism.' He expands his argument to include consumer culture not only as a framework for enforcing the status quo but also as an arena of struggle for marginalized groups in their attempt to strengthen their position and acquire power. The various tribes or groups that establish their own designs or identifying fashion marks seek in this way to define themselves.[21] Thus, the photographer's choice to present Asian migrant workers, Palestinians, and Sephardic Jewish men as models upon which to display luxury garments questions the norms of Western beauty. It is an invitation to contemplate the general parameters that guide our perception of ideal beauty. The choice of these models is not a 'natural' one in the eyes of the consensus; its exceptionality marks the conventional way we look at others as strange or as an exception/other. In this sense, the transgressive action by Nes recalls the asymmetrical designs of the Japanese fashion designer Rei Kawakubo, forcing Western viewers to recognize the limitations of their own ideal of beauty and the selectivity of the norms by which they value

and appreciate clothing.[22] Eventually, the prison in these photographs turns into a means for queer, socio-economic, cultural, and political criticism. The series shows how in the framework of supervision and punishment, brutality, and even dehumanization, solidarity and change may take place.

***Image 3**:* Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes

4. Traces of Homoerotic Aesthetics

The Prisoners series displays several themes that converge under the title 'Surveillance and Punishment.' These can be roughly divided thematically to reflect a fictional chronology: interrogations, line-ups, and photos that show various events in prison life. The photos include, alongside the narrative anecdotes embodying the norms of supervision and punishment, a clear homoerotic resonance typical of the photographic work of Nes.[23]

Two photos of arrest presenting the handcuffed detainees are also representations of forbidden desires (Images 1 & 2). The first photo shows a man in chains, dressed in a striped wool V-neck sweater by Vivienne Westwood and checked wool trousers by Christopher

Charon, attended by two police officers or guards (Image 1). This echoes many examples of arrest from television police series such as *Law & Order*, crime films, and real confrontations with the law and in doing so show the inherent tension in the space of prison between guards and prisoners, as well as among the prisoners themselves. The bodily fragmentation of the prisoner in the second photo (Image 2) and its representation from behind, the slightly emphasized tilted buttocks, together with the directed lighting angle, focus attention on the buttocks as an object of desire or, rather, its significant substitute. The bodily gestures of the 'fashion' models in the photos are signs of corporeography, that is, 'a bodily writing through which homoerotic desire is expressed.'[24] The positioning of the body allows these figures to transcend their alleged identity.[25] In both cases, as I will show later, the erotic tension that accompanies the image is the basis for understanding how identity is formed through the performative act. As we shall see, the gender positions of the characters are the effect of the actions the agents perform and the attributes they appropriate.

Another way to represent homoerotic tension is found in the photo of two men who share the same cell and bed, display the same body posture, and focus on the same point (Image 3). Dressed in army-style Kenzo shirts and straight cut-raw cotton denim jeans by Apc., they are handcuffed to one another, sharing the same destiny, like twins multiplying and reflecting one another. This dual look of the models, who resemble twins, hints at an erotic gaze resulting from their fascination with the other who shares with them the parallel physical or mental attributes. The photo brings to mind a quote from *Our Lady of the Flowers* (1943) by Genet, describing the meeting between Divine and Mignon as an encounter between two young boxers who 'think they are seeing themselves in a mirror.' The queer theorist Denis Provencher quotes the novelist and essayist Edmund White, according to whom there is an element of narcissistic myth in Genet's writing, which becomes evident in the author's use of the twin brothers Querelle and Mario in *Querelle of Brest* (1947). We can also see traces of this same myth in contemporary queer representations, as for example in the poster design for Jean-Paul Gaultier's cologne for men, 'Le Mâle.' Provencher claims that Gaultier's advertisement deliberately exploits the mirror image that reflects the narcissism and homoerotic visibility that are found in Genet's books.

Another example of the homoerotic foundations of this series can be seen in the photograph featuring a well-built prisoner leaning against the cell bars (Image 4), dressed in a cotton tank top and shorts by Rick Owens. His muscular body and countenance produce a sense that although he is seemingly handcuffed, he is also full of vigour, wearing a fashion model's look of confidence. His physical immunity nonetheless includes hints of fragility in the gap between his undershirt and pants, a homoerotic nuance or an exposure that is polarized with the classical male dominance of his look. Further reinforcing my reading of homoerotic signs in these photos is the exchange of charged gazes between the men in the series, to which I will return shortly (Images 1 & 5). There are several additional indications, beyond the choreographic elements, that position the photos at the heart of Israeli homoerotic visibility. These include the appearance of Beni Kvodi, a well-known bouncer in the gay club scene in Tel-Aviv of those years (Image 4), and the appearance of Hai Ben Shushan, winner of the contest 'Man of the Year' (2003) held by the gay-lesbian Israeli magazine *Hazman Havarod* (Pink-Time) (Images 6 & 7).

The homoeroticism implied here has been enabled by following the trends of fashion photography of the late twentieth century and especially at the turn of the twenty-first century. The presence and visibility of the male model has become intensified, and he is featured in distinctly erotic contexts, including in homoerotic scenarios. Fashion campaigns by Dolce & Gabbana, Calvin Klein, Benetton and others have promoted obvious homoerotic representations. This trend has been reinforced by the growing status of the gay community, as

well as by greater cultural openness regarding gender diversity, with the figure of the metrosexual bringing homoeroticism to representation in the fashion world. Celebrities like the footballer David Beckham personify the process by which masculinity has undergone a process of objectification and commercialization. The male model had become the object of desire, and the viewer consumes this object as a voyeur, or as an object with which to identify.

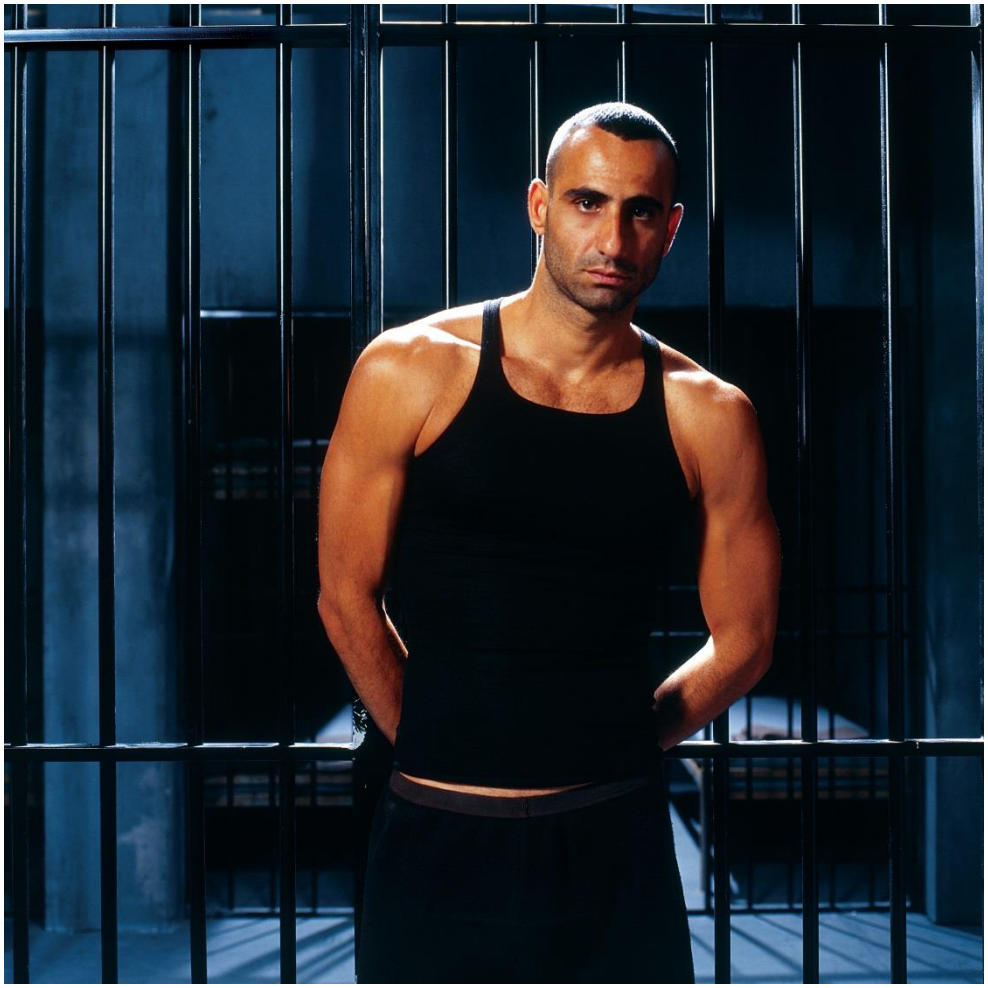

***Image 4**:* Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes

The above visual and anecdotal sociological information, however, is insufficient in itself to explain the significance of the series and its critical stance. Indeed, these 'fashion' photographs do more than just hint at a same-sex encounter. The critical edge is initially revealed by the visual staging of the exchange of glances or the spectatorial exchange between the participants that establishes erotic relationships between men. Secondly, as I will show, the photos rewrite the perceptions of subject and object, and the social and sexual power relations, but also the relations of subordination between the authorities/gaolers and subalterns/prisoners, and the communities they represent.

***Image 5**:* Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes

***Image 6**:* Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[26]

Image 7: Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[27]

5. Fantastic Reversal

The photo showing a detainee with two police officers, foregrounded against the police arrest-vehicle (Image 1), seems to have been taken during the act of arrest. The main character is a young man of Middle-Eastern appearance dressed in a Vivienne Westwood sweater that resembles a prisoner's uniform, with an officer holding him on each side. The officer on his left side is in shadows but still distinct, his eyebrows frowning and his lips rigidly compressed. His face appears against the contrasted light of the background, intensifying the threat it transmits. The second officer seems to be holding the arrested man more gently, relating to the young man rather softly and empathically. We cannot see this officer's face, but according to the arrested young man's gaze, they seem to be exchanging glances. In this very familiar narrative, the purpose of the two authoritative figures is to make the detainee talk, by playing the 'bad cop' and the 'good cop.'[28] While the photographed space is bathed in the cold blue light colour of the police, the dark young man in the centre is lit in yellow. The warm light illuminating his hands and upper body, signalling the foci of the narrative, is contrasted with the blue light and opposes the meaning of order signalled by the blue colour. The entire series ranges from the threatening dark of night, to the strong sun striking the prisoners on their way to the detention facility (Images 7 & 8).

The darkness of the prison itself is illuminated by the light that enters from the outside world and especially by artificial light (Images 3, 9 & 10). The relationship between light and shadow and the way it structures the environment is also a significant element in the work of Genet. In *Our Lady of the Flowers* he writes:

> At night I love them, and my love endows them with life. During the day I go about my petty concerns. I am the housekeeper, watchful lest a bread-crumb or a speck of ash fall on the floor. But at night! Fear of the inspector who may

> suddenly switch on the light and put his head through the grating forces me to take sordid precautions lest the rustling of the sheets draw attention to my pleasure; but though it lose in nobility, my gesture, by becoming secret, heightens my pleasure. I dawdle. Beneath the sheet, my right hand stops to caress the absent face and then the whole body of the outlaw I have chosen for that evening's happiness. The left hand closes, then arranges its fingers in the form of a hollow organ which tries to resist, then offers itself, opens up, and a vigorous body, a wardrobe, emerges from the wall, advances, and falls upon me, crushes me against the straw mattress that has already been stained by more than a hundred prisoners, while I think of the happiness into which I sink at a time when God and His angels exist.[29]

***Image 8**:* Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[30]

In *Our Lady of the Flowers*, Genet describes the night as the time of erotica, a nocturnal masturbation that differs from the activity of the day. The narrator imagines himself as a housewife busy with cleaning to prepare the house for the coming of night. Against the nineteenth-century housewife's activity he presents the nocturnal activity in the 'bedroom.' Against the housewife, he positions the whore. The fear of the prison guard stimulates the beginning of masturbation. The guard switches on the invasive electric light, watching through the small window in the door, turns off the light and continues to monitor. The guard personifies the supervision, the impossibility of any private space that is protected from the public gaze.

***Image 9**:* Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[31]

Genet experienced severe supervised confinement of the kind he describes when he was imprisoned in 1926 at the age of sixteen for three months in La Petit Roquette. At that time, it was a prison for youth, for short periods of punishment before their transfer to institutions outside Paris. La Petite Roquette was destroyed in 1831 and rebuilt in 1836 by the architect Abel Blouet, according to the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's principle of the Panopticon. It was the first detention facility for youth and the first Panopticon in France. According to the

Panopticon model, the structural logic of the building is that whereas the prisoners cannot see each other from behind their bars, they are completely exposed to the gaze of the control tower or the guards. According to Bentham, the prisoners are not supposed to be able to see the distant and camouflaged prison guard, though they are aware of his existence; in the French version of the Panopticon, the prisoners could see the guard.[32]

According to Foucault, the Panopticon model was a turning point in the perception of confinement, in marking the transition from dungeon to modern day prison. It constituted a transition from the perception of an enclosure designed to suppress and seal the prisoner off from the world, denying him light in his life, to the perception of flooding the prisoner with light and depriving him of darkness, a situation in which he is constantly monitored. As Foucault writes, 'Full lighting and the eye of a supervisor capture better than darkness, which ultimately protected. Visibility is a trap.'[33] In pre-modern times, before the birth of the prison, observes Foucault, the imprisoned were suppressed and society forgot their existence. The prisoner was deprived of a gaze because, in sinning, he had turned away (looked away) from God. This is the Augustinian sin: Shifting one's perspective away from God leads God to withdraw his gaze and grace. The prison thereby becomes a deportation facility. In modernity, by contrast, there is no longer room for the exile of the prisoner; he is not simply removed or concealed. Rather, he remains visible, implanted in the body of the State. Thus, in modernity the prisoner's privacy is denied. He is constantly exposed to the supervising gaze. Crime is perceived as pathology and the prisoner becomes an object of research and detection. 'He is the Object of information,' writes Foucault, 'never a subject in communication.'[34] In this sense, the modern prisoner has no private space; he is sentenced to live under the public eye, making the action that Genet reports in the paragraph quoted above, an act of public masturbation.

The same masturbation scene described by Genet, in which the prison guard peers into the erotic space produced by the prisoner himself, appears again in his film *A Song of Love* (1950), in which we see the prison guard peering through a hole in the door at the masturbating inmates. The guard is obviously a voyeur, and voyeurism is another phenomenon that was considered a perversion in the nineteenth century, 'perverse implantation,' to use Foucault's terms.[35] However, unlike the 'classic' invisible voyeur, the guard in the film actively watches from his position of power. He voyeuristically enjoys the act of masturbation as much as he derives pleasure from the power in his hands/eyes. The inquiring gaze of the prison guard is not only an act of remote enforcement and surveillance but also the gaze of someone who yearns and desires. He is supervising but also interested sexually. Suddenly, we discover that there is also a kind of reciprocity that lies at the heart of the regime in power.[36]

We can follow a parallel scene in *Our Lady of the Flowers* in which the protagonist describes how he masturbates at night in gaol, partly hiding, partly revealing himself to the gaze of the prison guard. At the beginning of the description, Genet appears to be inviting us to pity the protagonist, describing how he is forced 'to take sordid precautions' to disguise the erotic action. However, he also writes that these sordid precautions that are imposed on him, 'heightens my pleasure.' Thus, the sexual pleasure is stronger and even guaranteed through the encroaching eyes of the prison inspector, i.e. within the operation of power lies a seductive dimension.[37]

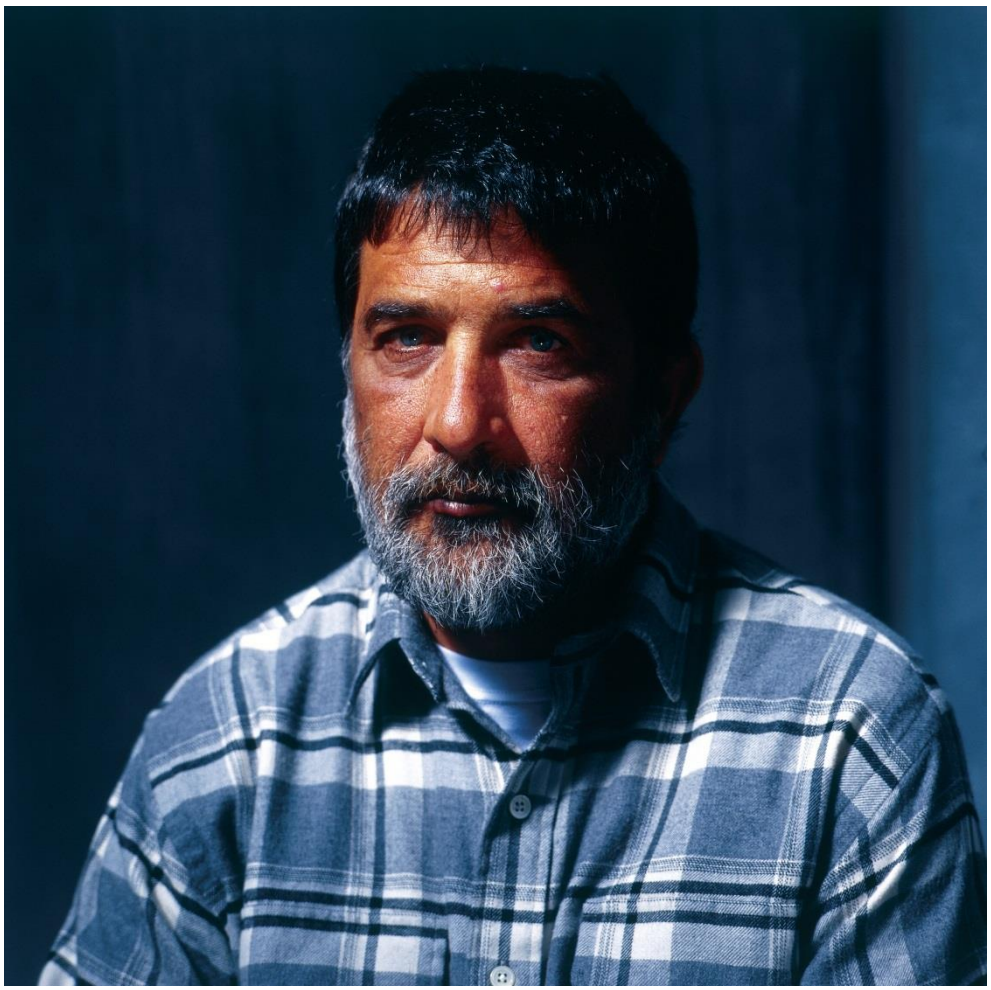

Image 10: Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[38]

Genet, in fact, is a precursor to what the literary theorist Leo Bersani terms the 'outlaw.'[39] His characters exist on the margins of society; they practice same-sex passions but they do not wear a 'gay identity.' It can be argued that this non-identitarian language is also represented in the photographs of Nes and creates an alternative queer identity relevant to contemporary society. Some may argue in regards to these figures, that if they have a homoerotic dimension, it is juxtaposed with a homophobic rejection of sex between men. That is, the characters of Nes, unlike those of Genet, are not marching ahead with their zippers open.[40] I contend, nonetheless, that they demonstrate a sexual interaction that can be read against the Israeli geopolitical reality.

