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# From Lace to Chains. The Making of a Print

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# From Lace to Chains. The Making of a Print

Edited by Alison G. Stewart

**An Exhibition at Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln, Nebraska  
January 18—March 17, 2019**

How have printed works of art changed over time? Do printmakers today work with the same materials and techniques that printmakers used centuries ago? And does printmaking involve the same motivations, concerns, or methods of distribution today as it did in the past?

These were questions asked by University of Nebraska–Lincoln students in a history of prints class in the School of Art, Art History & Design taught by Hixson-Lied Professor of Art History Alison Stewart during fall semester 2018.

For this curatorial project, students selected one set of old master prints (pre-1850) and one modern (post-1850) print from Sheldon’s collection, each created with different techniques and for different purposes but with a shared focus on fashion trends of the day. Thinking about the cultural significance of dress and style—be it the prominence of lace in the seventeenth century prints by Wenceslaus Hollar or the gold chain that wraps around the figure in Rozeal’s contemporary print—helped students situate these prints within the contexts of their production and reception.

The work *El Oso Me Preguntó* (2016), an archival pigment print with gold leaf overlay by the American artist Rozeal, is compared with four prints etched and engraved by Wenceslas Hollar around 1640 and published in *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus, or, The Several Habits of English Women, from the Nobilitie to the Contry Woman, as they are in these times*.

**Student curators**

Nadria Beale	Ashley Owens
Stella Bernadt	K C Peters
Mariah Livingston	Natalie Platel
Megan Loughran	Ali Syafie
Hannah Maakestad	Emma Vinchur

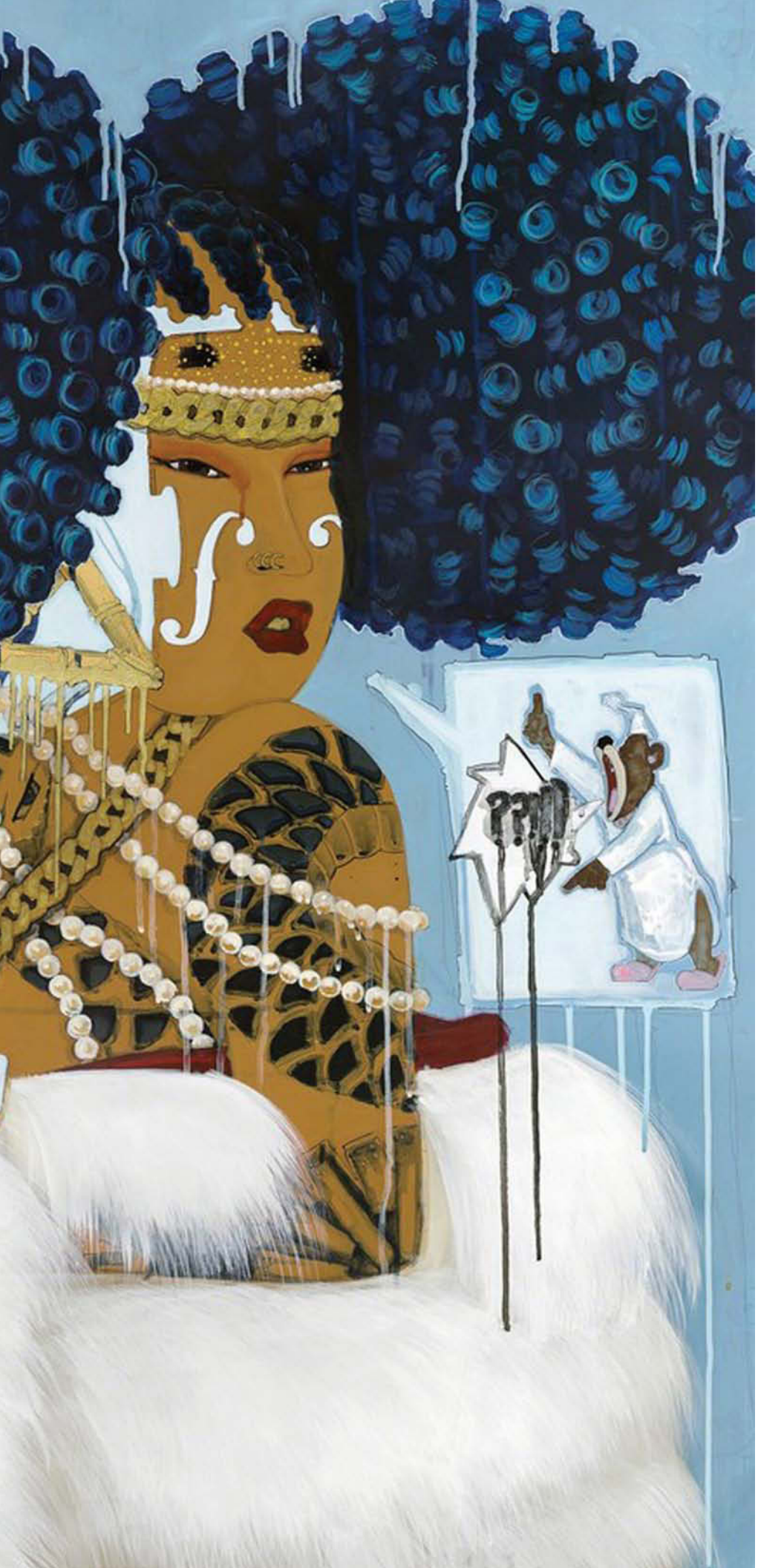
The role of Sheldon as an academic art museum is to foster the acts of thinking, learning, experiencing, and creating. We aim to deliver on this by engaging all aspects of academic life on campus, from research to curriculum to scholarship to co-curricular engagement to the student experience.

