Summary

Dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of fashion from an academic perspective, the quarterly journal *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* views fashion as a cultural phenomenon, offering the reader a wide range of articles by leading Western and Russian specialists, as well as classical texts on fashion theory. From the history of dress and design to body practices; from the work of well-known designers to issues around consumption in fashion; from beauty and the fashionable figure through the ages to fashion journalism, fashion and PR, fashion and city life, art and fashion, fashion and photography — *Fashion Theory* covers it all.

In this issue's **Dress** section, we take a look at performance, costume and fashion.

Irina Sirotkina offers *A Case of Exposure: The Oriental Costumes of Leon Bakst, and the Epistemology of Nudity.* Why is it that 'naked truth' is a familiar expression, while 'immaculately dressed truth' is not? And to whom should this matter be addressed, fashion theory experts, or

epistemologists studying the theory of knowledge? Can truth really be masked or embellished, or will it always, sooner or later, end up being revealed to the observer? In her paper, Sirotkina examines Bakst's costumes for the 'Oriental' Ballets Russes productions, and other artworks showing exposure and nakedness, within the context of Foucault's 'regimes of truth'. The author suggests a number of sources which may have inspired Bakst's studies, notably Isadora Duncan's dance, and the boudoir cards of Jean Geiser, and draws a parallel between these images and allegories of Truth, a traditional subject in Western art.

Susan Marshall contributes *Insubordinate Costume and Beyond.* Reflecting on her doctoral research into Insubordinate Costume and her subsequent experiments in the use of modular costume in performance with The White Lady of Liselund and Performative Pockets, Marshall discusses the multi-faceted, agentic and ecological possibilities of her flat-pack modular 'phoenix' costumes, which shift human centrality towards a co-creativity between object and body. The modular pieces can be constructed in different ways in order to form three-dimensional sculptural shapes, which can be worn and played with in a myriad of alternative ways. With reference to Jane Bennet's New Materialism theory of 'thing-power' and her definition of the word 'assemblage' as used by Deleuze and Guattari, Marshall's practice research can be considered as an assemblage of human and nonhuman elements. Together, these have greater power and the ability to determine narratives and generate a performance, as performers discover movement, character and physical expression through the wearing of — and playing with — the costume. The agentic power of the inanimate costumes in synergy with the playfulness of the animate performers is a crucial aspect of Marshall's practice. Originally developed to investigate how costume can act as an impetus to creativity, theatre-making and dramaturgy, the flat-pack modular costumes can also be considered an ecological experiment, both in the choice of materials, and in the constant recycling of pieces to create new costumes. The modular costumes are potentials which can be filled with new meaning depending on the place, the situation and the creativity of the performer.

Charlotte Østergaard's article *Ethical Dilemmas of Stretching Towards Others in Fitting Situations* stretches the situatedness of costume fitting to include dressing and fitting into a connecting-costume in an urban environment. The author's ambition is to study the ethical dilemmas that emerge in situations where participants are invited to fit into a costume that connects them to a co-wearer. Sara Ahmed writes that 'bodies as well as objects shape though being orientated towards

each other' (Ahmed, 2010:245). This suggests that the object as the connecting-costume entanglement orientates the wearers towards each other and potentially towards different Others. However, in events and during specific situations the connecting-costume will most likely expose and queer the wearers in an urban environment. Hence, the ethical dilemma is how does the researcher craft conditions in a way that makes the wearers fit-able to stretch themselves towards each other. One dilemma is that situating fitting in the urban environment suggests that several conditions most likely are out of the researcher's control. Another dilemma is that even if the researcher also crafts the connecting-costume, can the researcher predict or even imagine how the crafted materialities will craft wearers, including how wearers fit one another? Eva Skærbæk writes about Løgstrup's philosophy of ethical demand that 'ethics is the responsibility of I, the demand is personal' (Skærbæk 2011:45). Skærbæk's words suggest that research is an ethical call for the researcher to state that the researcher is responsible for what the research crafts. Hence, even if several conditions are out of the researcher's control and the researcher cannot predict how wearers will respond to the conditions — the researcher is still responsible for how she crafts conditions. In specific situations, she must attend and respond to what those specific conditions craft. This article argues that in order to create conditions for wearers to become fit-able to stretch themselves towards Others, the researcher has an ethical responsibility to maintain a critical awareness of the specificity of the situations. The researcher must be critically aware of, attend, and respond to how the situation crafts the wearers, and must learn from the wearers' responses.