It is possible to see the participants in the scene of arrest, a common theme in mainstream and BDSM erotica, as sharing the same fashion/erotic community (Image 1). The narrated story in the photograph is a parodic enactment of local geo-ethnic relationships and beyond. By staging an erotically charged narrative, the photographs offer a kind of acting out, allowing Israeli viewers to break free from their quotidian lives and encouraging them to

experience and identify with the opposite roles.[41] The three figures in the act of arrest do not present exposed violence per se; rather, they perform a body language and gestures that resemble a war dance. The protagonist in the centre, lit with bright, warm tones, presents a tough masculinity, order and unbridled desire.[42] The erotic context may still be doubted here, since there is no clear and transparent presentation of sexual interaction and no literal representation of sexual intercourse. However, examples of erotica built around a lack of realization of penetration can be found, for example, in 'About Penetration' by the writer Catherine Tavel.[43]

Tavel tells a story about penetration by writing of its absence. In the love affair that unfolds between Diane and Thomas, the erotic relationship between them can be considered unrealized because it is based on masturbation and phone conversations/sex. To Diane's chagrin, the married 'Thomas wouldn't touch her,' he refuses to 'betray' his wife and to have any direct sexual encounter with her.[44] Diane compensates for this refusal by symbolic gestures such as the purchase of earrings for herself and for Thomas at Christmas. The ear piercing and the wearing of the earrings become signs of the missed encounter. One of the highlights of the plot takes place towards the end of the story. Diane is sleeping with Kenny, Thomas' friend, while the latter is content with just watching the two. The exchange of the desiring glances between Diane and Thomas during the event manifests an indication of erotic interaction. Despite the vulnerability of Diane, who is actually being penetrated by Kenny and scopically 'penetrated' by Thomas, she returns Thomas' 'look' and thereby undermines her objectified status in the scopic regime, as indicated by her 'empowered' orgasm.[45]

Image 11: Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[46]

Erotic interaction is signified in *The Prisoners* photos, for example, through the handcuffed hands. In one photo, the bound hands positioned above the firm buttocks present what Cornell described as a 'man's posture as erect but his role as passive. The handcuffs … signaling the site that serves both as a sign of sexual vulnerability and gay desire' (Image 2).[47] The handcuffs are those that connect the twins and recall single-sex interaction (Image 3). Another photo shows handcuffs penetrated by fists (Image 11), evoking the hands that penetrate the bars (Image 12). The latter two echo homosexual practices of penetration,[48] and the handcuffs here are an indication of an erotic touch, similar to the earrings in the ears of Diane and Thomas.

The power expressed on the face of the arrested man (Image 1) and his directed gaze, calls to mind the position of Diane in 'On Penetration.'

> She would penetrate Thomas without even touching him. She would penetrate him with her eyes and with other things. She would take him inside that way. She would use the power generated by her orgasm to penetrate him.[49]

Like Diane, who experienced erotic empowerment in a situation that can be perceived as exploitative, humiliating, and oppressive, the prisoner's gaze in the photo allows him to gain power, despite the restriction of the body. Furthermore, while the handcuffed prisoner is being 'conquered' by the policemen, the experience that is being expressed on his face can be seen as one of empowerment and not of subordination.

Image 12: Untitled, © 2003. Photograph courtesy of Adi Nes[50]

Regarding the question of the gaze, following the early critical language of the film theorist Laura Mulvey in her psychoanalytic discussion of the cinematic gaze, it can be said that the policemen in the dark, like the viewer in the cinema, is looking as if through a keyhole, much as the photographer looks through the viewfinder of the camera. The policeman's gaze represents scopophilic pleasure in which the thing that is being seen is consumed like an object. This pleasure echoes the voyeuristic experience of the spectators (Image 1). A second pleasure relevant to the examination of the spectacle before us is essentially narcissistic and is based on identification with an ideal self.[51] The arrested protagonist at the central axis of the photograph can also function as an object of identification, like a character or a hero with whom the observer can identify. Simply put, however, this photo moves away from the classic gender split between the scopophilic object, the woman, and the viewer's subject of identification, the man, for both roles represented in the photographs are performed by men.[52]

Mulvey's dichotomy could seemingly be implemented to analyse the image, if we were to suggest that the photo offers an ethnic version of the gender polarity she describes. In other words, the Israeli light-skinned policeman becomes an agent for the viewer's psychological identification, while the Middle Eastern or Arab man becomes his object of desire. Such a shift ostensibly makes sense because of the way that the image provides a voyeuristic, sadistic urge for control and punishment, which is an integral part of this narrative. Thus, the gaze framed in this photograph posits the Arab/Middle-Eastern man as an erotic object in the eye of the camera, echoing the gaze of the photographer. In this spirit one could argue that the white man is consuming his Other, occupying the female's position, suggested by Mulvey as a passive object.

This reading is only partial, however, because it perceives the central protagonist in the photo as passive and misses the extent of his activism.[53] Moreover, it does not take into account the context of consumption of the presented photos. The readers of *Vogue Hommes International*, for whom the series was originally designed, share different kinds of pleasure and, moreover, they can experience identification and solidarity with the character of the handcuffed figure. This does not suggest that they experience a masochistic pleasure, but that it is possible for them to move between the position of the handcuffing guard and the shackled arrested man.[54] Like the historian Teresa de Lauretis' female spectator, the spectator of these photographs may experience a double identification: with the allegedly active masculine gaze and with the passive feminine image.[55] Not only do the two officers represent the same nuance of active and passive figures, the 'good cop' and the 'bad cop,' but one of them seems determined and strong while the other indicates softness and ambivalence about the act of arrest. However, the protagonist, himself, the prisoner in the centre of the photograph, is a double subject: that is, he holds a two-fold position in himself – both active and passive.[56] The spectator or the viewer who flips through the pages of *Vogue Hommes International* is invited to move between one position and the other.

In this sense the series both presents the exciting setting of the conflictual ethno-national Israeli/Palestinian reality and demonstrates the fixed roles assigned to the opposing sides. What seems to be a white man and/or an Israeli policeman is 'traditionally' defined in the Israeli public imagination as the subject, and the dark man is considered the object of action – passive, to be penetrated, feminine, without subjectivity. The photo presents a 'performative resignification' of the self-evidential ethnic locations. Within the erotic narrative, the Middle Eastern/Arab man can define himself as a subject even when he is occupying the position of the object in the presented scenario.

The men presented in the photograph, like fashion models, wear their masculinity and sexual positions. They are performing their gendered/sexual roles. In their routine, they 'play' their active or passive roles. How they are staged in the photo, however, highlights the multi-

dimensionality of the models in that their attire is not only one of a representation of clothes for sale but a cross-dressing of their gendered roles. This is the key to understanding the photos that offer the political sphere an almost fantastic option. It is a representation that although aware of the mundane violence and coercion experienced by minorities in Israel or Israel's 'Others,' still is able to see them as active subjects or equal partners in terms of sexuality, gender, and politics. This photo, along with others in the series, opens the way to the emancipatory options hidden in reality. It 'drags' reality, both in the sense of dressing it with other options of existence and in pulling it toward change.

6. Emancipatory Masochistic Chain of Desire

Another key image in *The Prisoners* series shows the conflict between the imprisoning guard and the imprisoned in a very straightforward way (Image 5). This photograph offers a key to understanding the way by which subaltern relations are created by means of territorial control, surveillance action, and intimidation. The photo seems initially to represent the social and territorial conflicts in Israeli society. It presents a dramatization of the relations that constitute and subordinate subjects/subjectivity. The officer (who is wearing sunglasses by Cutler & Gross) appears as a representative of the discourse that maps and organizes the prisoner (who is wearing a distressed look leather blouson by Valentino Red and a wool jumper by Louis Vuitton), establishing him as a subject when he comes into contact with power. If the national Israeli discourse is based on the repression inherent in the occupation processes and on the perception that the Israelis themselves are the victims, then this photo works the other way around.

Closer inspection reveals this photo to be more complicated. The fashionable man, the (presumably) Palestinian is not solely a victim. His power and his facial expression show that he is not a submissive, one-way victim. The passion relations depicted here identify the officer as still quiet and powerful, but not as an overtly violent figure. The young prisoner confronting the officer has his own desire; it seems that once we have crossed the divide between the officer and the prisoner and slipped into the space of desire, it is no longer clear who controls the situation. There is a reversal of power relations here because, I think, in many ways this photograph includes signs of the subservience of the policeman, or at least of the non-passive dimensions of the prisoner. With his eyes hidden behind his sunglasses, the policeman seemingly holds the position of power; like the control tower in the model of the Panopticon, he observes the prisoners but they cannot see him. However, at the same time, and like the inspector in *A Song of Love*, the policeman is not only observing and supervising, he is craving and seeking his object of desire.

The detainee in the photograph transmits the sense of a tremendous desire for transgression; he is far from being an easy prey to the desires of the prison guard. Moreover, in the end what we confront here is a couple representing a situation of mutual recognition, or at least of a claim to recognition. If sex/sexuality is what constitutes the modern subject, at least in the Foucauldian genealogy, in this photograph, subjectivity lies somewhere between the two characters.[57] Staring back, he disrupts the hierarchy, the apparent proper order. This deviation challenges what is seen by the authority as the proper place of the prisoner. The forbidden upward tilt of the head, looking directly at the authority, is a prohibited action for the body of the prisoner, a prohibited gesture that opens the way to a new regime of vision and speech. When the prisoner looks at his gaoler not only as a guard/policeman/police function but as an object of aesthetic appreciation, his own improper body, as the subject-in-the-making by his act of staring, opens the door to a new spatio-temporal organization, a new option of being – with, a new 'queer relationality.'[58]

One could read this entire narrative framework as an account of oppression; that is, of 'classical' Orientalism, in which the Palestinian undergoes a process of colonialization by the imperialist mythologist, who presents him as the noble savage, the exotic Other.[59] On the other hand, the balancing of the representation, the mutual objectification, posits this image as a reflexive criticism by Nes, the photographer, as a reaction to oppression. Thus, the documentary perspective that reads this as a representation of the reality of oppression is insufficient because the series is also an erotic/social fantasy as well as a fashion spread, two fictions staged to the last detail by the photographer. Nes makes the handcuffs, for example, a fashionable accessory, embodying, as a synecdoche of the series, an erotic desire (Images 1, 2, 3, 7 & 11). Like fashion itself, fashion photography is based on the mechanism of identification.[60] If the photographer reveals the objects of his identification, and we, like him, perceive these situations as reflections of our own identification, the photograph becomes the embodiment of a masochistic situation.

In 'Coldness and Cruelty' (1967), the philosopher Gilles Deleuze differentiates between masochism and sadism. He argues that the 'belief in the unity [of them] is…the result of misunderstandings and careless reasoning….It is unrealistic.' He adds, 'the concurrence of sadism and masochism is fundamentally one of analogy only; their processes and their formations are entirely different,' and their allegedly common ground, 'should therefore make us suspicious.'[61] When I suggest that *The Prisoners*, following Deleuze, embodies a possible masochistic stance, I mean that the erotic bond in masochism is based on an alliance and mutual accord. The relationship between the officer and the detainee can be read as what the literary critic Mairéad Hanrahan has called 'a 'chain of desire.'[62] The sequence of gestures constitutes acts of exchange with homoerotic implications in which desire and attraction turn the bodies into something else. The choreography of the body allows these characters to transcend their trivial alleged identity.[63] If sadistic fantasy relates to a sanctification of the institution (such as the church or the nation), in masochism the relations are those of consent, and even if there is an element of force, torture, etc., 'the terms and limits have been specified ahead.'[64]

In this sense, I would argue that there is something utopian/alternative/fantastic in this series of photographs. Whereas reality shows that at the material, socio-political level there is one party that holds power and acts transgressively, that is, breaks the international law in order to define itself,[65] as if it were above the law (this is one definition of sadism), this series, with the reciprocity inherent in it, hints at a masochistic space in which priority is given to those Others marginalized by society. In the spirit of Deleuze, I contend that *The Prisoners* photos suggest that while the sadistic perception empowers the aggressor, the masochistic one empowers the victim. This is the basis for an understanding that should be discussed elsewhere: Israelis and members of post 9/11 Western society need to accept the conceptual and material possibility of being submissive and understand what it means to live a precarious life. 'What is morally binding,' writes the philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler, 'does not proceed from my autonomy or my reflexivity. It comes to me from elsewhere, unbidden, unexpected, and unplanned.'[66] The moral obligation arises from: 'The face as the extreme precariousness of the other. Peace as awakens to the precariousness of the other.'[67] In ethical terms,

> To respond to the face, to understand its meaning, means to be awake to what is precarious in another life or, rather, the precariousness of life itself.…It has to be an understanding of the precariousness of the Other.[68]

7. Conclusion

To conclude, the first stratum of *The Prisoners* photos is one of fashion-photography showing menswear, clothes that are being used to en-gender identity. Those who wear them

repeat the norms established by the fashion market. They dress in accordance with the codes. They act out their figure/image and shape their actual being, and their gender is thus constituted by performative action. Clothing is supposed to provide a reliability to gender identity. However, the photos reveal that masculinity is the product of dress codes and behaviour that materializes in various performances. Following the identity parades in the series (Images 6 & 7), it can be argued that being a man or a woman is the outcome of being able to line up the correct signs and symbols that will be recognized and deciphered properly by others. As I have shown, however, this series does much more than merely illustrate the repetitive effects and imitations of gender in turning to introduce a system of supervision and punishment in a queer, ethnic, geo-political, Israeli-Palestinian context.

There is no *fixed* relationship between the policing discourse in the prison and the operating conditions in the geo-political Israel/Palestine space, and the power of Israeli oppression. That is to say, the photographs I have discussed here show how despite the regime and living conditions in the prison, one can still see the multi-directional manner of the movement of power between prison guard and prisoners. Foucault wrote, 'We must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one.'[69] The staging of the violent action, its reiteration in the photos, transports and undermines power. Thus, when homosexuality crosses 'the extreme discretion' of the eighteenth century and appears in the nineteenth century, spreading and gaining visibility in the twentieth century in a variety of discourses, though it was attacked by the mechanisms of social control that perceived it as an aberration, at the same time it enabled the possibility of a counter-discourse that allowed it to 'to demand that its legitimacy or "naturality" be acknowledged.'[70]

The photographic series shows that in this oppressive reality, represented by prison, there can appear cracks out of which the subaltern can speak. The criminalization of reality that disciplines the subject as one that is controlled by violent deviation is translated in the photos into the disciplinary discourse that identifies homosexuality in relation to subjects whose sexuality is their essence. As this article has sought to show, the series presents the same logic that allows homosexuals to demand legitimacy on the basis of what is identified as their oppositional essence, as the logic that allows the Palestinian detainee to direct his opposition and claim its legitimacy from the same Otherness that is attributed to him. Thus the representation of the oppressive regime in the photos presents the detainees in a way that challenges the space and conditions of detention and, moreover, the very reality of detention itself.

The Prisoners series should be seen as an act of fashion photography that offers a form of fantasy allowing the spectator to access different representations of desire, another script, or a new fantastic, sexual, political option. These images constitute a set through which desire is introduced into a scene, through which the subject can experience desire that enables the crossing of his ethnic and/or gender specificity.[71] Instead of perceiving the Palestinians, Middle-Eastern men, refugees, homosexuals etc., as examples of inferiority and humiliation, the series rewrites them as objects of desire that are also subjects of action and performance in a permanent process of subjectification.

8. Epilogue

In the image that closes the series at *Vogue Hommes International*, a Doberman dog appears with its mouth open (Image 8). The photograph does not reveal whether he is barking or silent. His appearance with a studded leather collar, designed by Bobby Samaritaine, raises the most significant issue in this photographic series: the question of visibility and audibility. Aristotle distinguishes between an animal that makes a sound, which represents a

state of being, and humans that possess the capacity of speech and, as a result, can express the distinction between good and evil. He claims that humans have logos (reasoned speech) that enable them to discern right from wrong, and as such to be involved with political activity. Samuel A. Chambers, writing on political theory, describes Aristotle's position and also introduces the critical reaction of the philosopher Jacques Rancière, while connecting the discourse of the latter to queer theory. According to Rancière, one cannot defend Aristotle's ontological position of distinguishing between the pre-political, represented by the animal, and the political associated with humans. The specific identification of the sounds made by man as an utterance is a political decision. Referring to a particular noise, sound, or voice as an utterance is a political decision. A way to suppress a political being is by relating to him as non-political. Chambers calls the decision regarding who should be heard and seen as the politics of (in)audibility or the politics of (in)visibility.[72]

Nes' aesthetics offer a queer politics in the sense that his images are not fixed in one 'natural' space. His artistic photos are not embalmed in the museum that has become the house of artistic photography in the twentieth century fin de siècle. They migrate to magazine pages and beyond; they refuse to stay put. The figures in the highly staged photographs may be imprisoned in the social space and in the geo-political complexity of the area represented, but they also suggest their ability to imagine new forms of life, and thus the photographs and the people presented in them embody a kind of aesthetic capacity. These photographs reveal an egalitarian aesthetics set in a fashion magazine, but one that is moving between the autonomy of art and heteronormativity of life. They make 'visible what had been excluded from the perceptual field' and 'audible what used to be inaudible.'[73]

The queer position of this photographic series is embodied in the challenge and resistance it presents to gender norms, sexuality and politics, in that it opposes the binarism of masculine and feminine, active and passive, dominant and submissive, national subject and other national object, etc. The series does not declare that there is only one minority or single identity that must be rehabilitated, i.e., the foreign worker, the Palestinian, the Sephardic Jew, etc. The photos offer a political move that cannot be reduced to identity politics, and in this sense they are not oriented to produce inclusiveness. The conflictual situations staged in these photos, the various groups facing one another, Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews, immigrants and natives, etc., carry their identity marks, but the series does not celebrate their identity as a substantial element; rather, their position becomes clear in a relational form. Changing the balance of power in the photos is not aimed at constructing an inverted power relation between the protagonists. The harsh reality will not be resolved by reversing the hierarchy but by the people themselves, who will face each other, in relation to one another, whose subjectivity will be an in-between one, to be considered as positionality and relationality.

If the detention facility marks the official order or even the polis, then the political action is a disturbance, a disorder, just as the series under discussion is a declaration of wrongs and injustice. The inversion and the opening up of new, alternative relations in these photographs offer a way to replace the logic of control with an egalitarian logic. The fashionable action of dressing the disempowered in luxurious finery amounts to resisting the heteronormativity of Israeli culture. This position reveals that the series is not aimed at creating a new, alternative, essential identity. Rather, the series portrays a new political horizon, a political option that in many ways is anti-identity, anti-statist, anti-normative, a politics that characterizes the queer discourse after what could be called the post-sexual turn of this field.[74]

Notes

[1] I want to thank the reviewers for constructive comments and valuable advice.
[2] The series was shown again as a solo exhibition at the Tel-Aviv Museum of Art as part of the wining artist's prize: *Adi Nes: Photographs – The Leon Constantiner Photography Award for an Israeli Artist-2003* (8 December 2003 - 20 March 2004), curator Nili Goren; and at the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, *Between Promise and Possibility: The Photographs of Adi Nes* (13 March - 18 July 2004), curator Daniel Cornell. Fashion details supplied in notes associated with captions.
[3] The Dead Sea area is a matter of territorial dispute between Israel and the Palestinians. According to the Palestinians 'since 1967, Israel has unlawfully appropriated vast portions of Palestinian land in the occupied Dead Sea area primarily to establish settlements and through those exerting a firm control over the region, including over its natural resources.' Claudia Nicoletti and Anne-Marie Hearne, *Pillage of the Dead Sea: Israel's Unlawful Exploitation of Natural Resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (Ramallah, West Bank: Al-Haq, 2012), 8.
[4] *The Prisoners* recalls other series by this photographer: *The Soldiers* (1994-2000) and *The Boys* (2000). After *The Prisoners* series came the *Bible Stories* (2003-2006) series, and most recently, *The Village* (2012).
[5] Adi Nes as quoted by Shira Breuer, 'Fashion/The Workers Will Wear Red to the Gallows,' *Haaretz*, January 06, 2004, accessed 26 January 2014, http://www.adines.com/content/Fashion%20-%20The%20workers%20will%20wear%20red%20to%20the%20gallows.htm.
[6] Nili Goren, 'Turning Fiction into Routine,' *Adi Nes: Photographs* (Tel Aviv and San Francisco: Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 2004), 7.
[7] Not used by *Vogue Hommes*; featured in Adi Nes exhibitions. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[8] Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, 'The Decade of Indifference,' in *Real Time: Art in Israel, 1998-2007*, ed. Amitai Mendelsohn (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2008), 11.
[9] In this sense, I agree with the wish expressed by Gil Hochberg 'to dare to look at this very uncomfortable meeting between "queer" politics and "real" politics."' See Hoda El Shakry, 'A Conversation with Gil Hochberg on "Queer Politics and the Question of Palestine,"' *Newsletter for the UCLA Centre for the Study of Women*, 4 April 2009, accessed 24 February 2013, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/1pm3p9d1.
[10] Angela McRobbie, *British Fashion Design: Rag Trade or Image Industry?* (London: Routledge, 1998), 153.
[11] John Hartley and Ellie Rennie, 'About a Girl,' *Journalism* 5, no. 4 (November 2004): 458-479.
[12] Lars Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, trans. John Irons (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 19.
[13] John Hartley and Ellie Rennie, 'About A Girl,' 477.
[14] Victor Brombert in his study on prison literature, *The Romantic Prison: The French Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); from Andrew Sobanet, *Jail Sentences: Representing Prison in Twentieth-Century French Fiction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 3.
[15] Quoted in Ibid., 5-6.
[16] Agamben's model to characterize modernity and the state of exception is actually the camp. See Giorgio Agamben, 'The Camp as the "Nomos" of the Modern,' in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 166-180.