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 SHELDON

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
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## **From Lace to Chains. The Making of a Print**

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### **Academic Programs at Sheldon Museum of Art**

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## **Rozeal**

born Washington, DC 1966

## **El Oso Me Preguntó**

Archival pigment print with gold leaf overlay, 2016

40 x 30 inches

University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2017–2018 Sheldon Student Advisory Board

acquisition purchased with funds from the Olga N. Sheldon Acquisition Trust, U-6768.2018

RECENT ACQUISITION





## **Wenceslaus Hollar**

Prague, Czech Republic 1607–London, England 1677

From

**Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus, or, The Several Habits of English Women, from the Nobilitie to the Contry [sic] Woman, as they are in these times**

clockwise from upper left:

Plate 13

Plate 16

Plate 4

Plate 24

Etching and engraving, 1639–1640

5.25 x 2.75 inches each

University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Anna R. and Frank M. Hall Charitable Trust, H-1946.1974, H-1948.1974, H-1945.1974, H-1949.1974

## CREATOR

Iona Rozeal Brown, known as simply Rozeal, is an African-American painter and hip-hop DJ.

When Rozeal was young, her mother took her to see *kabuki*, traditional Japanese theater where both male and female roles are played by men.

Later Rozeal encountered *ganguro*, a fashion trend of the 1990s among young Japanese women who defied traditional Japanese beauty standards by tanning their skin to a darker tone, wearing brightly colored makeup, dyeing their hair, and adopting hip-hop fashion.

By mixing *kabuki* and *ganguro*, as well as common DJ practices of sampling and assuming a stage persona, Rozeal explores how identity is performed.

Rozeal uses the term “Afro-Asiatic allegory” to describe her merging of Japanese and African-American hip-hop cultural elements.



Rozeal with *afro.died, T.* (2011), National Gallery of Art. Copyright Rozeal Studios

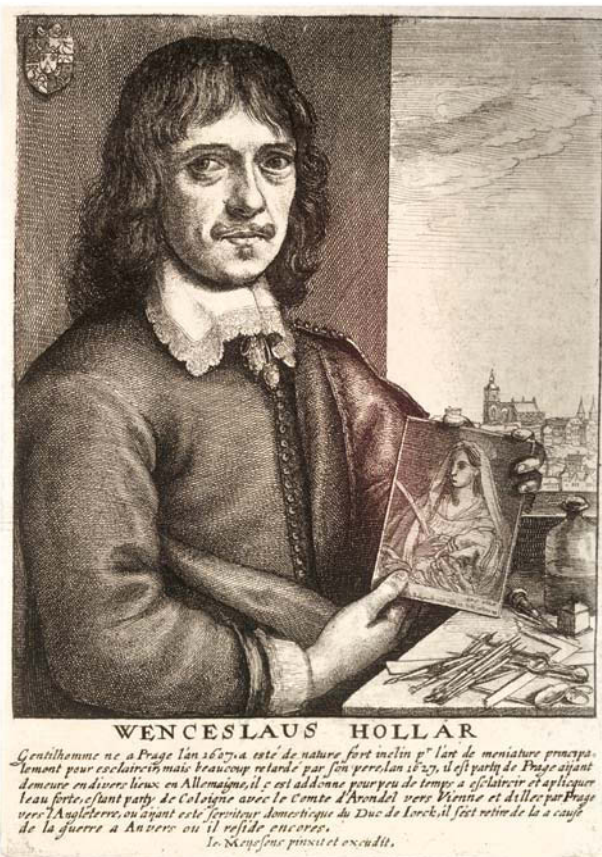
## CREATOR

Wenceslaus (Wenzel) Hollar (1607–1677), a native of Prague (now Czech Republic), trained as draughtsman and etcher with prominent printmakers in Germany and worked for much of his life in England.