Emily Brayshaw presents *Unravelling Psychologically: Knitting in Performance Costume and the Themes of You Got Older (2015).* The act of knitting within the practice of performance costume design and making remains largely unexplored within scholarship, and yet hand-knitted garments feature regularly as key items of characters' costumes in stage, television and film productions. While providing a pleasing aesthetic dimension to a production's look as well as conveying feelings of comfort and domesticity, seeing a character knit on stage can also point to themes of mental breakdown and a character's attempts to order their world. This article explores not only these thematic concerns within Clare Barron's play You Got Older (2015), but how the act of designing and knitting costumes for a text-based theatrical performance can support actors' work to highlight a play's dialogue and writing. It also discusses how hand-knitted costumes and props can allow audiences to make sense of the symbolic and material worlds of a play, and provides designers with

greater insights into how the systems and processes of knitting can help to create and represent these worlds.

Catherine Morris and **Dara Meyers-Kingsley** offer *Off the Wall: The Development of Robert Kushner's Fashion and Performance Art, 1970–1976.* The artist Robert Kushner is best known for opulent and sensually colourful paintings featuring highly stylized decorative patterning and, most recently, flower and still life motifs. While he came to international prominence as a leading proponent of the Pattern and Decoration movement in the late 1970s, the roots of Kushner's exuberant and extravagant painting style can be traced to a lesser-known, earlier body of work devoted to performance and fashion. Beginning in 1970, with a remarkable series of events inspired by the flamboyance of fashion and the production values of fashion shows, Kushner developed a whimsical, humorous and intelligent series of works that adapted the operational modes of the fashion world to the conceptually based medium of performance art. Over the course of a decade, Kushner took his art off the wall, revised it, and used it to engage the body before returning it — now profoundly altered by its three-dimensional and temporal encounter with the human form — to the wall in a developmental cycle that wove together the seemingly disparate disciplines of painting, clothing design, theatrical production, sculpture and performance. Kushner's years of working off the wall and on the figure coincided with the development of conceptually based performance art in the 1970s, and his as yet under-recognized contributions to the practice were unabashedly exhibitionistic, humorous, and hedonistic. Where Kushner embraced the entertainment values inherent in the performance medium, many of his peers disparaged theatricality and viewed amusement as a distraction. Just as his adaptation of high fashion precedents was a radical departure from the counter-culture that viewed any association with the status quo with suspicion, Kushner's exploration of the fey and the narcissistic placed his work outside the performance art mainstream. This retrospective review of Kushner's work from the period is in part an attempt to redress his exclusion from the history of contemporary performance art.

Caroline Elenowitz-Hess contributes *Reckoning with Highland Rape: Sexuality, Violence, and Power on the Runway.* Alexander McQueen's Fall 1995 show Highland Rape was a turning point in his career. The title of the show, in conjunction with the models' appearance on the runway in ripped, revealing clothes, was undeniably provocative, and the controversy raised his profile considerably. Several reviewers criticized the show, labelling it misogynistic. McQueen consistently objected to this characterization, saying that the phrase Highland Rape referred to England's

historical 'assaults' upon his ancestral homeland of Scotland, and drew from witnessing the abuse that his sister suffered at the hands of her ex-husband. Because of this, some fashion scholars have dismissed the idea of McQueen's misogyny as merely a failure to fully understand his oeuvre and his biography. While critiquing McQueen's use of sexual violence, the author feels it is necessary to find a middle ground between the idea that either McQueen's work is too complex and authentic to be criti-cized, or that his sometimes-troubling approach to race and gender poli-tics should condemn him to wholesale dismissal. Examining Highland Rape through its authorial intent and a close reading of the garments themselves, while considering the power dynamics between model and designer, reveals a performance that reinforces the glamorization of rape and the manipulation of women's bodies, Elenowitz-Hess claims.