[17] Georg Simmel, 'Fashion,' *International Quarterly* X (1904): 139, accessed 18 January 2014, http://www.modetheorie.de/fileadmin/Texte/s/Simmel-Fashion_1904.pdf.
[18] Simmel, 'Fashion,' 152.
[19] Simmel, 'Fashion,' 138.
[20] Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 83.
[21] Andrew Ross, 'Tribalism in Effect,' in Shari Benstock and Suzanne Ferriss, *On Fashion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999), 284-299.
[22] Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 89.
[23] Adi Ness' interest in same-sex desire and homoerotic aesthetics has become a discursive convention. See for example: Doreet LeVitte Harten, 'Less the Horror than the Grace,' *Adi Nes* (Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, 2007), 128-146.
[24] Elizabeth Stephens, 'Corporeographies: The Dancing Body in 'adame Miroir and Un chant d'amour,' eds. Clare Finburgh, Carl Lavery, and Maria Sevtsova, *Genet: Politics and Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 160.
[25] Ibid., 163.
[26] Cotton blouson, Paul & Joe. Shearling coat and striped silk scarf, Boss Hugo Boss. Wool pea coat, Louis Vuitton. Cotton mix zipped Jacquard cardigan, Boss Hugo Boss. Used-look leather jacket, Nicole Farhi. Collarless cotton shirt, Boss Hugo Boss. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[27] Zipped wool cardigan, Kenzo. Boot-cut cotton jeans, Junya Watanabe. Leather lace-up boots, Jill Sander. Hooded zipped cotton top, Gap. Cotton T-shirt, Calvin Klein. Used-look cotton jeans, Paul & Joe. Leather lace-up trainers, Adidas. Wool pea coat and cotton T-shirt, Rykiel Homme. Straight-cut corduroy jeans, Gap. Leather boots, Dirk Bikkembergs. Hooded zipped cotton blouson, Dirk Schönberger. Zipper wool jumper, Nicole Farhi. Stripped cotton trousers, H&M. Leather Boots, DKNY. Zipped polyamide 'ski' jacket, Martin Margiela. Straight-cut cotton jeans, Apc. Leather Boots, Dirk Bikkembergs. Wool mix trench coat, Martin Margiela. Straight-cut jeans and leather boots, Apc. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[28] This visual match between that which stimulates empathy and that which results in rejection, or alternatively identification with the 'beautiful' and escape from drudgery is a basic tool in the visibility and the merchandizing of the fashion world. This topic can be seen clearly in the world of plastic surgery advertising, featuring pictures of before surgery (damaged) and after surgery (beautiful). Or, alternatively, reality shows featuring various kinds of 'total makeover' for the participants.
[29] Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, 4.
[30] The Doberman is wearing a studded leather collar, Bobby, Samaritaine, Paris. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[31] Cotton shirts and trousers by Paul Smith.
[32] For a short introduction to the life of Genet and the history of the Panopticon see Yehunatan Alsheh and Roy Wagner, *Political Sodomy: On the Relevance of Jean Genet* (Tel-Aviv: Resling, 2007), 142-143.
[33] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1977), 200.
[34] Ibid., 200.
[35] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 36.
[36] For this dialectical interpretation of the position of the officer, and an interesting approach of the writings of Jean Genet, see Alsheh and Wagner, *Political Sodomy*, 140-147.
[37] Ibid., 145.

[38] Cotton check shirt by Polo Ralph Lauren; cotton T-shirt by Ralph Lauren. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[39] Leo Bersani, *Homos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 113-184.
[40] For the non-identitarian character of the images in Genet's writings see Provencher, *Queer French*, 53-63.
[41] Ziv analyses the story *The Surprise Party* by Pat Califia along those lines of dramatization of gender hierarchies, offering a parodic commentary on the gender system itself as well as a form of acting out that fools the system. See Amalia Ziv, *Sexual Thoughts: Queer Theory, Pornography, and the Politics of Sexuality* (Tel-Aviv: Resling, 2013), 206 (Hebrew) [English from the English cover of the book].
[42] Goren, 'Turning Fiction into Routine,' 5.
[43] Catherine Tavel, 'About Penetration,' in *Herotica 3: A Collection of Women's Erotic Fiction*, ed. Susie Bright (New York: Plume, 1994), 56-69.
[44] Ibid., 60.
[45] My description of 'About Penetration' is based on Ziv, *Sexual Thoughts*, 179-180.
[46] Not used by *Vogue Hommes*; featured in Adi Nes exhibitions. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[47] Daniel Cornell, 'Imprisoning Desires,' *Adi Nes: Photographs* (Tel Aviv and San Francisco: Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 2004), 16.
[48] 'Fisting' refers to the insertion of a hand or forearm into the rectum.
[49] Tavel, 'About Penetration,' 68.
[50] Not used by *Vogue Hommes*; featured in Adi Nes exhibitions. Stylist: Paul Mather.
[51] In the words of Mulvey, there are: 'Two contradictory aspects of the pleasurable structures of looking in the conventional cinematic situation. The first, scopophilic, arises from pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight. The second, developed through narcissism and the constitution of the ego, comes from identification with the image seen.' Laura Mulvey, 'Visual and Other Pleasures' (1975), in *Film Theory and Criticism*: *Introductory Readings*, eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 836-837.
[52] I am well aware of the empirical tone of this claim and of the way it misrepresents Mulvey's theoretical argument. Mulvey's concept of 'the male gaze' relates to the normative way of seeing women as primarily sex objects; i.e., whoever performs this way of seeing reflects a masculine role. The picture discussed here, however, complicates this argument in showing that in the homoerotic scenario the objectified beheld person and the subject gazing at him reflect a reciprocal or mutual gaze economy that transcends Mulvey's clear opposition. See Anne W. Eaton, 'What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude? A Feminist Perspective on Art and Pornography,' in *Art and Pornography: Philosophical Essays*, eds. Hans Maes and Jerrold Levinson (Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 293.
[53] In a later reflection on her seminal article Mulvey rethinks the opposition that underlies her previous writing. She suggests that the female spectator may have a mobile position that enables her to oscillate between active masculine and passive feminine, narrative identifications. But as Stacey suggests, Mulvey's later offer suggests that for a feminine spectator to identify with an active desire, she must assume a masculine position. And again we end up with a gender binarism according to which a desiring active woman is actually a male. See Laura Mulvey, 'Afterthoughts on "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" Inspired by *Duel in the Sun* (1946),' *Framework* 15/16/17 (1981): 12-15; and Stacey, *Star Gazing*, 25-26.
[54] Raymond Bellour in his discussion of Hitchcock's films reads the position of the feminine into the cinematic apparatus and claims that the woman who values the films he analyses does so 'only from her own masochism.' Raymond Bellour, 'Hitchcock the Enunciator,' *Camera*

Obscura 2 (1977): 66-91; and his 'Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion,' *Camera Obscura* 3/4 (1979): 105-106. Here according to the critical presentation of Bellour's position by Stacey, *Star Gazing*, 24-25.

[55] See Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 144; and see also Stacey, *Star Gazing*, 26; and Ziv, *Sexual Thoughts*, 188-189.

[56] As Ziv described this dialectic in another case, feminist discourse often clings to heterosexual dichotomies, for instance 'identification of masculinity with activity, desire and possession of the phallus and the gaze, facing with identification of femininity with passivity, lack of the phallus and status an object of desire and of the gaze.' Ziv, *Sexual Thoughts*, 199.

[57] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*.

[58] Samuel A. Chambers and Michael O'Rourke, 'Jacques Rancière on the Shores of Queer Theory,' *borderlands* 8, no. 2 (2009): 9.

[59] The now classic text that analyses this sort of Orientalist discourse is Edward Said's *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). But what Nes offers here is a less monolithic vision that accentuates the multi-directionality of (colonial) power. In this sense Nes is closer to Homi Bhabha's theory, See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 71-72. For an overview of Said's legacy and the post-colonial polemics see Victor Li, 'Edward Said's Untidiness,' *Postcolonial Text* 1, no 1 (2004). Accessed 3 February 2014, http://postcolonial.org/index.php/pct/article/viewArticle/309/106.

[60] According to Lacanian psychoanalysis, the subject is fashioned in and by identifications. The subject identifies through narcissism, aggression, misrecognition, and objectification. Fashion photography takes advantage of these mechanisms. See Diana Fuss, 'Fashion and the Homospectatorial Look,' *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 4 (Summer, 1992): 716.

[61] Gilles Deleuze, 'Coldness and Cruelty' (1967), in *Masochism*, trans. Jean McNeil (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 40, 46.

[62] In Stephens, 'Corporeographies,' 164.

[63]Ibid., 163-164.

[64] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 'Masoch/Lancelotism,' *New Literary History* 28, no. 2 (1997): 231-260, accessed 25 March, 2013,
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/new_literary_history/v028/28.2cohen.html#FOOT22.

[65] Israel is often blamed by various organizations for discriminatory policies in the Israeli Negev and the West Bank: building unlawful settlements in occupied territories, attacking Gaza, enforcing a blockade etc. See for example the activity reports of B'TSELEM – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.
http://www.btselem.org/.

[66] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso, 2004), 130.

[67] Ibid., 134.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 100.

[70] Ibid., 101.

[71] Elisabeth Cowie discusses fantasy as a set by which desire is introduced into a scene. Although the fantasy she discusses doesn't relate directly to object relations in the simple sense, as the staging relates to 'what isn't there, of what can never *directly* be seen,' it opens the way to understanding the gliding between the different sexual, gendered and ethnic positions. See Elizabeth Cowie, 'Fantasia,' in *Visual Culture: The Reader*, eds. Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall (London: Sage Publication, 2005), 356-369. And see Stacey, *Star Gazing*, 30-31.

[72] Samuel A. Chambers, 'A Queer Politics of the Democratic Miscount,' *borderlands* 8, no. 2 (2009): 9-10.
[73] Rancière from *The Philosopher and His Poor* quoted in Roger Cook, 'Aesthetic Revolution, the Staging of ("Homosexual") Equality and Contemporary Art,' *borderlands* 8, no. 2 (2009): 3.
[74] I call 'post-sexual' the theoretical move seeking to minimize the presence of sexuality in queer theory, or at least introduce its problematization. Even though I do not share this emerging repression, I understand the reason for this move is the dominance of sexuality in queer theory that led this field to become fixed on identity politics and even essentialist identitarianism. See Chambers and O'Rourke, 'Jacques Rancière on the Shores of Queer Theory,' 2.

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Making Things Present: Exhibition-Maker Judith Clark and the Layered Meanings of Historical Dress in the Here and Now

Sofia Pantouvaki and Donatella Barbieri

Abstract

In this article, the presentation of historical dress by the architecture trained exhibition-maker Judith Clark is examined as an evolving methodological enquiry that goes to the core of displaying dress from the past in the present. In her professional practice Clark takes the dual role of curator and designer, building on concepts of dress from a combined starting point of 'making things present,' in the words of the philosopher and literary critic Walter Benjamin. From her initial experimental exhibitions in the Judith Clark Costume Gallery (1997-2003), a nine-by-four meter space in Notting Hill, London, where she explored the body and dress in ways discursive and thematic, Clark's exhibitions have dealt with ways in which to display historical dress in a contemporary context, proposing a dialogic relationship between dress and audience, while addressing the absent body that once wore the garments. By situating dress at the intersection of multiple fields of practice and the variety of perspectives this entails, this study highlights curatorial interventions through which the spectator becomes engaged with the object that is dress. By re-defining the practice of presenting dress in exhibition, this process re-delineates the role of fashion curators, their co-creators, and spectators. The ideas presented in this article are based on the study of Judith Clark's work through visits to exhibitions she curated and designed and in a personal interview with Clark; many of the concepts discussed were also generated as a response to current scholarly literature on fashion curation from the perspective of design practitioner and researcher. Looking at fashion curation as a creative action shifts the way historical dress is presented and is part of a new interdisciplinary movement which is re-writing the rules for not only future curators of historical dress but for the ways in which historical dress can be read, understood and interpreted.

Key Words

Historical dress, interpretation, fashion curation, exhibition-making, Judith Clark, Judith Clark Costume Gallery, *Malign Muses/Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*. *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*.

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> The true method of making things present is to represent them in our space (not to represent ourselves in their space).
>
> -Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*[1]

1. Exhibiting Historical Dress: Layered Meanings

In current scholarly debates, historical dress and the layered and complex meanings that lie within its understanding and interpretation can be said to illuminate the past whilst articulating concerns about the present. According to Christopher Breward, the design historian and curator, redefining the discursive power of dress and the body is a 'paradigm shift that has

rocked a discipline not previously concerned with supporting vigorous or passionate debate'[2] and has taken place over the last three decades. Overcoming the earlier narrow view that considered fashion research 'an interesting subject for ladies,'[3] historical dress is understood today as a conveyor of information, meanings, values, and people's personal stories at various times. This shift reflects a rise of new approaches to the understanding of history that has been promoted by sociologists, social anthropologists, ethnologists, design historians, and cultural historians. To quote the dress historian Margaret Maynard:

> we ensure the future of dress by trying to understand all facets of clothing even though we may never fully comprehend what it meant to be attired this way. It is tricky work but we should never underestimate its usefulness.[4]

The fashion curator and exhibition-maker Judith Clark, the subject of this article, notes that 'fashion and academia have been uneasy bedfellows.'[5] Theorists such as Elizabeth Wilson, working in the field of cultural studies, have been at the root of new readings of dress and fashion from gender and material culture perspectives.[6] Consolidating the growing maturity of the subject, fashion research journals have been established, beginning with *Fashion Theory* founded in 1997 to *Catwalk*, founded in 2012, where fashion is examined from global and inter-disciplinary perspectives. More recently, scholarly insight has come from the field of performance costume; like fashion, costume in performance is a part of human life and dates back to early civilisations, yet remained largely unexplored from an academic perspective until the start of the twenty-first century.

This growing academic interest brought a transformation in the way fashion and dress gradually gained recognition and respect in the museum context. 'The Cinderella media of the museum have, since the late twentieth century, become the jewel in the crown,'[7] as pointed out by the dress historian and curator Amy de la Haye. In its 'Cinderella' days, institutional collecting policies denied historical dress a place in museums[8] until the early twentieth century, when it gradually began to be collected and displayed, a process that has increased dramatically since World War II. Unlike other fields of artistic practice, including the applied and decorative arts, dress – or 'costume' as it was then defined – had been considered 'frivolous' and superficial, associated with female vanity by the hegemony of male museum curators.[9]

When historical dress began to be exhibited, the focus of the early displays was on the exquisite craftsmanship and the social privilege that these garments represented. The display of finery and the inherent power symbolised in these chosen garments projected the entrenched superiority of the social elite to whom they had once belonged. In addition, in the logical progression of linear time that typically organises the objects in the museum 'the whole universe of style' was encompassed, 'organised, catalogued and contained.'[10] This made for an easily consumable and unchallenging view of the history of dress. Connected to a specific time, place, and the notable personage who once wore it, clothing has had voyeuristic interest for the spectator and been displayed to show deference and to represent social hierarchies.[11] In the course of the twentieth century, fashion curation developed as an independent field closely connected to the study and understanding of dress collections. The role of the author-curator 'bringing to life his [/her] own concept of fashion' was born and the field of curation opened to include women curators.[12] Historical dress became a new focus and seminal personalities such as the fashion editor and curator Diana Vreeland built a personal 'curatorial grammar,' set trends and created celebratory retrospectives focused on the work of a particular designer or 'a crucial moment in the evolution of Western fashion.'[13] In fifteen thematic exhibitions staged at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York from 1973 to 1987, Vreeland, who was Special Consultant for the Institute, introduced a theatrical approach to

fashion curation, supported by the use of props, music, and dramatic lighting. A pioneer in the development of museum fashion exhibition curation, Vreeland staged historical and contemporary dress in subjective ways and took into consideration the position and role of the viewer.[14] The historian Valerie Steele credits Diana Vreeland for challenging the convention of displaying historical dress in outmoded 'waxworks' exhibition, therefore giving license to other curators to create more progressive dress-based exhibitions.[15]

By the 1990s, fashion exhibitions had become the 'jewel in the crown' of museums, to use the aforementioned expression of de la Haye. This transformation was made possible by dedicated innovators in the field of dress history, theory, and fashion curation as well as by the designers themselves. In the twenty-first century, fashion is recognised as an expression of complex socio-political and cultural ideas, and is the focus of debates situated at the heart of human existence. Fashion curation has become a reflective practice, an encounter with dress on material as well as conceptual levels. Judith Clark has popularized this orientation in fashion exhibitions which she views as 'forms of free association' that allow her to work through relations among the clothing, curator, designer, the viewer, the body, time, and space.[16]

In recent years, the work of Judith Clark, Professor of Fashion and Museology, London College of Fashion, UAL, has advanced conventional modes of curatorial practice and challenged the idea of fashion as isolated objects situated in hierarchical chronologies.[17] Clark defines herself as 'exhibition-maker,' a term intended to incorporate both roles of curator and designer, roles usually thought of as distinct and undertaken by independent collaborators.[18] Her goal is to 'make ideas present,' i.e., reflecting and proposing new perspectives to an audience from a standpoint of an artist/creator. With the rise of fashion studies and research, Clark notes that there has been a movement to 'make exhibition design more articulate, to incorporate some of the abstract ideas within the experience of the exhibition.'[19] For Clark, exhibition-making is a form of performance, the creation of a new installation, a new mise-en-scène in an exhibition space.[20] This perspective has shifted the perception of history and dress from a self-reflective reductive exercise to an advanced level of questioning that promotes infinite possibilities of reading, responding, and making connections.

In this article, we focus on the work of Judith Clark because it has changed the ways in which dress is exhibited and has expanded the interaction of historical dress with fashion, creating a new artistic practice. By analysing Clark's key curatorial works, from her initial experimental exhibitions in the Judith Clark Costume Gallery (1997-2003) to her later collaborations with major collections of dress in museums like the ModeMuseum in Antwerp, Belgium, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, we propose that her questioning, dialogic perspective towards the absent body goes to the core of the very idea of displaying time through dress and re-defines the curator's agency. Looking in close detail at how ideas embedded in museum archived objects offer space for insightful interpretation and reveal new connections in the creation of site specific installations such as *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (2010) at Blythe House, the repository of the Victoria and Albert Museum reserve collections, we perceive Clark's role as that of an artist/author as well as exhibition-maker who 'makes things present.' This perspective, which looks at dress curation as a creative action, shifts the way historical dress is presented and is part of a new interdisciplinary movement with performative approach to body and space that is re-writing the rules for future curators of historical dress and the ways historical dress can be read, understood and interpreted.