Hollar was a prolific printmaker who made both independent prints and book illustrations of a wide range of subjects, including maps, religious scenes, portraits, and natural history, among others. He is known as a chronicler of his times.

Hollar worked during the Baroque period, a transitional time for how art was made and sold. An emerging open art market and increasing demand for secular subjects provided Hollar and his contemporaries with multiple ways to make a living in the seventeenth century.

One of these ways was to work on contract for a wealthy patron, perhaps even in exchange for living arrangements. Hollar's primary patron was art collector Thomas Howard, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Arundel.



Wenceslaus Hollar

Portrait of Hollar after a portrait by Jans Messens, etching, c. 1649. Note the etching tools at lower right. Wikimedia



Daniel Mytens (d.1647)

Thomas Howard, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Arundel and Surrey, National Portrait Gallery, London

## PROCESS

Rozeal's archival pigment print likely began as a painting that was then digitally reproduced. The dripping effects at the top of the print, shown below, suggest that the original work was painted, reflecting the artist's training as a painter.

To create the print, the painting would have been photographed and then converted to digital media. The digital file would then be printed with an inkjet printer that uses archival pigments.

As a transfer process, prints can be made in multiple iterations. *El Oso Me Preguntó* was printed in two editions of different sizes. Sheldon's print is number six of an edition of eight prints. The other edition, of twenty-five, was scaled to and printed on a smaller paper size.

Limited edition printmaking is a modern practice (from the twentieth century onward) that predetermines the number of prints produced, contrasting with the pre-modern practice of print-on-demand.



## PROCESS

Hollar used the techniques of etching and engraving for these prints. Both techniques involve the transfer of a design onto a metal plate that produces a printed image in reverse. The plate was printed repeatedly, according to demand, onto paper and hung to dry, as shown below.

Etching is a chemical process that uses acid to “bite” into a metal plate while engraving is a manual process whereby grooves are physically cut into a metal plate with a graver or burin instrument held in the hand.



Abraham Bosse (1604-c. 1676), *Pouring acid to etch a plate on a slanted board (On the Manner of Etching with Acid and with a Burin, and of Dark-Manner Engraving)*, etching, drypoint, and roulette, 1645. Rhode Island School of Design, Gift of Mrs. Herbert N. Straus, 51.004

What makes Rozeal's print more distinctive than a typical editioned print is that gold leaf has been applied to emphasize the chain that wraps across the female figure's forehead and torso, as well as her front teeth.

It is unknown whether Rozeal herself or Adamson Editions, the fine art printmaker and publisher of this work, applied the gold leaf directly on the print.