The **In Focus** column presents **Emma Shercliff's** *Material Memories in Storage: The Aftermath of Site-Specific, Collectively Made Textiles.* Site-specific, collectively made textiles are particularly effective producers of histories that entwine place and people. More than simply a means to an end, the process of making together foregrounds the potential of textiles to transform and be transformed beyond their materiality. The material making process mirrors another kind of making process: that of a certain kind of social integration or a sense of being and belonging somewhere, however temporary and changeable these may be. Once completed, how-ever, these material artefacts can provoke difficult questions concerning the responsibility for their storage and display, succumbing to a fate in semi-permanent storage and eventually relinquishing their material pre-sence to a form of visual or textual representation. Although this is not the fate of all collectively made textile works, given the widespread prac-tice of collective textile-making, it is inevitably the fate of some. Using the example of a collectively made hooked rug project that the author co-ordinated and participated in 15 years ago, she explores the transformed status of collectively made textile artefacts through memories of making in order to open up new understandings of these types of site-specific col-lective textile- making projects as a different kind of creative practice: as a narrative performance of experiences of being together.

In this issue's **Body** section, we revisit the relationship between fashion and age within the context of gender constructs. **Yulia Demidenko's** *'Women of a Certain Age': Age-Related Identity and Fashion in the Nine-teenth Century (Based on Russian Fashion Magazines and Manuals of Good Taste)* looks at the little examined topic of age-related identity in

dress in the nineteenth century. The article is based on sources such as fashion magazines and handbooks of etiquette and the art of dress, which refected broader trends of democratisation and the rising role of women in society. In the author's opinion, the contemporary system of regulating the wardrobe in accordance with age first appeared in the nineteenth century. In her article, Demidenko focuses in particular on the emergence of 'fashion for the elderly', a concept which, to this day, is not yet fully formed. Age-related regulation became the norm both for individual items of clothing, and for general style, dress length, underwear choice, fabric colour, type, and decoration. A system of age-related dress codes was formed, the deciphering of which can be of great benefit both within dress history, and for the attribution of works of art.

Anne McInnis and **Katalin Medvedev** contribute *Sartorial Appearance Management Strategies of Creative Professional Women over Age 50 in the Fashion Industry*. Women in the United States are often subjected to unrealistic standards of ideal appearance, claim the authors, and these ideals are even more extreme in the fashion industry. Because professional women who hold creative positions in the fashion industry are in the business of creating style and beauty, there is a high level of expectation toward them to maintain their dress and appearance at a not explicitly stated, but anticipated, and often unrealistic standard. In this study, creative positions refer to design, colour and trend forecasting, product development and merchandising related jobs. Older women working in these areas are in a double bind because when one is responsible for creating consumer products for the fashion industry, the perceptions of one's appearance become part of one's professional expectations, reflecting one's aesthetic values and creative capital. This qualitative study explores the complexity of age, dress, experience, and consumption needs of this professional cohort in today's visual and youth-centric culture that pervades the fashion industry. The study addresses social and cultural views on fashion as it relates to the ageing body and self-image by analyzing the relationship between women's personal style and the industry's expectations for their workplace appearance.

Anna-Mari Almila and **Hannah Zeilig** present *In Older Men's Wardrobes: Creative Tales of Affect, Style and Constraint*. Fashion in old age has been of increasing interest within various disciplines, including social gerontology and fashion studies. However, there remains a scarcity of research concerning older men's everyday dress practices. This paper redresses this imbalance through a detailed exploration of the everyday dress practices of a group of three sartorially minded older men. A series of in-depth interviews revealed the conscious ways in which the men

style themselves, the various constraints that structure their dress, and above all, the men's emotional entanglements with their garments. The notion of wardrobe as a conceptual space (which is both mental and spatial) frames this study. Importantly, the older men's dress practices are considered as they contribute to, and extend, notions of everyday creativity. Typically, when creativity is considered amongst older people, this has tended to focus on individuals who can be conventionally defined and socially labelled as 'creative' types (artists, musicians etc.). In contrast, this study helps to reveal the extent to which all aspects of social life, including the mundane act of dressing, may involve creative practices. If creativity is de-coupled from 'high artistic achievement', we can begin to understand how all individuals possess diverse forms of creative potential and capacity.