2. Judith Clark Costume Gallery: New Curatorial Approaches

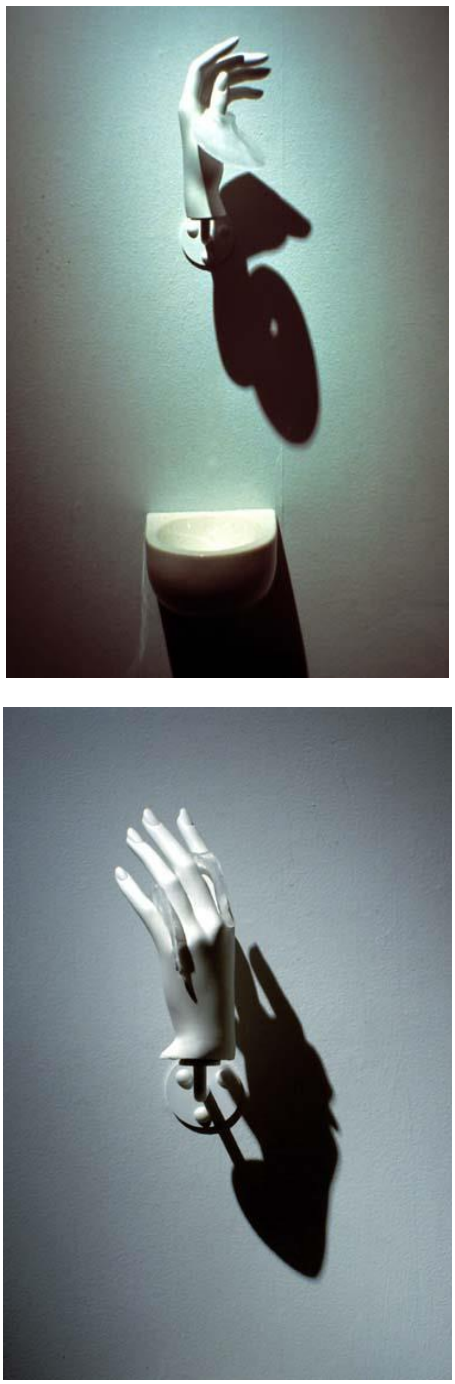
Clark's training is as an architect. Her shift from architecture to fashion curation began as she realized the parallels between the design and dressing of spaces with that of dressing the

human form. When a dress is viewed on a mannequin, she noticed that for viewers 'there is a profound identification with what you are looking at,' unlike other objects in the museum.[21]

As an undergraduate student of architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, in the late 1980s and then as a graduate student at the Architecture Association, School of Architecture in London in the early 1990s, Clark was already attuned to the sophisticated dialogue that existed between theory and practice in the mature scholarly field of architecture and soon became interested in the intersection of the body, dress, and architecture. Fashion curation and fashion theory were in their infancy, and Clark nourished a profound interest in the subjects while frequently visiting the permanent collection of historical costumes at the V&A. Her reading around architecture probed at the boundaries of the body and architecture; prominent among these were the Princeton Papers on Architecture: *Sexuality and Space*; Adrian Forty's paper titled 'Of Cars, Clothes and Carpets: Design Metaphors in Architectural Thought,'[22] and Mark Cousins' writing on psychoanalysis and space. Clark would 'literally pounce' on any of the writing that connected dress and architecture. Following the publication of Elizabeth Wilson's *Adorned in Dreams*, Clark asked Wilson to be the supervisor for her MPhil at the Architecture Association.[23] Though committed to ideas beyond the disciplinary boundaries of architecture, Roy Landau, then Head of Graduate Studies at the Architecture Association, was dismissive of Clark's focus on dress and suggestion that Elizabeth Wilson be her supervisor, commenting, 'well, if you want to join the sisterhood.' Clark left the programme soon afterwards.[24]

Clark served her apprenticeship (1993-1994) as assistant curator at the Accademia Italiana delle Arti e delle Arti Applicate, London, and subsequently at the Art Restoration for Cultural Heritage, Lugano, Switzerland (1995). In both places she helped assemble precious objects and works of art for a range of important exhibitions, gaining expertise in the exchanges that take place as part of curatorial practice. Clark credits her movement across disciplinary boundaries and movement from architecture to making fashion exhibitions in part to her interest in theatre, in particular the Theatre of Constructivism. The avant-garde movement of Russian Constructivism (1920s-1930s), established in the utopian period that followed the 1917 October Revolution, maintained that art is not autonomous; it proposed an interdisciplinary approach for contextualisation and meaning, with art having radical, new social purposes. While studying architecture, Clark focused on the work of the experimental theatre director Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874 -1940), in which she found a synthesis of the body and the unfolding space of his Constructivist performances. She was particularly interested in the way dress participated in the rhythm of space. 'If you substituted the body with the mannequin, it would be an exhibition,'[25] she claimed. In the tension between body, gesture, and space Clark believed she could project a dynamic narrative based on dress. Her emphasis on constructivism and theatre, specifically on staged dress as art in movement, found expression in an article she wrote in 1998 for the *Addressing the Century* exhibition catalogue, 'Kinetic Beauty: the Theatre of the 1920s.'[26] As we shall see, Clark's approach in this work underpins much of her later work. Clark also names the *Fashion and Surrealism* exhibition in 1988 as an important influence on her approach, as 'it made it so flamboyantly obvious that ideas are contained in clothes.'[27] At a time when dress was mostly catalogued and displayed chronologically, the exhibition was arranged thematically, a kind of 'repackaging of history,' as Clark put it.[28]

By the time Clark set up the Judith Clark Costume Gallery in Notting Hill in 1997, there had been a creative and intellectual migration among the disciplines that defined her field including theatre, costume, fashion, historical dress, exhibition design, architecture, gender studies, psychoanalysis, fashion theory, and curation.[29] The Judith Clark Costume Gallery was established at a time of increased interest in exhibitions of dress by fellow experts and the general public. [30]



Images 1a and 1b: '*Ice Thumb Disc, Ice Finger-Between x2*,' by Naomi Filmer, from *Be-hind, Be-fore & Be-yond*, Judith Clark Costume Gallery, London 1999. Image: Tom Garside. © Judith Clark Costume Gallery

After a five year run, the Gallery closed in 2003 but in that time she staged twenty-one exhibitions. Discussing the relationship between the Judith Clark Costume Gallery and the emerging field of fashion theory, Clark remarked that 'it was important to make suggestions that were low budget and small scale, where this debate could take on a physical form.'[31] She says she was engaged in a creative, open-ended process. 'I wanted to create something akin to a three-dimensional sketchbook,' a position which implies having a series of extended conversations with the designers and artists that were featured in the Gallery. [32] How different then is this discursive, 'sketchbook' approach from what Valerie Steele calls 'the book on the wall' approach to making exhibitions?[33] As an independent curator, unencumbered by institutional and commercial constraints, Clark could freely exploit the potential of the space of her nine-by-four meters Gallery.

At the Gallery, Clark created different ways of 'exhibiting dress fast,' with every exhibition displaying fashions in different ways from the one before it. 'It was set up to look very specifically at curating dress,' she observes, noting that 'every exhibition said something different about this discipline, about curating fashion.'[34] With a turn-around timescale more akin to fashion production than exhibition mounting, Clark's exhibitions questioned traditional museum practices of displaying clothes as permanently displayed objects. The idea of impermanence was reflected in the Gallery's *Be-hind, Be-fore & Be-yond* (26 October - 13 November 1999) in which Naomi Filmer's 'ice' jewellery marked the passage of time by slowly dissolving into water (Images 1a & 1b). Immobile hands, 'growing' out of the wall, and sections of mannequins that held the jewellery pieces were staged; new pieces, in moulds, were kept in the freezer to replace melted ones, in a repeating circular, temporal pattern. In contrast to typical museum practice, where the goal is to conserve for posterity selected objects, the goal of *Be-hind, Be-fore & Be-yond* was to document the demise of the object exhibited.

With an agenda of not making 'definitive, comprehensive exhibitions' but rather of pushing the boundaries of what could be achieved through curating and exhibiting dress, Clark continued to stage experimental work at her Gallery.[35] Another remarkable curatorial collaboration occurred when she worked with Simon Thorogood to develop wooden mannequins for his solo show titled *C41: Simon Thorogood* (20 September - 1 December 1998). These abstracted bodies emerged from Thorogood's sketchbooks of poetical drawings of aerodynamic aircraft forms from which the garments displayed also originated. The golden tones of the textiles dissolved into the warmth of the wooden mannequins, each made specifically for the garment, demonstrating how 'the garment is linked so inescapably to the body.'[36] Blurring the boundaries between the dresses and the form that held them, the 'quasi-monolithic structures gave the gowns great presence, and the low lighting emphasised their otherworldly beauty.'[37] The potential for the multiplicity of interpretation inherent to dress on a mannequin was further challenged by Clark's *Captions* exhibition (7 November - 8 December 2000), where invited guests, or anyone who entered the Gallery for that matter, were asked to write a caption for a single extravagant Alexander McQueen gown, which was kept under a spotlight as if in a lightbox. The viewers' responses were then nailed to the Gallery's walls, Clark's way of questioning the monolithic role of the curator and of promoting a multiplicity of voices. Groundbreaking shows such as these caused the Judith Clark Costume Gallery to become a focus for debate and for 'creating a new grammar, new patterns of time and reference,' as well as for supporting the ongoing development of the Gallery and the conceptual designers it featured. [38] In particular, Clark's merging of clothing and the mannequin expanded notions of dress as a total form or gestalt which assimilates its wearer. Like the work of Diana Vreeland, Clark's work was viewed as controversial, proposing a theatrical approach that mixed historical dress and contemporary assemblage.

When Clark exhibited historical dress, she applied a similar interrogative approach investigating time and history in the three-dimensional space of the Gallery. In *Parure de Plumes* (17 December 1998 - 7 February 1999), there was a single display, the 'Peacock Dress,' from the late 1850s Alsace region of France. The dress extended into the Gallery's space through its crinoline skirt which was decorated with large prints of feathers reminiscent of a peacock, an 'exotic' pattern-making reference to Orientalism. The exhibit paid tribute to the English painter James McNeill Whistler's famous 'Peacock Room,' itself a homage to Orientalism.[39] The dress was styled with a contemporary peacock-feathered headdress, made by the milliner Dai Rees, and with Katherine Clark's Cherry Blossom Collection of jewellery, which was inspired by Kangxi porcelain and by Aubrey Beardsley's Art Nouveau prints. Highlighting connections among the here and now, historical periods, and geographical places on a single body, the exhibition demonstrated, in the words of Clark, how 'in dress, surfaces float free of their histories.'[40]

If the single garment exhibited in *Parure de Plumes* could highlight the relationship between historical references and design, then the fifteen precious gowns by the French couturier Madeleine Vionnet, spanning the years between 1917 and 1933 and borrowed from the costume collector Martin Kamer, rendered the Gallery space more akin to a museum. *Vionnet* (15 March - 26 April 2001) put under the microscope the threefold impact of Vionnet's bias cut, from aesthetic, cultural, and technical perspectives. Singling out Vionnet's bias cut in the garments, the catalogue and the material published on the Gallery's website, the display looked unflinchingly at the social importance of Vionnet's historical dresses. The fashion historian Rebecca Arnold's essay, commissioned for the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition, explored Vionnet's designs as new cultural, social, and historical readings of femininity and the female body in history. Arnold emphasised how Vionnet's revealing draped couture created a new way of dressing women's bodies and discarded nineteenth-century 'morality that had deemed no woman respectable who was not closed off from the world in corset and petticoat, her body a mysterious object encased in whalebone.'[41]

Another feature of the show was the technical complexity of Vionnet's pattern cutting, which was dissected in great detail, dress-by-dress, revealing the impact of specific techniques that previously had not been applied to dressmaking. Choices of material, colour, cut, and composition were discussed in terms of how they contributed to create an individual dynamic dress effect. Quotes from Roberto Menichetti, then creative director at Burberry, were included in the publication, demonstrating the ways in which Vionnet's work continues to be perceived as essential by today's designers.[42] In the complex triangulation among cultural theory, technical object analysis, and impact, Vionnet's contribution is clear in the aesthetic relationships among the garments on display.

During its tenure, the Judith Clark Costume Gallery provided a space for Clark to explore methodologies that responded to a new self-consciousness about dress and exhibiting-making. It became a centre for exchange and dissemination of ideas around a new museology and innovative ways of approaching fashion theory. Clark describes these exchanges as essential to the purpose of the Judith Clark Costume Gallery and held seminars there. 'We really had wonderful conversations…developed new ways into the subject…it was like having colleagues in a way that supported one another's work.'[43] The Gallery attracted influential fashion historians, theorists, editors, and curators, including Christopher Breward, Caroline Evans, Valerie Steele, Carol Tulloch, Alexandra Palmer, Amy de la Haye, Claire Wilcox, Valerie Mendez, and Alistair O'Neil. Designers and artists whose creative conversations with Clark resulted in work being developed and displayed in the gallery included Simon Thorogood, Dai Rees, Hussein Chalayan, Alexander McQueen, Mat Collishaw, Naomi Filmer, Matthew Williamson, Arkadius, and Adelle Lutz.[44] Each gravitated towards the Judith Clark

Costume Gallery at a time when they were considering new methods of presentation for their work. The film theorist and curator Peter Wollen visited the Judith Clark Costume Gallery in its early days and held long conversations with Clark about exhibiting dress; these were featured in *Addressing the Century: 100 Years of Art and Fashion*, the exhibition he and the art historian Fiona Bradley curated in October 1998 at the Hayward Gallery, London, which was designed by the architect Zaha Hadid and for which Clark designed and installed the millinery section.

The dialogue between theory and curatorial practice explored in the Judith Clark Costume Gallery soon found expression in larger spaces. Linda Loppa, then director of the fashion museum ModeMuseum (MoMu) in Antwerp, contacted Clark to borrow Hussein Chalayan's 'Remote Control Dress' for the first exhibition MoMu would stage in October 2002, *The Fashion Museum: Backstage*.[45] The conversations between Loppa and Clark continued and gave rise to MoMu's fifth exhibition *Malign Muses: When Fashion Turns Back* (18 September 2004 - 30 January 2005) which was renamed *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*, when the show travelled to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (24 February - 8 May 2005).[46] The small space of the Judith Clark Costume Gallery, which had made it possible for concepts to be incubated and connections to be made, drove forward experimentation in curation that reflected ongoing debates and created new ones in ways that were transferred to an international stage.

3. Making Things Present: *Malign Muses* and *Spectres*

The quote by Walter Benjamin that opens this article, 'The true method of making things present is to represent them in our space (not to represent ourselves in their space),' is critical for understanding Clark's contributions to contemporary exhibition-making.[47] Benjamin's *Arcade Project* influenced not only Clark but the fashion historian Caroline Evans, whose *Fashion at the Edge: Spectacle, Modernity and Deathliness* (2003) formed the conceptual context for Clark's *Malign Muses: When Fashion Turns Back.*[48] In the early stages of the planning for *Malign Muses*, Clark was asked to review a final draft of Evans' seminal book, which espouses, from a cultural theory perspective, fashion's relationship with the dark side in the late twentieth century. Evans was interested in the ways in which designers were influenced by death, trauma, alienation, and decay and incorporated those themes conceptually. The book often refers to the designers' historical dress references as part of their design process. It was immediately clear to Clark that aspects of Evans' text could provide the textual counterpoint for the visual logic of the installations of *Malign Muses*; these became spatial metaphors of Evans' reading of Benjamin's relationship between the past, the present, and the future and the phantasmagoria, about which he wrote extensively. Relationships between historical periods explored in *The Arcades Project* and expressed in Benjamin's concept of *tigersprung*, a leap in the past, were visualised by Clark through optical frames such as the telescope, theatrical ones such as the diorama, and physical spaces such as a labyrinth. These new connections reveal what had been 'previously concealed.'[49] Quotations from Evans' book were found throughout the exhibition providing a conceptual context. Described by Valerie Steele as 'paradigm shifting,'[50] *Malign Muses/Spectres* took themes from Evans' work and transformed them into three-dimensional sets.[51] The spatial translation of ideas such as 'A present haunted by the image of ruin in the future,'[52] created a 'labyrinth of associations' for visitors between fashion past and present.[53]

The website for *Spectres* defines the show as 'a Fashion Installation,'[54] and explains how the show 'set out to reveal the shadows and experiences that formed a "fashion memory" in contemporary dress' and displayed 'the hidden, yet haunting, connections between recent fashion and its past.'[55] *Malign Muses/Spectres* eschewed notions of historical dress as passive, dead objects, and, contrary to usual practice which uses informative, individual captions, it used

a printed leaflet, given to the viewer at the entrance of the exhibition, on which the objects' details were compiled. Visitors could choose to identify each individual historical object in conjunction with the leaflet or just 'experience' the objects in relationship to one another, in the here and now. In this way, the exhibition also explained how historical dress engages the imagination of contemporary designers, who make connections between elements of dress from different sources and historical periods without any unwarranted loyalty to their provenance.[56]

Composed of a series of separate installations, some of the show's titles suggest a specific action: 'Reappearances: Getting Things Back,' 'Locking In and Out,' 'Remixing It: The Past in Pieces,' and 'Phantasmagoria: The Amazing Lost and Found.' These titles indicate *doing something*, a gesture through a moment in time and draw attention to *how* connections are made and un-made, how historical references are remembered and forgotten, and how historical imagery is projected as an idea of the body. Through active key-words included in their titles ('getting', 'locking', 'remixing'), the installations exposed the process of creation inherent to design practice. Other installations appear to allude to states of mind, where dress is recognised as a powerful and complex agent in the relationship with both the present and with history. The installation materials ranged from dolls in boxes and towering chairs, in 'Curiousier and Curiousier;' to gigantic two dimensional exaggerated historical silhouettes each with a rusting lock, chain and key, enigmatically adorning their flat raw plywood surfaces in 'Nostalgia,' to a crumpled and beautifully faded Victorian wedding dress positioned with contemporary purposefully 'distressed' fashion dresses in 'A New Distress,' symbolising 'a present haunted by the image of ruin in the future.'[57]

Resonances and the shadow of performance itself are explored in other installations (Image 2). In 'Phantasmagoria: The Amazing Lost and Found,' centuries old Commedia dell' Arte stock characters such as Harlequin and Pierrot are historical references in the work of designers ranging from Schiaparelli to Mary Quant and more recently Christian Lacroix, Alexander McQueen, and Dries Van Noten. The illusion of history as theatrical characters is explained by Clark as 'the tricks of the circus' that 'distract us from history, masking its detail.' Each character, in different ways 'coerces our attention and stops us thinking about where they have come from and where they might be going.'[58] Nearby, the 'Magic Lantern,' as from a nineteenth-century fairground, gives context to dresses as 'characters' on a stage. Four translucent screens surround a carrousel of rotating suspended silhouettes projected as shadows on screens, that move and distort on their surface, an allusion to the magic lantern's 'visual deception or display, in which shadowy and unreal figures appear.'[59] Reminiscent of the process of remembering, these forms come in and out of focus, explaining a sense of the ever-presence of genealogies of forms, such as those of Commedia, which haunt and cast shadows on the present. The New York fashion illustrator Ruben Toledo, enlisted by Clark to collaborate on *Spectres*, created the magic lantern silhouettes that articulate the female body in unpredictable, ever-changing, and absurd arrangements at various points through its history. His image of a wheel of fashion with its silhouettes of extended historical forms paraded around its edge, suggests connections between polarised compositions which acquire separate meaning in Judith Clark's installation of 'Nostalgia.'

Recognizing the impossibility of finding an object or a garment that might define the ambiguous relationship between nostalgia and dress, Clark built 'oversized monuments to dress designs' to symbolise 'past fashion's possible futures.'[60] The gigantic plywood silhouettes of exaggerated historical forms, scaled up versions of Toledo's illustrations, represented her idea about how nostalgia for the past throws a shadow over the present and projects into the future (Image 3). The giant forms, observes Evans, 'were festooned with giant iron locks and keys that suggested the figures could be understood as doors opening into other routes and ideas.'[61]

Image 2: 'Phantasmagoria: The Amazing Lost and Found,' from *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*, V&A 2005. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

By virtue of its scale and conceptual frame, *Malign Muses/Spectres* offered a space in which dress could really 'float free' of its context and make evident a range of ways in which history and dress are perceived within contemporary practice and discourse. The show built on ideas around fashion curation that had been 'incubated' in the Gallery. For example, the perception of the dress/object as non-stable and ever changing is extended here in a larger spatial metaphor of temporary connections in the installation 'Locking In and Out.' Individual garments, designed decades apart, were placed in circles on separate interlocking cogs. The interlocking mechanism allowed each dress to encounter distant dress relations for a brief moment, and then rotate away in separate directions, enacting the impermanence of the connections. For Evans, this display traced 'previously concealed' connections.[62] This mapping of interweaving themes among the show's installations offered a powerful metaphorical reading to the linearity of historical references. The overlay of historical and contemporary time on the same body, initially explored in *Parure de Plumes* in the Judith Clark Costume Gallery, was further developed in the theatrical device of 'Pepper's Ghost' in *Malign Muses/Spectres*. In this installation, Veronique Branquinho's 'Blouse and Skirt' (Spring/Summer 1999) glows intermittently with the ghost of a 1900-1950 baptism robe in torchon and bobbin lace, through a lighting and reflection illusion technique, first devised in Victorian theatre to stage ghosts.