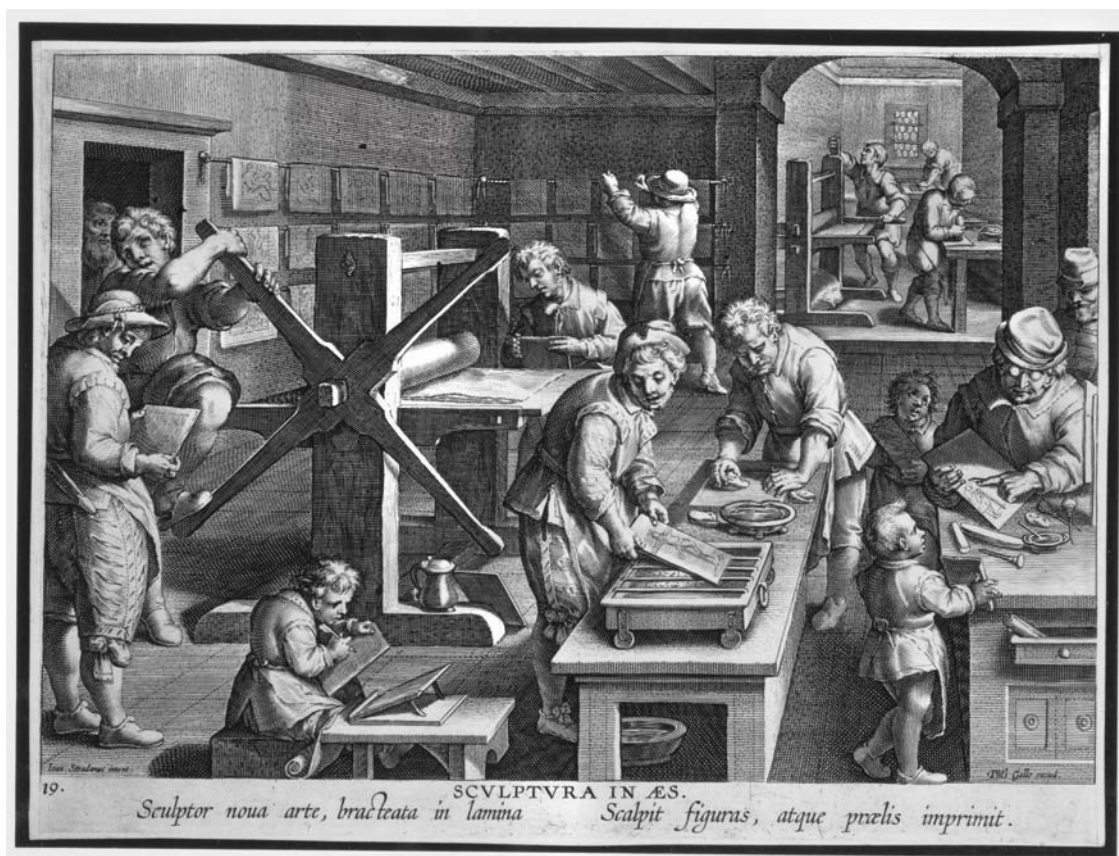
Canon iPF9400S inkjet printer

A draughtsman at heart, Hollar excelled at etching because it was closest to drawing. Etchings generally produce even and sometimes sketchy lines that can produce a range of textures, as seen in the petticoat, the muff's individual strands of fur, and lace accents in Plate 13 (on p. 6).

Engraving produces crisper lines that taper and swell. Engravers and etchers use hatching and cross-hatching to achieve tonal variation. Can you find engraved lines in Hollar's prints? The workshop illustrated below shows a copper plate engraved and printed (at lower right and at left).

Hollar's plates could be printed repeatedly to meet the demand for his prints, which must have been great because the plates were published with revisions nine times over the next century.

At some point in time (perhaps the eighteenth century), some of Hollar's prints—likely these four owned by Sheldon—were cut down to their borders and placed in private collections, subsequently moving into museum collections. They were thereby removed from their original series or book context and seen as individual works of art.



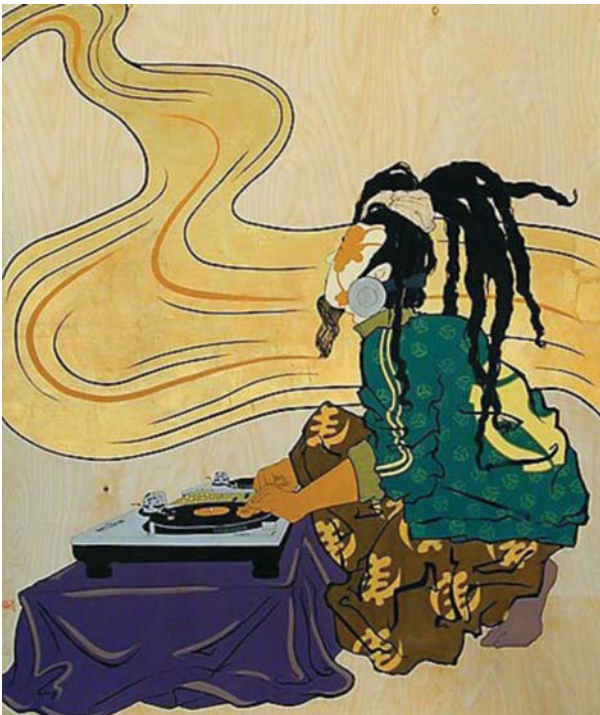
Jan van der Straet, called Stradanus (1593-1605), Invention of Copper Engraving [*Sculptura in Aes*], plate 19 from *New Inventions of Modern Times* [*Nova Reperta*], engraving, c. 1600. Metropolitan Museum of Art. The bench on the right shows engraving tools.



## SOURCES

The overall composition, decorative patterning, and flat coloring of this print by Rozeal draw on the aesthetics of *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints of the Edo period in Japan (from the seventeenth through the mid-nineteenth century).