In this issue's **Culture** section, the authors examine fashion within the context of constructs of glamour and wit, and as a tool for black humour.

Dita Svelte contributes *Whether Witches Can by Some Glamour Change Men into Beasts': Wit and the Seductive Glamour of Fashion.* Glamour is usually theorized within fashion studies as a visual illusion, distant and unattainable, often associated with celebrity elites. Yet glamour possesses a power of attraction and fascination that could also be described as a form of seduction. How might an idea of seduction inform our understanding of the glamour of fashion? Using an empirical example of a camouflage couture dress by Jean-Paul Gaultier as a point of departure, the author explicates an unusual and interdisciplinary historical text — the notorious witch-hunting bible, the Malleus Maleficarum — to elaborate a theory of glamour as systemic, powerful, and immersive. Furthermore, this theory of glamour is predicated on a seductive form of wit. Svelte draws on Jean Baudrillard's Seduction, which itself connects seduction and wit to the glamour of fashion, to argue that it is precisely a concept of wit that might allow us to conceptualize the glamour of fashion not as an unattainable illusion, but as an immersive, powerful and effective phenomenon. This revised definition of glamour possesses important implications for how we might rethink fashion itself.

Theresa Winge offers *Not the Apocalyptic Dress Promised: Coping with Fear Using Dark Humour Memes on Social Media.*

During the initial months of the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown and subsequent isolation numerous memes on social media suggested the virus was not the apocalypse we were promised in all of the Science Fiction stories. These memes highlight how people are challenging their pandemic disappointments by focusing on how pajamas and comfy clothing

were not the imagined garb for an apocalypse. At the time, dressing for an apocalypse reflects the specific circumstances of this crisis far more than the fantastic projections of the highly stylized garb and gear from Sci Fi stories. Specifically, the memes about dressing for a lockdown leaving the world homebound during the Covid 19 virus pandemic offer sarcastic and ironic visual comparisons of imagined versus actual dress. The obvious function of these memes as artifacts of visual culture that utilize humor to cope with fear, but these memes further communicate the importance of dress as non-verbal communication and identity construction. In this article, I explore the ways the dark humor embedded in sartorial memes disseminated via social media platforms during the pandemic convey deeper socio-cultural messages about dress and personal and imagined identities in a time of crisis. By dissecting the memes and their dissemination reveals the importance of actual or fantasized dress as non-verbal communication and markers of identity in a time of crisis.

In this issue's **Events** section, **Irina Sirotkina** contributes *The Elite Is Still the Elite,* her review of 'Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear' at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (March — November 2022).

　Asya Aladzhalova visits 'Clothed in Luxury. The Art Deco Woman' at the Worker and Collective Farm Woman pavilion of Moscow's All-Russia Exhibition Centre VDNKh (28 September 2022 — 24 January 2023), and shares her impressions in *Clothed in Luxury amid Universal Woe.*

　Megan K. Hughes offers *When History Is Made Before Our Eyes*, her thoughts on 'Unmasking the Pandemic: From Personal Protection to Personal Expression' at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada (18 September 2021 — 27 March 2022).

　Joshua M. Bluteau contributes *On a Digital Pedestal,* his impressions from the online exhibit 'Undercover — From Necessity to Luxury: The Evolution of Face Coverings during COVID-19' from the Westminster Menswear Archive, London (11 May 5 June 2021).

In this issue's **Books** section, **Katharina Herold-Zanker** presents *British Dandies: Engendering Scandal and Fashioning a Nation,* her review of Dominic Janes' British Dandies: Engendering Scandal and Fashioning a Nation. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2022.