Image 3: 'Nostalgia,' from *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*, V&A 2005. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Branquinho's design, which is heavily indebted to late Edwardian references of women's dress, is revealed almost as its own child-self in a kind of x-ray image. Staged at the end of a long corridor, the Pepper's Ghost 'performs' the implied connection between the two objects, one from the present and one from the past, in which the relationship between the dress and its historical muse or spectre is inextricably linked. If the absence of an object to define nostalgia offered Clark the opportunity to explore the idea of monuments, memory, and doors into the future, then the absent body of the wearer, long gone in the case of historical dress, also became a site to explore. The absent body is brought to the viewer's attention through interventions by the jewellery designer Naomi Filmer, which appeared intermittently on mannequins that had been extended or dismembered. This tearing apart and reassembling is echoed in 'Remixing It: The Past in Pieces,' in which the disassembling of the past and assimilation with the new is represented in an installation of segmented bodies and garments from the past and the present, set in a sliding block puzzle suggesting infinite possible re-arrangements.[63]

With its overt theatricality, *Spectres* drew harsh criticism from the dress historian and curator Lou Taylor. 'As an object-based dress historian, my negative reaction is, of course, not surprising,' she wrote, concluding that there 'was a lack of respect here for the selected clothes,' which she also complained were unprotected by glass and not explained through labels. [64] That said, many subsequent exhibitions have gone on to draw inspiration from Clark's approach.[65]

4. The Curator's Agency: *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*

The fashion theorist Flavia Loscialpo suggests that 'individuating the "traces" that a garment bears, listening to the narratives embedded in it, discloses the possibility of drawing a constellation of both conceptual and historical references.'[66] Judith Clark's exhibitions emphasise such 'traces,' hence her continued commitment to scholarly research, which she claims make exhibitions 'more coherent – the curator has more material to fall back on.'[67] This approach, observes Christopher Breward, has taken Clark:

> further away from an uncritical fashion literature and towards a reading of histories of the museum and collections, perception theory and architectural treatises. This striving for new terrain informs such questions as "how fiercely can we edit objects?," "what does historical veracity mean?," and "is there a violence in decontextualising tendencies of quotation and display?"[68]

The idea that 'dress carries memories and histories and that it acquires individual qualities through personal interactions with its wearer and viewers' is now well-documented in archive related literature,[69] as is the idea that an exhibition involves the establishment of a new relationship between the exhibited object, i.e. the costume, and the space.[70] Similar approaches to those used by Judith Clark have been observed in other relevant fields, such as in the curating and displaying of performance costumes which are investigated today by scholars as generating performances by their sole existence, independent from the performer.[71] Examining the dynamic of the costume *after* the performance, the costume designer Simona Rybáková, who curated *Extreme Costume*, presented at the Prague Quadrennial (16 - 26 June 2011), writes: 'we have torn [the costumes] out of context, but are offering them in a new context.'[72] In an exhibition of costumes, which usually takes place when a performance has concluded and the performer is absent, the body becomes a notion, a memory, and so acquires a virtual presence. In the new context of the exhibition space, the audience is called to experience the costume in a different way. The spectator is introduced to a new visual image, a new spatial narrative, and a new character of the costume. This concept, more clearly evident in performance costume

exhibitions, was fostered by Clark in her inter-disciplinary approach, which takes into account the spatial and the narrative perspective of a garment as well as the potential for interpretation offered by it. Thus, the contemporary curating of dress can be perceived as a performance design act where the installation becomes a performance.

Clark's investigation of ideas embedded in archived garments and her insightful interpretation took a concrete spatial and performative form in the site-specific project *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, which involved eleven installations on a tour at Blythe House, the Victoria and Albert Museum repository for its art, design, and theatre reserve collections. The *Concise Dictionary of Dress* installations (28 April - 27 June 2010), an Artangel commission for Judith Clark and the psychoanalyst Adam Phillips, presented historical dress, collected and archived by the V&A, in a series of thought-provoking encounters with viewers. With titles like 'Armoured,' 'Comfortable,' 'Conformist,' 'Pretentious,' 'Tight,' 'Measured,' 'Essential,' 'Plain,' 'Fashionable,' 'Loose' and 'Creased,' these encounters displayed dress as viewed in the archive through textual, material and conceptual intervention by the two curators. Each of these adjectival titles or dictionary entries, which were written by Phillips, was extended in more complex definitions. For example, 'Measured' is:

> 1. Against chaos; a way of thinking about disarray; calculated excess. 2. The fitted as fitting. 3. Proportion as the mother of virtue. 4. The milder ecstasies of the considered. 5. Contained by the idea of containment.[73]

The effect of these abstract, sometimes contradictory definitions is a rejection of absolute truths and the proposal that dress as a museum object is only partially classifiable, inviting redefinition by viewers. Collecting, protecting, and storing historical objects are the essence of the museum's archive, and Clark and Phillips question the very notion of the archive itself. Writing about the stored, wrapped, and archived museum object, Clark concludes:

> It is as though they refer to an always - deferred future when they might be exhibited, or re-exhibited. Stored objects are stored moments of personal and cultural memory. Anxiety about exhibiting objects are anxieties about sharing them, about letting people come to their own conclusions about them.[74]

In the book based on *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* project, Clark makes reference to the art historian and collector Aby Warburg (1866 - 1929), acknowledging that he 'haunted' the project 'quite significantly,' for example, in the notion that dress can be considered a means for the expression of pathos.[75] Her reading of Warburg focuses on 'cause' or 'motive' and was translated into a three dimensional definition in 'Armoured,' the first of the interventions viewers encountered. Situated on the roof of Blythe House is a translucent resin-cast figure, created in the form of a 1790s' windswept dress and bonnet, highlighting the relationship between dress and the space around it by appearing as a thickening of the air itself, moulded by the wind, at one with the sky, and in opposition to the solidity of the sentinel architecture around it (Image 4). Dress is a materialisation of the idea of 'Armoured,' translated into the landscape and the context of the site of Blythe House. Historical dress is here an initial reference, a starting point for Clark, which she garnered from a hand-coloured fashion plate by Niklaus von Heideloff, *The Act Directs* (1797), its two bonneted female figures, with high waisted skirts swept by the wind as they look out onto the sea.

Image 4: **'**Armoured,' from *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, 2010, Judith Clark and Adam Phillips. An Artangel commission. Photograph by Norbert Schoerner. © Artangel

Other interventions such as 'Conformist,' the transposition of a wallpaper pattern 'Windrush' (1883) created by the Victorian designer, artist, and writer William Morris, onto a pinned-together calico toile of a trailing medieval gown, are also significant. Framed inside a dark wooden cabinet, reminiscent of Victorian museum storage spaces, the garment, elaborately embroidered for over 354 hours by Rosie Taylor-Davis, revealed stored ideas and techniques that are central to the existence of the V&A and to Morris' legacy (Image 5). 'It is about recording his methods within a dress, about storing his loyalty to ideals of craftsmanship within an idea of taste so closely associated with the V&A.'[76] In relief on the plain calico, the dense, detailed, and rich embroidery only reaches a section of the toile in the centre-back, appearing thus as an ongoing process, as a layering and developing of ideas through time. As such, this installation captured the nature of creative thought and process that emerges from the dialogue with historical dress and the archive.

5. Concluding Thoughts

Scholars such as the historian John Styles have written that a 'new self-consciousness about the range of issues that the history of dress now embraces' is needed. As Styles sees it, 'dress history is now a point of intersection for scholars coming from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds' and requires 'a commitment to a mode of enquiry combining elements of both conceptual and empirical work.'[77] If complex ideas about dress are made evident in Clark's *Malign Muses/Spectres* in the interaction among objects, the compositional narrative of space in which they are placed, and the context of their encounters with the viewer, then the role of the

Image 5: **‘**Conformist,’ from *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, 2010, Judith Clark and Adam Phillips. An Artangel commission. Photograph by Julian Abrams. © Artangel

curator was further investigated and extended in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, in which Clark became a visual artist as well as a curator/exhibition-maker. Questions about the use and

meaning of historical objects/dress and the agency of the curator can begin to be answered by acknowledging that the curator/exhibition-maker is a sentient, responsive, and questioning expert of space and dress, whose insightful search for answers is guided by conversations with equally engaged collaborators.

Intriguingly, it is Clark's representations of historical bodies that have attracted the most criticism from scholars and curators. Reflecting on the collusion of historical and contemporary references on the same body in *Parure De Plumes*, the fashion curator Fiona Anderson writes:

> Displaying historical dress in this way takes too far an attitude which acknowledges the obvious theatrical artifice of museum displays and leads on to ahistorical approaches that disturb and distort the educative potential of historical dress.[78]

We have argued that an insightful, responsive, and imaginative approach is fundamental to 'making objects present' over time and place. It allows the curator/exhibition-maker the agency to unlock the hidden, layered existential meanings archived in collected dress. The point we are making in analysing Judith Clark's exhibition-making practice is that her work refines practice and thus traditional definitions – such as 'fashion curator' – which does not necessarily imply the full contribution her work makes. Clark's conceptual and spatial perspective starts from the object/viewer relationship which reveals meanings which are not always explicit. This presupposes an evolution of thinking within the viewers in order to engage imagination and thought in the encounter with Judith Clark's work. The evolution read in these terms is no longer a progress, an orderly accumulation of knowledge or a linear logical understanding, but a reciprocal creation, a reflection, an interaction generated between the viewer/participant and the objects and ideas that are made present.

While aspects of Judith Clark's work have at times been controversial, her exhibition-making has provided an insightful, responsive, and imaginative approach to 'making objects present' and changed the ways in which dress is displayed and viewed.

Notes

[1] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin Mclaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 206.

[2] Christopher Breward, 'The Politics of Fashion: The Politics of Fashion Studies,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 42, no.4 (2007): 674.

[3] Ioanna Papantoniou, 'Endyesthai – Approaches: The Rationale Underlying an Exhibition,' in *Endyesthai (To Dress): Towards a Costume Culture Museum*, ed. Ioanna Papantoniou (Nafplion: Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation, 2010), 15.

[4] Margaret Maynard, 'Dress: A Future for Its Past,' edited transcript of a paper presented to the Australian Dress Register seminar, 10 November 2008, *Australian Dress Register* (Haymarket: Powerhouse Museum, 2012), 6.

[5] James Norton, ed., 'An Interview about Spectres with Curator Judith Clark,' video and online transcript, Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed 20 March 2013, http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/videos/a/video-an-interview-about-spectres-with-curator-judith-clark/.

[6] See Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2007).

[7] Amy de la Haye, 'Introduction: Dress and Fashion in the Context of the Museum,' in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, Volume Ten - Global Perspectives, ed. Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010), accessed 12 June 2012, http://www.bergfashionlibrary.com/view/bewdf/BEWDF-v10/EDch10039a.xml dd.
[8] Lou Taylor, *Establishing Dress History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).
[9] See, for example, Juniya Kawamura, *Doing Research in Fashion and Dress: An Introduction to Qualitative Methods* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2011).
[10] Erin Mackie, 'Fashion in the Museum: An Eighteenth-Century Project,' in *Architecture: In Fashion*, ed. Deborah Fausch and Paulette Singley (Princeton: Architecture Press, 1994), 335.
[11] Greer Crawley and Donatella Barbieri, 'Dress, Time and Space: Expanding the Field through Exhibition Making,' in *The Handbook of Fashion Studies*, eds. Sandy Back, Amy de la Haye, Joanne Entwistle, Regina Root, Agnes Rocamora, Helen Thomas (London and New York: Bloomsbury, in press).
[12] Gabriele Monti, 'After Diana Vreeland: The Discipline of Fashion Curating as a Personal Grammar,' *Catwalk: The Journal of Fashion, Beauty and Style* 2 no.1 (2013): 75.
[13] Ibid., 63. Vreeland invented the role of 'fashion editor' at *Harper's Bazaar* (1936-1932). She then served as Editor-in-Chief of American *Vogue* (1963-1971) before moving on to the Met.
[14] See Richard Martin and Harold Koda, eds., *Diana Vreeland: Immoderate Style* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993); and Monti, 'After Diana Vreeland.'
[15] Valerie Steele, 'Museum Quality: The Rise of the Fashion Exhibition,' *Fashion Theory* 12, no. 1 (2008):7-30.
[16] Judith Clark, 'Looking at Looking at Dress,' Viktor and Rolf Exhibition Symposium Presentation, Barbican Gallery, September 2008, in *Judith Clark Costume*, accessed 19 July 2013 http://judithclarkcostume.com/books-catalogues/.
[17]Judith Clark, 'Statement VI, Unpublished,' in *Judith Clark Costume*, accessed 4 October 2013, http://judithclarkcostume.com/books-catalogues/.
[18] See also Judith Clark's website, accessed 30 July 2013, http://judithclarkcostume.com/.
[19]Clark, 'Statement VI, Unpublished.' Judith Clark, 'Statement I,' commissioned by Linda Loppa and Kaat Debo for the inaugural exhibition at ModeMuseum in Antwerp, 21 September 2002 - 4 April 2003, Appendix to 'Statement VI', accessed 25 October 2013, http://judithclarkcostume.com/books-catalogues/.
[20] See also Sofia Pantouvaki, 'Costume in the Absence of the Body,' *Presence and Absence – The Performing Body*, ed. Adele Anderson and Sofia Pantouvaki (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, in press) and Crawley and Barbieri, 'Dress, Time and Space.'
[21] Judith Clark, interview by Donatella Barbieri and Greer Crawley at Judith Clark Studio, transcript of recording, 16 November 2011.
[22] Ibid; Beatriz Colomina and Jennifer Bloomer, eds., *Sexuality and Space* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992); Adrian Forty, 'Of Cars, Clothes and Carpets: Design Metaphors in Architectural Thought: The First Banham Memorial Lecture,' *Journal of Design History* 2, no.1 (1989): 1-14.
[23] Judith Clark, interview by Donatella Barbieri and Greer Crawley.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Judith Clark, 'Kinetic Beauty: The Theatre of the 1920s,' *Addressing the Century - 100 Years of Art & Fashion* ed. Peter Wollen (London: Hayward Gallery, 1998).
[27] Judith Clark, interview by Donatella Barbieri and Greer Crawley. *Fashion and Surrealism*, curated by Richard Martin, was exhibited first at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology

in 1987 and later in London at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1988, and promoted the idea of considering historical dress in the context of contemporary resonances.
[28] Ibid.
[29] The word 'costume' then defined the type of dress that would be found in the catalogue of an auction house; it was also the name used by for fashion departments in museums such as the V&A and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (which continues to use that name for its famed Costume Institute). As an overarching category it encompassed both historical and contemporary dress, and dress as a collected and exhibited object. For Clark, the term 'costume' proposed infinite ways of interrogating and interpreting the dynamic between dress and space.
[30] For more information on the Judith Clark Costume Gallery and a list of the exhibitions displayed, see: http://judithclarkcostume.com/gallery/child-of-costume-gallery-1/, accessed 30 July 2013.
[31] Norton, 'An Interview about Spectres.'
[32] Ibid.
[33] Steele, 'Museum Quality,' 27.
[34] Norton, 'An Interview about Spectres.'
[35] Clark, quoted in Fiona Anderson, 'Museums as Fashion Media,' *Fashion Cultures: Theories, Explorations and Analysis*, ed. Stella Bruzzi and Pamela Church Gibson (London: Routledge, 2000), 382.
[36] Sarah Scaturro, 'Fashion Projects #3: Experiments in Fashion Curation – An Interview with Judith Clark,, in *Fashion Projects on Fashion, Art, and Visual Culture*, accessed 4 November 2011, http://www.fashionprojects.org/?p=676.
[37] 'Exhibition C4 I Couture Collection,' *Contemporary Fashion Archive*, accessed 21 April 2013, http://www.contemporaryfashion.net/index.php/none/none/1329/uk/exhibition.html.
[38] Judith Clark, 'Statement 1,' in *Het ModeMuseum: The Fashion Museum: Backstage*, ed. Kaat Debo (Ghent: Ludion, 2002), 147.
[39] See *Judith Clark Costume, Parure de Plumes*, accessed 23 April 2013, http://judithclarkcostume.com/gallery/parure-de-plumes/.
[40] Clark, 'Statement 1.'
[41] Rebecca Arnold, 'Vionnet and Classicism,' *Vionnet*, exhibition catalogue, ed. Judith Clark, (London: Judith Clark Costume Gallery, 2001), 3-4.
[42] Judith Clark, ed., 'Roberto Menichetti talks about Vionnet,' *Vionnet*, ibid., 13.
[43] Judith Clark, Interview by Donatella Barbieri and Greer Crawley.
[44] See also Judith Clark - Costume Gallery (1997-2003), accessed 22 April 2013, http://judithclarkcostume.com/gallery/child-of-costume-gallery-1/.
[45] Chalayan's sculptural dress was initially commissioned by the Judith Clark Costume Gallery for Zaha Hadid's *Mind Zone* display at the Millennium Dome. The dress itself had been displayed in Clark's Gallery in an exhibition titled *Play Hussein Chalayan* (July 2000) in which the space became a kind of futuristic playground. This aerodynamic moulded dress, made out of painted styrene with remote control operated panels, has since been exhibited continuously around the world.
[46] Linda Loppa and Kaat Debo, 'ModeMuseum,' in *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*, ed. Judith Clark (London: V&A Publishing, 2004), 9.
[47] Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, 206.
[48] Caroline Evans, *Fashion at the Edge: Spectacle, Modernity, and Deathliness* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003).
[49] Ibid., 33.

[50] Valerie Steele, interview by Donatella Barbieri at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, 2 December 2011.
[51]Judith Clark Costume, *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*, accessed 30 August 2013, http://judithclarkcostume.com/exhibitions/child-of-exhibitions-1/.; Exhibition and publication, Judith Clark, *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back* (London: V&A Publishing, 2004).
[52] Evans, *Fashion at the Edge,* 56.
[53] See 'Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back, Fashion Installation,' Victoria and Albert Museum, London, accessed 21 April 2013, http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/s/spectres/.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] See also Christopher Breward, 'Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back,' in *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back*, ed. Judith Clark (London: V&A Publishing, 2004), 13.
[57] Ibid., 56.
[58] Judith Clark, *Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back* (London: V&A Publishing, 2004), 30-31.
[59] Evans, *Fashion at the Edge*, 89.
[60] Amy de la Haye and Judith Clark, 'One Object: Multiple Interpretations,' *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, Special Issue on Fashion Curation, ed. Alistair O'Neill, 12, no.2 (2008): 168.
[61] Caroline Evans, 'Hussein Chalayan's Utopia: A Critical Evaluation of Hussein Chalayan's Modernism,' *032c*, 9 (Summer 2005): 83.
[62] Evans, *Fashion at the Edge*, 33.
[63] This installation proposes a process of 'design that inaccurately pillaged the past to produce a contemporary aesthetic,' wrote Caroline Evans; ibid., 25.
[64] Taylor, *Establishing Dress History*; Lou Taylor, 'Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back,' *The Art Book* 13, no. 1 (2006): 16.
[65] See Flavia Loscialpo, 'Traces and Constellations: the Invisible Genealogies of Fashion,' in: *Endyesthai (To Dress) – Historical, Sociological and Methodological Approaches*, Conference Proceedings, 9-11 April 2010, *Endymatologika* 4 (Nafplion: Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation, 2012).
[66] Loscialpo, 'Traces and Constellations,'136.
[67] Scaturro, 'Fashion Projects #3.'
[68] Breward, 'Spectres,'15.
[69] Donatella Barbieri, 'Encounters in the Archive: Reflections on Costume,' *V&A Online Journal* 4 (Summer 2012), accessed 25 April 2013, http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/journals/research-journal/issue-no.-4-summer-2012/encounters-in-the-archive-reflections-on-costume.; Donatella Barbieri, 'Costume Re-Considered,' in: *Endyesthai (To Dress) – Historical, Sociological and Methodological Approaches*, Conference Proceedings, 9-11 April 2010, *Endymatologika* 4 (Nafplion: Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation, 2012), 149.
[70] See also Scaturro, 'Fashion Projects #3.'
[71] See Pantouvaki, 'Costume in the Absence of the Body'; also, Sofia Pantouvaki, 'Dance Costumes on Display: Reflections and Practice,' in *Activating the Inanimate - Visual Vocabularies of Performance Practice*, eds. Celia Morgan and Filipa Malva (Oxford, Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2013), 109-121.
[72] Simona Rybáková, 'Extreme Costume,' in *Prague Quadrennial PQ011*, eds. Lucie Čepcová, Ondřej Svoboda, and Daniela Pařízková (Prague: Arts and Theatre Institute, 2011), 281.
[73] Judith Clark and Adam Phillips, *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (London: Violette Editions in association with Artangel, 2010), 73.

[74] Ibid., 111.
[75] Ibid., 112.
[76] Ibid., 114.
[77] John Styles, 'Dress in History: Reflections on a Contested Terrain,' *Fashion Theory* 2, no. 4 (1998): 388.
[78] Fiona Anderson, 'Museums as Fashion Media,' *Fashion Cultures: Theories, Explorations and Analysis*, ed. Stella Bruzzi and Pamela Church Gibson (London: Routledge, 2000), 382.

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Exhibition Reviews

PUNK: Chaos to Couture

The Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
9 May 2013 – 14 August 2013
Curated by Andrew Bolton
Catalogue: ***PUNK: Chaos to Couture***
Andrew Bolton, ed.
New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 240 pages, $45.00
Illustrated, with selected bibliography and index
ISBN: 978-0-30019-185-1

Last summer, the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's high-profile exhibition *Punk: Chaos to Couture* offered seven galleries of Punk and Punk-inspired clothing. Much to the chagrin of some commentators, it approached Punk not as a political protest or musical genre but as a fashion movement. This is, to some extent, historically accurate. For all the talk of working-class street protest and authenticity, it was a clothes shop that served as a spring-board for the Punk explosion. That shop was Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood's legendary West London boutique SEX, later renamed Seditionaries. The exhibition actually included a mock-up of Seditionaries in Gallery 3, the '430 Kings Road Period Room,' with original Seditionaries pieces hanging from the reproduction store fittings. Before it was SEX, Westwood and McLaren's store was named 'Let it Rock' and sold Teddy Boy styles that had not changed since the 1950s. As the store moved away from this static and codified style, it helped create a new style: Punk (Image 1).

Image 1: Gallery view, '430 Kings Road Period Room.' Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013

If fashion is indeed a form of art, then Westwood and McLaren's creations certainly belong in an art museum such as the Met. The Seditionaries pieces on display in the first three galleries contained elements of Dadaism, Surrealism, and Modernism, while their use of bricolage and their ironic take on previous subcultural looks prefigured postmodern art and theory. There was a wealth of Seditionaries garments in the reproduction of the Kings Road boutique, while the second gallery, 'Clothes for Heroes,' displayed a number of iconic Seditionaries shirts such as the 'God Save the Queen Shirt,' the 'Two Cowboys Shirt,' and the 'Anarchist Punk Gang – the 1%ers.' Having been widely worn at the time, these works will be familiar to anyone who has looked at photographs or films of the original Punk era. It was a treat to see these rare, often bootlegged and highly sought-after artefacts up close.

Image 2: Gallery view, facsimile of CBGB bathroom, New York, 1975.
Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013

The wall text in the introductory gallery explained how McLaren drew inspiration from the style of the scene at the popular New York club CBGB's and from the musician Richard Hell, in particular. A wonderfully playful reproduction of the filthy, graffiti-covered CBGB's toilet paid homage to this scene, but there were no examples of the sorts of outfits that would

have been worn there (Image 2). While the exhibition emphasised the fact that the do-it-yourself (DIY) ethos of customisation was the essence of Punk fashion, it did not offer any examples of customised clothing. So while Punk fashion was evidently about much more than just Seditionaries, no other original Punk garments were displayed. Like Richard Hell, the original Punks assembled their look from existing subcultural styles, altering garments they already owned. From the Skinheads came Doc Marten boots, from the Teddy Boys came drainpipe trousers and so on. This cut-and-mix of fashion signifiers is what the cultural studies scholar Dick Hebdige termed 'bricolage' in his influential work on subcultures. For some, a change of haircut and a Punk badge was all that it took to 'look' Punk. For others, Punk was a more theatrical and deconstructionist affair involving acts of customisation such as stencilling slogans on clothes, ripping apart school blazers and wearing bin bags. The exhibition gave no examples of these 'everyday' Punk looks, and it seemed somewhat ironic that the four galleries themed around DIY, not a single one featured a garment customised by its owner.

Many former and current Punks have bemoaned the Met's appropriation of what they see as an authentic street culture, but this criticism misses the point. As the music specialists Simon Frith and Howard Horne masterfully demonstrate in their 1987 book *Art into Pop*, Punk has existed at the intersection of art school ideals and commercial aspirations since its inception. Fashion and commerce have always been a part of Punk. The problem with the exhibition was not that it reduced Punk to fashion or sanitized it for a museum audience. The problem was that it interpreted Punk fashion too narrowly, focusing entirely on the influence of Seditionaries. Westwood's own seamless transition into high fashion allowed the exhibition to slip smoothly into the more high-concept world of runway fashion as visitors made their way from the first three galleries into the final four.

Image 3: Gallery view, 'D.I.Y.: Hardware.' Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013

While the exhibition may have fallen short on the 'Chaos' part, it did an excellent job on 'to Couture.' The remaining four galleries were dedicated to Punk-inspired works from the realm of high fashion. This actually began in the second gallery, where alongside the Seditionaries garments were contemporary interpretations of the same look, including a 2013 Burberry ensemble featuring a spiked leather motorcycle jacket and matching spiked sandals. Christophe Decarnin's 2011 ensemble for House of Balmain was notable for the fact that it looked like it could have been from the 1970s, until one noticed the use of silver, crystals, and embroidery. It was upon entering the fourth gallery, 'DIY: Hardware,' that the distance, both chronological and aesthetic, between 2013 and 1977 became evident (Image 3). This gallery's theme was hardware, displaying designer ensembles that took inspiration from Punk's use of spikes, studs, and zippers. Here the use of Punk elements was more pastiche than homage. For example, a 1994 black Versace silk dress featured gold safety pins. Riccardo Tisci's 2009-2010 ensemble for Givenchy was also fairly removed from Punk aesthetics. It was comprised of a black military-style cashmere jacket decorated with oversized gold studs and paired with black satin bell-bottoms. Christopher Kane's black lace dress, with its straps and brass rings making it look like a cross between lingerie and a Victorian maid's costume, gestured to Punk's use of fetish gear and a subversion of the male gaze.

The next gallery was themed around 'DIY: Bricolage,' and while the wall text quoted Dick Hebdige's famous work on Punk, Gallery 4 did not display the cut-up and bricolage of previous subcultural looks to which Hebdige was referring. Rather, this gallery featured the patchwork re-use of materials not originally intended to be worn. The curators saw parallels with Punk fashion's use of lavatory chains, bin bags and the like, describing the luxury fashion brands' clothes in this gallery as a sort of self-reflexive commentary on the disposability of consumer culture. Consumer detritus was incorporated into garments with a 2007 Prada skirt and a 2004 Helmut Lang jacket, both using pressed bottle tops. Almost modernist in its clean lines and utilitarian design was Hussein Chalayan's striking dress made out of white Tyvek airmail envelopes. Meanwhile, Galliano's 2001 jacket and skirt ensemble constructed of newsprint-patterned cotton and Scotch tape invoked the cut-and-paste aesthetic of DIY Punk picture sleeves, posters, and fanzines.

The sixth gallery was dedicated to 'DIY: Graffiti & Agitprop,' focusing on the aesthetic of Punk sloganeering. The inspiration was the Punk band *The Clash*'s early look of paint-spattered, stencilled boiler suits, which were designed by Caroline Coon. Katherine Hammett's 1984 *58% DON'T WANT PERSHING* dress was among the more iconic dresses in this room, featuring a style that has been imitated widely. Maison Martin Margiela's 2009 *THERE IS MORE ACTION TO BE DONE TO FIGHT AIDS THAN TO WEAR THIS T-SHIRT BUT IT'S A GOOD START* looked like it would not have been out of place at Seditionaries. Westwood's 2013 *CLIMATE REVOLUTION* shirt, with its visual quoting of posters from the May 1968 Paris uprising, was very much in keeping with her earlier work.

The final gallery, 'DIY: Destroy,' was themed around deconstruction. It was inspired by Punk's use of ripped and torn clothing, interpreted as a symbol of anger and urban decay (Image 4). Many of the garments in this room were simply torn or worn-out. These signs of wear did not strike this reviewer as particularly 'Punk,' for Punks did not invent the wearing of distressed clothing. Much more interesting were the series of 2004-2005 Rei Kawakubo Comme Des Garçons ensembles displayed in the middle of the room. Just as the UK Post-Punk band *Scritti Polliti* sang about Jacques Derrida, these works engaged with deconstruction in a more explicitly intellectual manner. Made of black silk and white cotton twill, with sleeves and ruffles in all the wrong places, these works highlighted the fact that the distinction between decoration and function is an artificial distinction constructed within the discourse of fashion.

Image 4: Gallery view, 'D.I.Y.: Destroy.' Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013

Aesthetically, the exhibition did an excellent job of delivering a cohesive experience. Wandering though the galleries created a sense of being in a self-contained space rather than in a wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The overlapping sound, video-projection, text, and music were disorienting at times, but this was in keeping with the exhibition's playful engagement with Punk and postmodernism. The walls of the gallery were host to numerous video installations, some directly connected to the garments on display, others more obliquely related. A wall of cathode-ray televisions hosted video collages, while other videos were projected directly onto the wall. Videos ranged from live performance to interviews to documentaries. The veteran fashion photographer Nick Knight assembled these video montages and acted as a creative consultant for the exhibition. The video clips vied for attention with speakers blaring interview clips and Punk rock classics such as Richard Hell and the *Voidoids*' 'Blank Generation' and *X-Ray Spex's* 'Identity.'

Given Punk's masculinist bias towards male performers and audiences, it was somewhat odd that the majority of the garments in the exhibition were women's. There were, however, a few exceptions. In the 'DIY: Hardware' gallery, there was a 2013 Thom Browne's wool jacket held together with safety pins, matched with a studded kilt and 21-hole brogues. In the 'DIY: Graffiti and Agitprop' gallery, two 2006-2007 Galliano ensembles for Dior featured sequin-embroidered bursts of colour reminiscent of paint splashes or perhaps bullet holes. The lack of men's outfits can be attributed to the exhibition's emphasis on runway fashion, which remains disproportionately female. It is a shame that the exhibition overlooked the Punk clothes worn in the clubs, pubs, and streets before Punk hit the runways. After all, it was the creativity and self-expression of everyday DIY Punk styling that inspired the designers whose work was exhibited in *Punk: Chaos to Couture*.

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David Bowie is

Victoria and Albert Museum, London
23 March – 28 July 2013
Curated by Victoria Broackes and Geoffrey Marsh
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Image 1: Album cover shoot for 'Aladdin Sane,' 1973. Photograph Duffy ® Duffy Archive for the David Bowie Archive. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

David Bowie's eye catching 'Tokyo Pop' black vinyl bodysuit is one of several with flared leggings designed by Kansai Yamamoto to go along with the razor-cut red hair for Bowie's *Aladdin Sane* tour (14 February – 3 July 1973) (Images 1 & 2). Displayed at the entrance to *David Bowie is*, it signalled that this V&A exhibition was devoted to a unique personality whose cultural frame of reference is eclectic, exotic, and esoteric. The exhibition was divided into two main sections: one focusing on chronologically documenting the artistic inspiration and evolution of Bowie-the-performer, the other featuring videos of his actual performances. The whole exhibition was a contextual cornucopia where films, books, and posters that have influenced Bowie were on display alongside a large selection of his performance costumes. On the gallery walls, in big capital lettering, lending monumental gravitas while putting a suggestive spin on different parts of the exhibition, could be read: 'David Bowie is ... 'An Absolute Beginner,' 'Looking for Information,' 'Blowing Our Minds,' 'Jumping from Universe to Universe,' 'Dressed from Head to Toe,' and 'Famous and Thinking About Something Else.'

What *David Bowie is* succeeded in bringing across is that David Bowie is *fecund*; fecund in the *Oxford English Dictionary* sense of 'producing or capable of producing an abundance of offspring or new growth,' both as regards his own mutability as a star and as an inspiration for countless other performers. The best songs – from the breakthrough 'Space Oddity' (1969), to 'Rebel Rebel' (1974), 'Young Americans' (1975), 'Ashes to Ashes' (1980), to 'Let's Dance' (1983) – are barrier-breaking, but Bowie's true legacy as a mass-media performer lies in his shape-shifting incarnations Ziggy Stardust (1972-1973), Aladdin Sane (1973, with the iconic lightning flash facial makeup), and The Thin White Duke (1975-1976). If this iconoclast dandy-messiah of an incipient 'me' culture had narcissistically dared to empower himself as a work of art, then most assuredly we ordinary mortals could do likewise! And many of us did, as Bowie's 'punk' and 'new romantic' acolytes demonstrated.

Image 2: Black Yamamoto bodysuit. Installation shot of David Bowie courtesy David Bowie Archive. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2013

The main purpose of this V&A tour de force has been to reveal the exceptional breadth of David Bowie's inspirations and playfully artistic readings of his sources. First, there were the inanities of post-war UK suburbia to be sloughed off. In the late 1960s, the mime artist, choreographer, and total performer extraordinaire Lindsay Kemp (b. 1938), along with theatrical make-up techniques, introduced Bowie to the experience of living as a complete performance. Cockney music hall, vaudeville, theatre, and art films had an influence on Bowie's staging. Canonical Hollywood publicity photos of Greta Garbo and Katharine Hepburn, *objet de culte* fashion mannequins, and paintings done by de Chirico, Magritte, and Dalí influenced his visual aesthetics. The iconic 'Earthrise' photo-image, taken across the barren moonscape by the Apollo 8 astronauts in 1969, along with William Burroughs' cut-ups (produced by cutting and rearranging a page of written words to create new narratives) and J G Ballard's ideas of fragmentation provided his music and lyrics with their motifs and structure.

Interspersed among wardrobe and other material artefacts were Bowie's many sketches and storyboards that reveal the extent of his own direct creative involvement. Bowie made his own costume designs on numerous occasions; an arresting example was the session musician Gail Ann Dorsey's horse's tail fastened by a dark red shiny leather bondage crotch-piece for the 'Dead Man Walking Video' (1997). A Bowie quote at the exhibition entrance above the aforementioned Yamamoto bodysuit set forth the preconditions of this avowedly bisexual artist's peculiarly disconnected, archly knowing creativity. 'All art is unstable. Its meaning is not necessarily that implied by the author. There is no authoritative voice. There are only multiple readings.' The bodysuit itself typifies the quote; not originally made for Bowie, it was based on a similar item seen by Bowie in the July 1971 issue of *Harpers & Queen*, which he then appropriated. The quote could also apply to the black, red, and white leather 'Woodland Creatures' short leotard designed by Yamamoto in 1972 for the *Ziggy Stardust* and *Aladdin Sane* tours. As could be read on an accompanying label, the gambolling rabbits which appear on what Bowie later called 'his impossibly silly bunny costume,' were a feature of traditional Japanese kabuki, a word translating literally as 'song, dance, art' theatre.

The film poster from *A Clockwork Orange* figured prominently at the beginning of the exhibition; theme music from Stanley Kubrick's 1971 film version of Anthony Burgess' novel had played before Bowie's *Ziggy Stardust* gigs. Also from the *Ziggy Stardust* tour was a jumpsuit in green and orange urban camouflage together with red lace-up shiny boots that subverted the original white jumpsuits of the 'droogs' or youthful practitioners of 'ultraviolence' in the Kubrick film; 'ultra-violence in Liberty fabrics,' according to Bowie himself (Image 3). Yet another jumpsuit, a quilted one designed by Bowie and his designer-tailor-cum-Ziggy-stylist buddy Freddie Burretti, had a green-on-white graphic print bearing an uncanny resemblance to digital camouflage years before the fact. Together with shiny white lace-up boots, it was worn by what could be likened to a cyborg laid out in a glass display case as if in a state of suspended animation or cryogenic hibernation reminiscent of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, another Kubrick film from 1968.

Bowie's 'black and white' phase was coextensive with his sojourn in Berlin (1976-1979), a requisite R&R from drug-addiction and an identity-crisis on top of *Ziggy Stardust*; disentangling himself from his Ziggy persona had caused Bowie serious problems. The Berlin era was epitomized in the severely elegant, monochromatic costume for the Thin White Duke, consisting of white shirt, black vest, black double-pleated trousers, black shoes, and a perforated gold bandanna covering of the entire face, reminiscent of the cabarets of Weimar Germany. Although Bowie's notorious retro-attraction to what in due course would be termed Nazi-chic was not the least of Bowie's fascinations for some people, notably punks, the curators had discreetly passed that over. Considering that the exhibition had been done in special collaboration with the David Bowie archive, this is perhaps not so surprising. A video-screen

triptych of Berlin themes that included Nazi book-burnings shown in conjunction with Bowie's 'Berlin triptych' LPs (1977-1979) 'Low,' 'Heroes,' and 'Lodger,' and Christopher Brewer's parenthetically noting in his chapter on Bowie album-covers in the exhibition catalogue that Bowie seemed to flirt with the trappings of fascism, were our only indicators of what many, despite Bowie's own protestations, saw as a serious flirt.

Image 3: Bowie's red-booted, quilted jumpsuit. Installation shot of David Bowie courtesy David Bowie Archive. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2013

Another black and white themed object was an exaggerated trapezoidal hour-glass tuxedo costume from the album 'The Man Who Sold the World' (1979). As conceived by set designer Mark Ravitz and Bowie, it was inspired by painter, textile, costume, and fashion designer Sonia Delaunay's (1885-1979) trapezoid, two-dimensional costumes for Dadaist playwright Tristan Tzara's (1896-1963) *Le Coeur à Gaz* [The Gas Heart] from 1923. To further illuminate its Dadaist pedigree, the costume was juxtaposed with a costume drawing, a photo of the prototype from Tzara's play, Delaunay's original costume drawings, and her portfolio (ca. 1915-1925). There was also a video clip showing Bowie performing in the costume together with a backing group of singer and dancer gypsies with their angular, robot-like movements and two-dimensional 'Egyptian' poses evocative of 1920s avant-garde theatre.

A black suit with pointed shoulders reminiscent of a picaresque Punch from the old Punch and Judy shows made a morbid impression on your reviewer. A similar unease attached itself to a Pierrot or 'Blue Clown' costume from the 'Ashes to Ashes' video (1980). Its accompanying label stated that, in the 1890s, Pierrot represented the alter-ego of the artist. Adding to the eeriness of this section of costumes was a double-headed dwarf, whose oversized heads each showed a moving projection of David Bowie's face. That freakish object had originally been made for Bowie's 1997 *Fiftieth Birthday Concert*.

In a locale several storeys high with enormous floor-to-ceiling video screens running on three sides, the exhibition accomplished the ultimate in 'inclusion.' 'Inclusion' refers to the notion of increased museum accessibility and the desire to broaden a museum's visitor profiles – in other words, of attracting a wider, non-traditional public to one's exhibitions. Throbbing music hit one's solar plexus, and the heretofore silent, reverent museum public obliged: people were dancing. The concert experience was real, since many of us who have actually seen Bowie perform live, have only experienced him from a distance on large video screens anyway. Here, whenever the videos were off, screen mesh revealed insets with Bowie's performance costumes, and when the videos were on, a light show would occasionally light up these costumes in an active interplay between video performance and museum artefact. Other videos playing behind a standing dummy in grey trousers, red suspenders, and a blue polka-dotted jumper made the Bowie-faced figure seem alive. The ambient darkness of the video gallery was also suggestive of the mysterious groundings of the flashy surface and spirit of Bowie. This was further underscored by some of the costumes on display which included a distressed frock coat by Alexander McQueen for the 1995 *Outside Tour*, and a gold and blue brocade frock coat by McQueen for the 1997 *Earthling Tour*. McQueen had blipped on Bowie's radar when that brilliant designer still was below everyone else's, and had apparently inclined in the late 1990s and early 2000s towards distressed gold brocade, frock- and tailcoat ensembles.

An audio guide let one fully immerse oneself in the exhibition. Jotting down notes for a review to the beat of Bowie was in no way distracting. However, a second visit to the exhibition without audio guide headphones did enable one to notice the ceilings from which many paperbacks and some hardcover editions of Bowie's favourite reading (which included Eugenia Ginzburg's gulag memoir *Journey into the Whirlwind*, Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor*, Charles White's *The Life and Times of Little Richard*, and many, many more) had been suspended (Image 4). One-time Bowie aficionado and future 'Queen of Punk' Siouxsie Sioux once remarked that Bowie was an unusual pop star in that 'he comes with a reading list.' Nevertheless, the exhibition left one uncertain as to what or who among these sources had *directly* influenced Bowie, although it did show in what manner his many collaborators had contributed toward broadening the referential horizon.

In a room of famous photographer portrait photos of Bowie that closed the exhibition, there was a 'Periodic Table of Bowie' by Paul Robertson (2013) showing influences-on-Bowie and the influence-of-Bowie – available for purchase at the museum bookstore as it turned out.

The eponymously titled catalogue is a tour de force in its own right. Those who have been unable to see the exhibition will enjoy the many beautiful and detailed images accompanying erudite chapters by qualified contributors. The fashion historian Christopher Breward has already been mentioned. Other contributors to the catalogue include composers, curators of fashion, textiles, theatre and performance, cultural historians, film critics, musical journalists, and musicians, adding up to a fecundity of expertise corresponding to the fecundity of Bowie.

Image 4: Display with books. Installation shot of David Bowie courtesy David Bowie Archive. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2013

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A Queer History of Fashion: From the Closet to the Catwalk

The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology
13 September 2013 – 4 January 2014
Curated by Valerie Steele and Fred Dennis
Catalogue: ***A Queer History of Fashion: From the Closet to the Catwalk***
Valerie Steele, ed.
New Haven: Yale University Press
2013, 248 pages, $50
Illustrated
ISBN: 978-0300196702

> Queerness is essentially about the rejection of the here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility of another world.
>
> -Jose Esteban Muñoz[1]

In keeping with the words of the late queer theorist Jose Esteban Muñoz, the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology's exhibition entitled *A Queer History of Fashion* is a curatorial victory that points in the direction of queer always being more than it is. With an impressive curatorial scope and exquisite artifice, the exhibition, while offering a historical perspective, succeeds in queering, that is, critically destabilizing and contesting, categories of the real at every level, pointing toward what Muñoz called a queer futurity.

The show illustrates what Gavin Smith, Alexandra Warwick, and Dani Cavallaro argue in *Fashioning the Frame Boundaries, Dress and the Body (*1998) that fashion is a border-making and border-blurring practice, turning on the axis of the material and the symbolic. Queer has always maintained a profound and important tension within its politics and, in the same turn, its aesthetic(s). On the one hand, queer has been used as an identity category to designate a sexual or gender orientation other than straight, heterosexual. On the other, queer signifies a kind of non-identity, a continual critique of any kind of label or categorization (Image 1). Queer is an identity, a noun, but also a verb, an action. *To queer* is to actively subvert easy definitions. In keeping with a radical queer politic, a queer history of fashion should do its best to challenge simplistic definitions of who one is. Rather than a voyeuristic, identitarian display of 'what queer people wear,' which could have been typecasting, the curators Valerie Steele and Fred Dennis allow the fashion in the exhibition to have a fully queer relationship to the bodies who wear them as well as to their designers. At one moment, the clothing functions as a memoir, such as with the exquisite Madeleine Vionnet gowns in the exhibition, with nothing quite obviously 'queer' left behind by the possibly bisexual designer. In another proximal moment, the clothing functions to assert or express and communicate a queer sexual identity, such as with the tailored suit for women from the eighteenth century or the hanky codes of the 'clone' style in the 1960s. In yet another moment, a garment calls into question its designer's own desire, and at the next instant, the clothing serves as a salve for trauma, as if to cover a wound, as with the AIDS display's colourful and loud paper dresses sold at LOVE. The use of the common T-shirt from ACT UP adds a texture of comfort and care to the sensitivity of the AIDS crisis, providing an aesthetic bridge between the political grit of ACT UP and the careful mastery of the paper pieces. Their positioning apart from the main display adds a sense of linear time being broken, creating a sense of reverence. In terms of curatorial scope and artistry, the show is impressive. Aesthetically, the exhibition ranges from loud and colourful camp pieces, to street style, to leather-based fetish subcultural wear, to elegant high fashion, merging street styles artfully with high fashion runway pieces, which

seem to offset and complement one another, effectively 'queering' easy distinctions between high art and daily subcultural expressions.

Image 1: Model, Jenny Shimizu, Helmut Red campaign. Photograph by Mark Seliger. © Image courtesy of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, 2013

Several narratives of queering in history are included – from the cross-dressing bars called 'molly houses' in the early 1700s to the myth of the 1970s 'gay clone.' While occasionally these stories have a simplistic quality (e.g. 'lesbians in the 1900s wore men's tailored suit'), these narratives break into more complex representations in the latter half of the exhibition, rounding the corner from the 1970s to more recent queer fashion configurations. The exhibition successfully and seductively elaborates the complex relationship between queer bodies and queer identities (Image 2).

Image 2: Installation view. © Image courtesy of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, 2013

Of particular note are the gender-bending pieces which queer the clothing-body relationship. Take, for example, a skintight white men's spandex shirt with a muscled physique printed on it, a hot pink sailor suit, and a bustled gown made entirely of flannel print lumberjack-style plaid shirts from the late 1990s designed for women. Icons are also central and will leave viewers pleased. The show's curators should be credited for their astute representations of iconic fashions worn by historical queer figures, including several exquisite pieces worn by Oscar Wilde and Marlene Dietrich. Notable also is Yves Saint Laurent's 'Le Smoking' jacket, inspired by Dietrich's menswear styles (Image 3).

The exhibition succeeds in queering 'queer history,' representing various iterations of gender and sexuality, including their uneven development and oftentimes conflicting representations. However, to augment this effect, the curators might have broken up some of its simpler historical narratives by showing a complexity of identities in each era. Perhaps because of the limitations of the space, Steele and Dennis were confined to organize their exhibition in an ironically linear narrative, extending from the 1700s and then ending in the contemporary moment. What kind of transformative experience might have come about from organizing the pieces in more experimental, non-chronological configurations, in order to queer history and narrative instead of relying on the expected liner trajectory from past to present? While the

chronology makes the show legible to a mainstream audience, are there missed opportunities to tell other stories not so easily given to a narrative arc or broad chronological brushstrokes?

Image 3: Installation view of the 'Pretty Gentlemen' platform, 2013.
© Image courtesy of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York

Also problematic is the show's abrupt end, with the inclusion of three pairs of contemporary wedding fashions by high-profile designers, which are separated from the rest of the exhibition by a set of doors, as if signifying birth from history to the present moment. While one might argue that wedding dress design is an appropriate end-point to the story, the ultimate emergence from a repressive closet, the show should be cautious not to tell such an expected 'happy ending,' which feels heteronormative and erases the multiplicity of queer fashions, subcultures, life narrative, and identities that characterize the contemporary moment. Indeed, even as struggles for marriage equality have increasingly become visible in the mainstream, queer theorists have argued that subcultural sexual practices have also increased but have been marginalized by this focus in the mainstream LGBT Rights Movement toward marriage. Can these interesting fashion subcultures which embody non-matrimonial futurities and modes of living, such as those emerging in Brooklyn's queer nightlife scene, also become visible at the moment of the show's ending to represent multiple futurities? This would have added another layer of queerness to a show that embodies throughout what Oscar Wilde referred to as the dangerous and delightful distinction of being different from others.

Notes

[1] Jose Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Ten and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: NYU Press, 2009), 87. This review was written just after the sudden and tragic passing of celebrated queer theorist Jose Esteban Muñoz, a professor of Performance Studies at New York University. We mourn his passing and celebrate his central contribution to understandings of queer aesthetics and queer futurity with deep reverence and respect, and look forward with hope to a utopian queer futurity enacted in the present moment.

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La Mécanique des dessous: une histoire indiscrète de la silhouette

Le Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris
5 July – 24 November 2013
Curated by Denis Bruna, gallery design by Constance Guisset
Catalogue: ***La Mécanique des dessous: une histoire indiscrète de la silhouette***
Edited by Denis Bruna
Paris: Les Arts Décoratifs
2013, 272 pages, 55€
Illustrated, with selected bibliography and index
ISBN: 978-2-916914-42-8

The concept of the silhouette in fashion is, like the origin of the word itself, a complicated matter. Etymologically based on the name of Étienne de Silhouette who, as the French finance minister, enacted in 1759 a series of austerity measures in response to a credit crisis brought on by the Seven Years War, the common noun silhouette soon thereafter was associated with the low-cost profile portraiture that had become popular at the same time. The silhouette portrait, which outlined the form of its sitter while omitting many of his or her specific details, constituted a partially abstract representation of the human body. The abstract dimension of the silhouette persisted when the term began to be applied to dress in the second half of the nineteenth century, subsequently referring to the way clothes interact with the body to enhance or modify existing lines and forms. In many respects, the evolution of modern fashion, from Poiret and Chanel through Dior and Balenciaga and beyond to Lacroix, Mugler, Westwood, and Gaultier, among many others, is the history of innovating silhouettes. The recent exhibition at Paris's Musée des Arts Décoratifs entitled *La Mécanique des dessous: une histoire indiscrète de la silhouette* (suggestively rendered in English by its creator as 'Behind the Seams: An Indiscreet History of the Silhouette') sought to examine the evolution of the Western silhouette from the fourteenth to the twenty-first century. Its curator Denis Bruna, the head of the museum's pre-nineteenth-century fashion and textile department, traced the silhouette's history by presenting examples of the hidden structures, devices, mechanisms, and contraptions that clothes makers and designers have employed to articulate desired and new forms for male and female bodies.

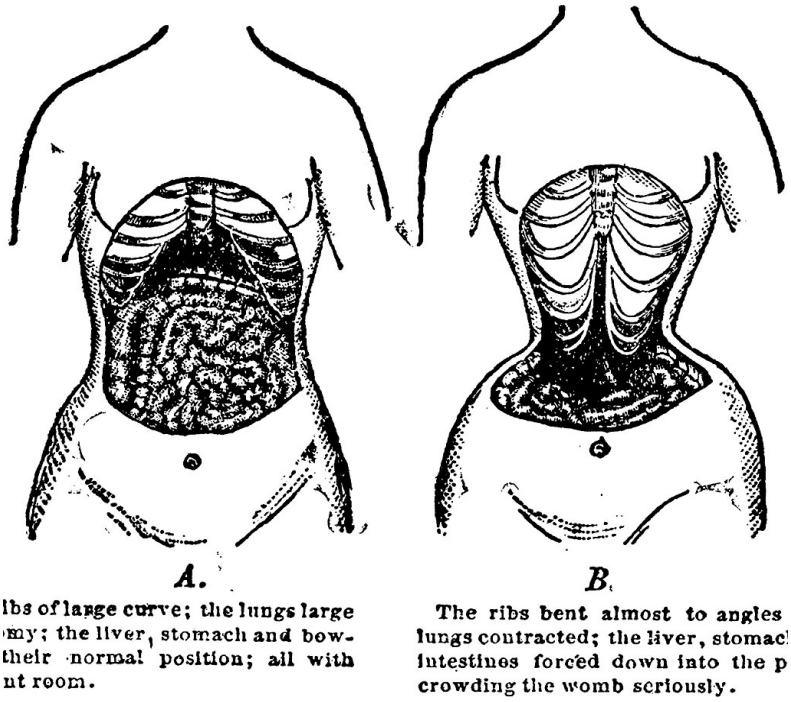

Image 1: Two pictures of a woman's torso; one showing a woman without a corset, the other showing the effects on the internal organs and bones when wearing a corset, 1903. © Courtesy Library of Congress.

At the entrance to the exhibition, a wall text in the form of a citation from a 1779 article on fashion by the journalist and lawyer Guillaume François Roger Molé served as an epigraph for the show. In that quote, Molé contended that merely showing the surface of clothes was not enough, arguing instead that by revealing their interior structures one could often better understand the basis for their fashionable status. In this way, the exhibition from the outset rather playfully evoked lofty Enlightenment values like the exploration and discovery of the unknown and the subsequent encyclopaedic compilation of knowledge about all types of human activity and behaviour. As one entered the exhibition, the notion that the viewer was embarking on a voyage of discovery to the shadowy, clandestine netherworld of undergarments from the past and the present was effectively rendered in the gallery space designed by Constance Guisset. The walls were painted black and the rooms were dimly lit. Inside the various display cases, spotlights illuminated the artefacts, many of them extremely rare, which had been placed on nondescript black velvet mannequins, creating an otherworldly atmosphere in which these normally hidden and purportedly indiscreet objects fantastically appeared.

La Mécanique des dessous was organized according to the historical period and the type of device or structure used to create a desired silhouette, the first floor displaying those male and female fashions popularized during the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries. In this portion of the exhibition, certain styles associated with one sex or another conveyed broader themes that ran throughout the gallery displays. Male styles like the false crotch or enhanced codpiece (1480-1600), the Spanish doublet (1550-1610), and chest pads (1770-1790) clearly expressed the desire to exaggerate the virility and power of the wearer. Female articles of underclothing like the iron corset (1600-1700) and dresses with whale bone construction (1680-1800) appeared much more constrictive in altering a woman's silhouette. In particular, the iron corset, whose facsimile model in the display was whimsically mobile, effectively demonstrated how women were trapped by this contraption. The most spectacular of the displays in this section was the enormous, gold brocade late-eighteenth-century *panier* (c. 1780) whose opulence and impractical dimensions emblematically conveyed the dissociation from French society of the Ancien Régime monarchy and royal court in the years immediately prior the 1789 French Revolution. This section of the exhibition ended with an interesting interactive space entitled 'Habillez-vous' (Dress Yourself) in which viewers could try on facsimiles of some of the articles included in the show.

The top floor of the exhibition, devoted to the nineteenth, twentieth, and twentieth-first centuries, featured form-altering styles that were, for the most part, familiar to the viewer even if no longer in use. Crinolines, bustles, and corsets were followed by girdles (for both women and men), bras, and form-enhancing underwear (Image 1). It was interesting to note that, aside from the early nineteenth century padded calves that men wore before trousers became conventional attire and the early twentieth-first century form-enhancing underwear (for example, Aussiebum's 2007 Wonderjock, named to echo the female undergarment, the Wonderbra), the issue of modifying the male silhouette substantially receded into the background during this period. Of course, this period roughly coincides with what J C Flügel in his seminal work the *Psychology of Clothes* (1930) called the Great Masculine Renunciation, a time when, with the rise of industrial capitalism and the ascendency of the middle class which asserted the values of the workplace, fashion became far more associated with women's dress as men's attire was progressively dominated by the black suit. In a similar way, beginning in the inter-war era of the twentieth-century, the female silhouette became a much sleeker, more athletic, and nearly androgynous proposition, minimizing the visibility if not presence of form-modifying structures. The final portion of the exhibition was conceived of in a rather postmodern way as couture fashions from contemporary designers like Thierry Mugler, Vivienne Westwood, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Rei Kawakubo, and Iris van Herpen paid homage to

some of the previous styles while ironically rearticulating their silhouette-modifying structures and strategies. The fashions shown in this section differed from the previous displays in that these items were not necessarily reflecting widely worn contemporary styles, but rather were experimentally reintroducing out-dated forms in a self-conscious way that ultimately constituted a critique of the very notion of the modification of the silhouette. This critique of the idea of the silhouette extended into the exhibition's compelling epilogue, a series of black velvet mannequins wearing no clothes, that chronologically illustrated the changing shapes of the female body since the fourteenth century.

La Mécanique des dessous, curiously reminiscent of the surrealists' collections of out-moded and out-of-fashion objects discovered in the fleas markets of Paris, brought to light completely real and essentially everyday sartorial under-accessories from the past and the present, and ultimately rendered them strange and uncanny in the process. At the same time, the exhibition effectively demystified the succession of forms of the human silhouette by revealing the mechanics behind their creation. The premise of the exhibition, continuing in a certain vein of recent French historiography that has examined the history of the body and its habits, provided a museological analogue to such important historical works like Philippe Perrot's 1981 *Les Dessous et les dessus de la bourgeoisie; une histoire du vêtement au XIXe siècle* (*Fashioning the Bourgeoisie: A History of Clothing in the Nineteenth Century*,1981), Georges Vigarello's *Le Sain et le malsain; santé et mieux-être depuis le Moyen Âge* (*Concepts of Cleanliness: Changing Attitudes in France since the Middle Ages*, 1993), and the collectively authored, three-volume series *Histoire du corps* (*History of the Body*, 2005-2006). While the exhibition's subtitle qualified these artefacts as indiscreet due to their intimate proximity to the body, perhaps their true indiscretion comes from their creators' desire to modify the body's actual silhouette and imaginatively recreate the human form according to the dictates of the fashion system and its ever changing ideals of male and female body types.

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Current and Forthcoming Exhibitions

Fashion in Fiction

(The Charleston Museum, Charleston, Virginia, 19 October 2013 – 6 April 2014)

This exhibition explores the role that clothing and fashion have played in some of the Western tradition's most famous works of fiction from the nineteenth and twentieth century. By juxtaposing passages from the works of Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Edith Wharton, F. Scott Fitzgerald, among others, with archival examples of the fashions that they describe, this exhibit shows how fashion and style become integral elements of our conception of a particular historical period and influence our understanding of these classic works of literature.

Bound To Impress: Corsets from the Helen Larson Historic Fashion Collection

(FIDM Orange County Gallery, Irvine, California, 20 December 2013 – 14 June 2014)

For several centuries, the corset was a popular garment employed to recreate a woman's silhouette according to changing ideals of the female form. *Bound to Impress: Corsets from the Helen Larson Historic Fashion Collection* presents examples of corsets from the 1760s through the 1820s, covering such important historical periods like France's late Ancien Régime, the French Revolution, Napoléon's First Empire, and the Age of British Romanticism.

William Klein

(FOAM, Amsterdam, 20 December 2013 – 12 March 2014)

Amsterdam's photography museum FOAM is exceptionally devoting its entire gallery space to a major retrospective of the work of the photographer, artist, and filmmaker William Klein. The exhibition includes examples of Klein's early abstract photography, his city studies of New York City, Tokyo, Rome, and Moscow, his fashion photographs for *Vogue*, his later painted contact prints, and clips from his documentary and feature films. As the show effectively demonstrates, from the realism of his 'street photography' to his ironic and sometimes irreverent take on the world of fashion, William Klein was among the most innovative and influential photographers of the second half of the twentieth century.

***Smoke* + *Veil*, Paris, 1958. © William Klein. Courtesy FOAM, Amsterdam**

Elegance in an Age of Crisis: Fashions of the 1930s

(The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, 7 February 2014 – 19 April 2014)

The decade of the 1930s is typically seen by historians and cultural critics as a time of economic and political turmoil; however, in the world of fashion, as this exhibition at the Museum at the FIT effectively conveys, it was also a period in which a streamlined aesthetic for modern and elegant dressing developed for both men and women. Examining the period between the 1929 Stock Market Crash and the outbreak of World War II in 1939, *Elegance in the Age of Crisis* shows how a balanced and well-proportioned male and female body became the ideal as a neoclassic vision of both sartorial style and corporality emerged. The exhibition highlights important technological innovations (for example, new synthetic fabrics), new techniques, new subcategories of fashion like active and resort wear, and a new approach to formal wear.

Papier Glacé: un siècle de mode chez Condé Nast

(Frozen Paper: A Century of Fashion with Condé Nast, Musée de la Mode, Palais Galliera, Paris, 1 March 2014 – 25 May 2014)

For the last century, the Condé Nast publishing group, which produces such influential magazines as *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *Glamour*, and *W*, has been a leader in bringing to the public interesting and innovative examples of fashion photography. This show presents 150 fashion photographs from 1918 to the present representing some of the biggest names in the medium like Horst P. Horst, Irving Penn, Man Ray, Cecil Beaton, and William Klein, among many others.

Dries Van Noten: inspirations

(Le Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Louvre, Paris, 1 March 2014 – 31 August 2014)

In this exhibition, the Musée des Arts Décoratifs presents the work of Belgian designer Dries Van Noten in the context of his diverse influences and inspirations from the worlds of fashion, literature, art, history, music, and cinema. The show details the personal journey and the creative process of Dries Van Noten from his early days in the 1980s as one of avant-garde designers of the Antwerp Six to his most recent runway collections.

Beyond Rebellion: Fashioning the Biker Jacket

(The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, 4 March 2014 – 5 April 2014)

While the biker jacket has a completely utilitarian function as an example of men's outerwear, its cultural status as a symbol of masculinity and rebellion cannot be denied. In this exhibition organised and curated by the students in FIT's graduate programs, the cultural history and mystique of the biker jacket is examined. Unconventional design elements including exposed zippers, metal snaps, and asymmetrical front closures contribute to the notion that wearing a biker jacket constitutes an act of resistance to social norms and everyday life. The history of this garment is subsequently retraced in this show from the 1928 Perfecto Style introduced by Irving Schott, to its popularization in movies in the 1950s like *The Wild One* (1953) and its more recent reinterpretations in the world of high fashion in designs by leading labels like Yves Saint Laurent, Jean-Paul Gaultier, and Comme des Garçons.

The Glamour of Italian Fashion, 1945 – 2014

(Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 5 April 2014 – 27 July 2014)

This major exhibition provides a comprehensive view of Italian fashion from the end of World War II to the present day. It examines Italy's transition from the economic ruins of the immediate post-war period to the development of the fashion and luxury goods industry in the 1950s and beyond. Focusing on key designers and fashion houses, *The Glamour of Italian Fashion, 1945-2014* features approximately ninety examples of both women's and menswear that highlight the exceptional quality of techniques, materials, and expertise that have made Italian fashion an important international phenomenon since the 1950s.

Evening Dress of Silk Designed by Roberto Capucci, 1987-1988. © Courtesy Roberto Capucci Foundation, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Charles James: Beyond Fashion

(The Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, May 8 2014 – 10 August 2014)

The inaugural exhibition in the Met's newly renovated Costume Institute, this retrospective of the career of Charles James features over 100 examples of the Anglo-American designer's work from 1929 to his death in 1978. Working in the haute couture tradition, James' approach combined the sculptural and the mathematical as he experimented with complex cuts and seaming. Examples in the show illustrate his lifelong interest in certain sartorial forms like wrap-over trousers, figure-eight skirts, body-hugging sheaths, ribbon capes and dresses, spiral-cut garments, and poufs. The exhibition also provides an interesting insight into the evolution of James's work with the inclusion of sketches, pattern pieces, swatches, and partially completed works from his last studio in New York City's Chelsea Hotel.

Les Années 50

(The Fifties, Musée de la Mode, Palais Galliera, Paris, 3 July 2014 – 15 November 2014)

In the history of Parisian haute couture, the 1950s constituted a golden age during which notable designers like Dior, Balmain, Fath, Balenciaga, and Cardin dominated the international fashion scene with designs that highlighted ample skirts below the knee, a cinched waist, and rounded shoulders. In the exhibition, this important period is considered by retracing the evolution of Dior's New Look silhouette from 1947 through 1957, underscoring the reality of the democratisation of high fashion during this decade with the progressive interrelationship of haute couture and prêt-à-porter.

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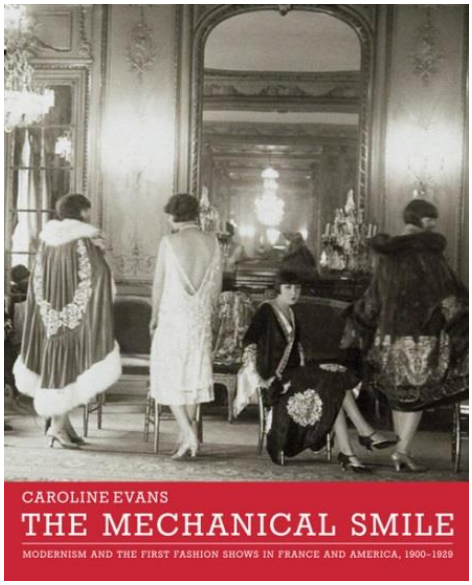
ISSN: 2045-2349

Book Reviews

The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900-1929

Caroline Evans
New Haven and London: Yale University Press
2013, 338 pages, $50
Illustrated, with an index and bibliography
ISBN: 978-0-3001-8953-7



Courtesy Yale University Press

While the runway show at its core is a presentational strategy designed to promote and market a designer's latest collection, it has become in recent decades a cultural phenomenon of global significance far exceeding its commercial context. Memorable runway shows like that for Alexander McQueen's Spring 2000 collection in which models were hoisted over a stage replete with spikes and nails and the Maison Martin Margiela Spring/Summer 2009 show in which the faces of the models were surreally obscured by flesh-toned masks, among many others, have revealed aesthetic and philosophical preoccupations akin to performance and conceptual art. Twenty-four hour cable fashion channels, YouTube clips of fashion week collections, and reality television shows for emerging designers and potential models have rendered accessible the idioms of the catwalk to an everyday public. Going even farther, Las Vegas's runway-themed Fashion Show Mall, with its weekly catwalk shows, seeks to place local and touristic shoppers in the middle of the fashion event itself. Despite the seeming ubiquity of the fashion runway show as a medium of cultural expression and aesthetic performance in the contemporary world, it is surprising that little serious commentary has been devoted to its admittedly short history. Caroline Evans' recent book *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900-1929* takes a significant step in addressing this lacuna by examining the early history of the fashion show and its primary participant, the runway model, in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century France and America.

The Mechanical Smile is divided into two large sections. Following a brief introduction that reviews the literature on the subject and outlines the theoretical issues of the book, the first six chapters chronologically trace the emergence of the fashion show in France and the United States through the 1920s. The first chapter, entitled 'Pre-History: Nineteenth-Century Fashion Modelling,' looks at live fashion presentations in the context of the developing business model of the haute couture industry in nineteenth-century France. In the second chapter, '1900-1914: The Rationalisation of the Body,' the author explores the evolution of the fashion show in France in the early twentieth century and in Chapter Three, '1900-1914: French Fashion on the World Stage,' she considers the international dissemination of France's fashion during the same period. Chapter Four, '1900-1914: America,' is the only one in the book devoted to the

phenomenon of fashion shows during this period in the United States. The final two chapters of this section, '1914-1919: The Nationalisation of the Body' and '1919-1929: Fashion in Motion,' return to France in the post-World War I era and discuss the development of the fashion show in relation to other cultural aspects of Western society at the time like politics, advertising, architecture, and modernist aesthetics.

In the second section of *The Mechanical Smile*, less chronologically organised than the first, Evans focuses on the mannequin, the original designation of the live fashion model. Chapter Seven, 'Architecture: Factories of Elegance,' analyses the work and presentational spaces of the emerging fashion industry while Chapter Eight 'Audiences: The Commerce of the Look' considers the mannequin's visual interaction with the audience in terms of the latter's gendered and commodifying gaze. In the next chapter, perhaps the most interesting of the book and entitled 'Objects: The Industrial Smile,' the author explores the contradictory notion of the mannequin as a living object. The final three chapters, 'Prolepsis: Future Bodies,' 'Movement: The Mannequin's Walk,' and 'Flow: The Mannequin's Pose,' analytically discuss the essential characteristics associated with the mannequin's body in the fully developed fashion show of the 1920s. In a brief 'Afterword,' followed by extensive notes and a detailed bibliography, Evans discusses how the Great Crash of 1929 affected the commercial and aesthetic dimensions of the fashion show.

In the history of the early fashion show that *The Mechanical Smile* retraces, key concepts emerge in the discussion that clarify the form and function of these fashion events, particularly in the context of an increasingly visible relationship between the economic system that produced them and the aesthetic conventions that they developed. As Evans demonstrates, in the formative years of live fashion modelling before World War I, dressmakers and designers began to standardise the constituent elements of these events in a specific way. For example, the designer Lucile (Lady Duff-Gordon) in London (and then in Paris from 1910 onwards) publicized her mannequin parades as elite spectacles, and the models chosen to participate were not only categorized according to body type, but they were also trained and styled in preparation for these events. Paul Poiret in Paris, employing similar strategies, created themed mannequin parades and cultivated a relationship with the press in terms of covering these theatrical spectacles. In the Paris fashion parades of Jeanne Paquin and Jean Patou, both music and motion became essential elements in the choreography of these presentations. In these examples, Evans sees the emergence of the notion of the live fashion model as a rationalised space wherein individuality was minimized and whose form was replicated in the process. The author likens this phenomenon to industrial production and asserts the idea of a Fordist aesthetic that regulated and regimented these ultimately modernist bodies.

The theme of the industrialisation of the fashion experience is pursued in the second half of Evans' book by an analysis of the performance of the mechanised and mobile mannequin. In this discussion, the author, following the arguments of other recent studies like Marlis Schweitzer's *When Broadway Was the Runway: Theater, Fashion, and American Culture* (2009), comparatively recognises the emergence of similarly rationalised women's bodies in the musical theatre, dance, and silent cinema of the period. The rationalisation of the body, Evans argues, positioned the mannequin in a philosophical space in which she was both subject and object. These living objects constituted a commercial abstraction (not without an erotic potential, as Walter Benjamin persuasively contended in his comments on the chorus girls of music hall theatre). The ultimate value of these mechanised, performing bodies was anticipatory in that they asserted the commodified fantasy of a perfect, future body.

Although *The Mechanical Smile* on the surface would seem to be directed primarily to readers and students of fashion history, its readership potentially includes those interested early twentieth-century popular culture, modernism, gender studies, and Franco-American cultural

relations. Meticulously researched, theoretically sophisticated, and sumptuously illustrated, Caroline Evans' book not only corrects and augments our understanding of this critical period in the development of the modern fashion industry, it also persuasively demonstrates the suggestive conjunction between fashion and other types of early twentieth-century cultural production in Western Europe and America. In this way, *The Mechanical Smile* effectively argues that modernism as an aesthetic and as a perspective was not limited to the high culture realms of art and literature, and extended far into the world of the everyday and its paradigms of commercial activity. As with her 2007 book *Fashion at the Edge: Spectacle, Modernity, and Deathliness*, Evans shows how fashion as articulated in the context of a modernist sensibility was a far more complex and even contradictory proposition than previous studies have been willing to admit. Moreover, her authoritative study reveals the subtle interrelationships between the business of fashion and the development of its aesthetics.

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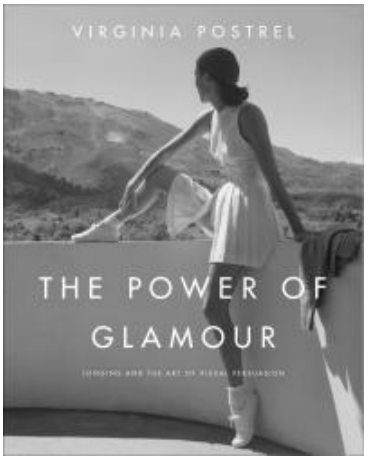
Briefly Noted Books

The Power of Glamour: Longing and the Art of Visual Persuasion

Virginia Postrel. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013, 286 pages, illustrated with an index, $28, ISBN: 978-1416561118.



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In her most recent book, the journalist and cultural critic Virginia Postrel provocatively explores the ubiquitous yet elusive notion of glamour. Distinguishing glamour from glitz, Postrel discusses how the former constitutes an imaginative phenomenon which prompts in us a yearning and a longing. This feeling of 'if only' influences our consumer behaviour, our choices about where we live, the careers we pursue, and the way we live our lives. The

author begins by identifying three essential characteristics common to all forms of glamour. She then proposes a theory of glamour that explains its power as a type of nonverbal persuasion, evoking secret desires and a deep yearning that ultimately informs on the shape of our everyday lives.

A Cultural History of Fashion in the 20th and 21st Centuries: From Sidewalk to Catwalk

Bonnie English. London: Bloomsbury, 2013, 2nd edition, 255 pages, illustrated with a bibliography and index, £16.99, ISBN: 978-0857851345.

In the revised edition of her popular textbook of fashion history, the art and art history specialist Bonnie English significantly augments her book with new sections on eco-fashion, fashion and the museum, and major changes in the fashion market in the twenty-first century including topics like new media, new retailing strategies, fashion weeks, and the increased importance of Asian fashion centres. The revised edition provides a more comprehensive view of the history and business of fashion in the past two centuries.

Fashion Crimes: Dressing For Deviance

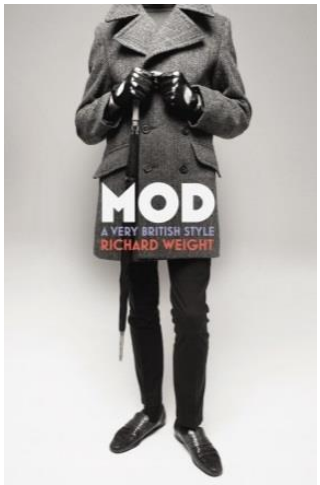
Jo Turney, ed. London: I. B. Tauris, 2013, 288 pages, with a selected bibliography and index, £54.50, ISBN: 978-1780766980.

In this collection of essays, edited by the design historian Jo Turney, the relationship between fashion and criminality is considered from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives. The essays analyse specific garments (for example, the Hoodie, branded sportswear, the knitted Norwegian Lustkoffe sweater, and so forth) as well as the individuals and groups associated with them. It considers how both garments and their wearers have been coded as outside of the parameters of 'respectability' and, thus, marked as socially deviant. This volume seeks to interrogate the notion of morality as a form of social control in relation to fashion, informing on the politics of identity that are communicated by dress codes established by the everyday choices of what one wears.

Mod: A Very British Style

Richard Weight. London: Bodley Head/Random House, 2013, 496 pages, illustrated with a bibliography and an index, £25, ISBN: 978-0224073912.

The Mod style, which originated as a working class movement in a newly affluent 1950s Britain, ultimately grew into a revolutionary expression of youth culture in the coming decade. Richard Weight's *Mod: A Very British Style* examines the roots of Mod phenomenon in the Soho jazz scene in the 1950s, its prominence in the mid-1960s with emblematic figures like Mary Quant, Terence Conran, and Twiggy in Swinging London, and its convulsions in occurrences like the Margate and Brighton Mod-Rocker riots of 1964. Weight shows how this eclectic style, which combined American popular music in the form of modern jazz and European fashion's modernist



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aesthetics, affected all types of cultural production in the realms of the period's music, fashion, art, film, and architecture, comprising a revolution of sorts for its participants.

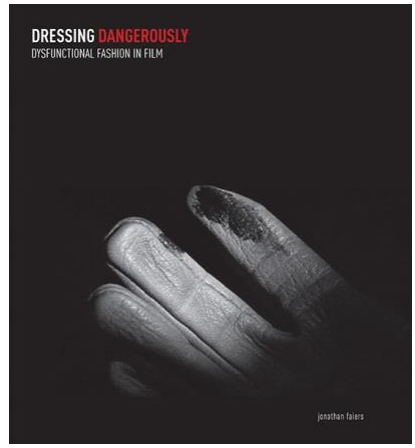
DIY Style: Fashion, Music and Global Digital Cultures

Brent Luvaas. New York and London: Berg/Bloomsbury Academic, 2012, 208 pages, with an index, $29.95, ISBN: 978-0857850409.

DIY Style: Fashion, Music, and Global Digital Cultures provides an account of the international do-it-yourself (DIY) movement in which, due to the newfound availability of cheap digital technologies and an independent spirit, young people around the world have taken cultural production into their own hands. The author Brent Luvaas shows how individuals and groups across the globe have created new clothing lines, launched their own record labels, and established vast networks of engaged amateurs interested more in producing than consuming. As this book persuasively argues, the global DIY ethos has revolutionized the capitalist industrial model, replacing it with a creative, collectivist, and alternative approach that has transformed the idea of cultural production from the ground up.

Dressing Dangerously: Dysfunctional Fashion in Film

Jonathan Faiers. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013, 304 pages, illustrated with a bibliography and index, $60, ISBN: 978-0300184389.



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In *Dressing Dangerously: Dysfunctional Fashion in Film*, Jonathan Faiers' presents an innovative and pioneering study of the uses of what he calls a 'negative cinematic wardrobe' in mainstream Hollywood films from the 1940s to the present. In films like John M. Stahl's film noir *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), Alfred Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* (1950), and Martin Scorsese's *Casino* (1995), among others, the author analyses how film costuming goes far beyond the simple notion of dressing glamorous stars in glamorous clothes and can constitute an additional, complex layer of meaning through the use of surprising and shocking depictions of fashionable dress which ultimately play a pivotal role in their respective cinematic narratives.

Slow Fashions: Making Sense of Sustainable Fashion

Anna Konig, London: I. B. Tauris, 2013, 224 pages, with a bibliography and index, £56, ISBN: 978-1848853423.

This book examines the increased role that fashion plays in the contemporary production of clothes according to principles of economic and environmental sustainability. The author explores the notions of 'eco-fashion' or 'ethical fashion' not only in the realm of garment production, but also in terms of the relationships of this type of clothing to representations of fashion and its uses in contemporary society.

Pour Vous, Mesdames! La mode en temps de guerre

(For You, Ladies! Fashion in Wartime)
Isabelle Doré-Rivé. Lyon: Editions Libel, 2013, 95 pages, illustrated with a bibliography, 16€, ISBN: 978-2917659359.

In this volume, under the direction of Isabelle Doré-Rivé of the Centre d'Histoire de la Résistance et de la Déportation and in association with Paris's Musée de la Mode, the issue of fashion in the context of World War II Occupied and Vichy France is explored from a variety of perspectives. Topics in the book include the styles that emerged in the culturally and economically restricted context of war and occupation, the effect of the political context on the functioning of the fashion industry during this time, and the representations in later fashion and cinema of this pivotal, yet troubled period of French history. A fascinating and important contribution to women's history, *Pour Vous Mesdames!* underscores the creativity and resourcefulness of fashion producers and consumers in response to the disruption of established patterns of cultural activity during times of war and military occupation.

Sixties Fashion: From Less Is More to Youthquake

Jonathan Walford. London: Thames and Hudson, 2013, 208 pages, illustrated with a bibliography and index, £24.95, ISBN: 978-0500516935.

© 2013, courtesy Thames and Hudson

Fashion in the 1960s, as with many other areas of cultural activity, was often groundbreaking, radical, and revolutionary. Jonathan Walford's latest book *Sixties Fashion: From Less Is More to Youthquake* provides a definitive view of this transitional period, examining the styles, labels, and movements that characterized the decade. From the rise of the iconic miniskirt to the assertion of the subcultural styles of the Mods in London, the Yéyés in France, and the Flower Children in the United States, the author considers how the demands of youth culture, which sought more informal and individualistic, yet stylish clothes, not only affected what young people wore, but also transformed the fashion industry in terms of materials, demographics, inspirations, and the very notion of what it meant to be fashionable.

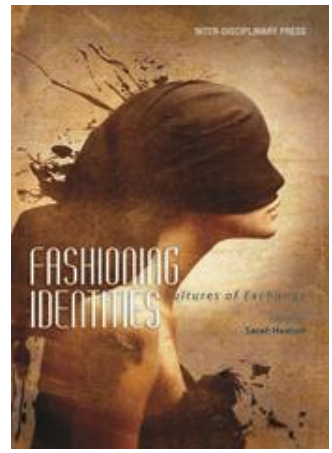
Modest Fashion: Styling Bodies, Mediating Faith

Reina Lewis, ed. London: I. B. Tauris, 2013, 256 pages, with a selected bibliography and index, £56, ISBN: 978-178076385.

In the essays in this collection edited by Reina Lewis, the contributors consider the notion of dressing modestly in relation to the world of fashion. This book considers such diverse topics as the reality of modest fashion in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faith-based communities; secular dressers associated with these groups; the commerce of modest fashion on the level of production; retailing to the modest dresser; consumer behaviour; and the political, religious, and aesthetic implications of dressing modestly.

Fashioning Identities: Cultures of Exchange

Sarah Heaton, ed. Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2013, 280 pages, with a selected bibliography, £24.99, ISBN: 978-184882126.



The essay collection *Fashioning Identities: Cultures of Exchange* examines the relationship between the act of wearing clothes and the implications that those sartorial choices have for the identity of the wearer. Edited by the literary critic Sarah Heaton, the book brings together contributors from Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines who consider the process of identity formation on the levels of the individual, the 'brand,' the industry, the national, and the global.