Rozeal's single female figure artfully posed, adorned with various cultural markers, and placed close to the picture plane is also typical of the *ukiyo-e* tradition, which focused on common people and scenes of pleasure.



Rozeal  
*Divine selektah ... big up* [after Yoshitoshi's Moon of the Filial Son], 2006. The University of Arizona Museum of Art



Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–92)  
月百姿 孝子の月 小野篁  
*One Hundred Aspects of the Moon: Moon of the Filial Son - Ono no Takamura*, 1889. National Diet Library, Japan

## SOURCES

Costume books arose as a type of visual imagery in the sixteenth century and continued in popularity during the seventeenth century.



Left:  
Hans Weigel, woodcut,  
1577, from *Habitus  
Praecipuorum Populorum  
... das ist Trachtenbuch*  
British Museum

Right:  
Jacques Callot, *La Noblesse*  
series, plate 8, etching,  
c. 1620  
British Museum



Left:  
Sebastian Vranckx,  
*Germanicus Habitus*,  
from *Variarum  
Gentium Ornatus* series,  
engraving, c.1600-1634  
British Museum

Right:  
Jan van de Velde II,  
*Costumes*, plate 8,  
etching, c. 1615-1641  
British Museum



Kitagawa Utamaro  
*Fancy-free Type*, c.1792–1793  
 British Museum



Kusakabe Kimbei (1841–1934)  
 or Baron Raimund von Stillfried  
 (1839–1911)  
 Japanese Tattoo (c.1870-1899)  
 J. Paul Getty Museum

The late eighteenth-century print by Kitagawa Utamaro, *Fancy-free Type*, is but one example of *ukiyo-e* that likely inspired Rozeal.

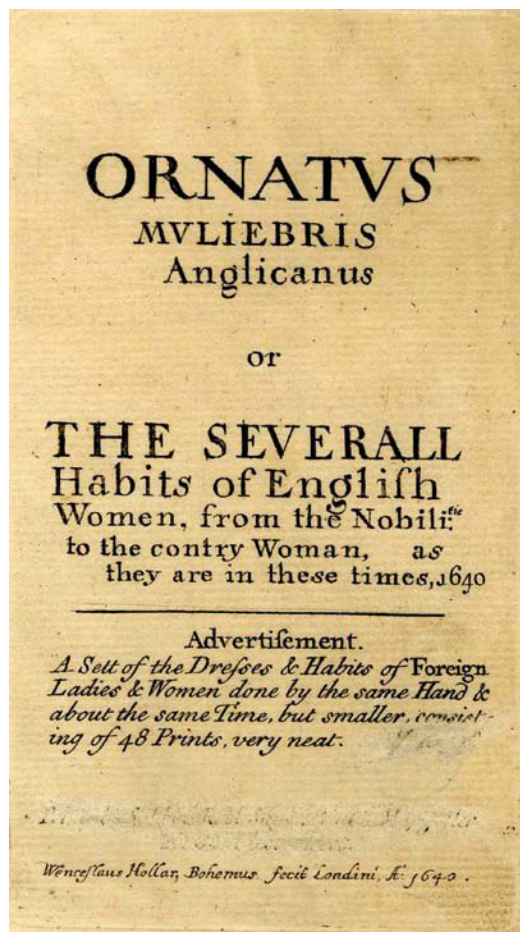
The serpent tattoo, seen prominently on the upper left arm of Rozeal's female subject, also references Japanese culture. At different historical moments, tattoos in Japan, called *irezumi*, symbolized warriors and strength, one's social status, and criminality.

The four works by Hollar on display are part of a book or series of twenty-six costume prints first published in 1640 in London with the title: *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus, or, The Several Habits of English Women, from the Nobilitie to the Contry [sic] Woman, as they are in these times.*

Sheldon owns six prints from this publication. The multiple dates, 1639 and 1640, suggest that they may have been first issued independent of the book or series.

The four prints exhibited here offer views of English women dressed more or less extravagantly in different fabrics, lace, bows, pearls, fur, and other accessories indicative of their social status.

In Plate 13 Hollar captures the shiny, smooth fabric of this figure's gown, possibly made of luxury silk, and the contrasting rough texture of the dark fur muff. The muff and decorated underskirt provided insulation for a gentlewoman's public excursions outdoors. The strange mask concealing her face was a common fashion accessory that enabled women to move about London without being recognized on its bustling urban streets.



In place of the Japanese conventions of beauty and class markers—translucent pale skin, elaborately coiffed hair with ornamental pens and comb, and a brocade kimono—Rozeal substitutes the accessories and personal styling that *ganguro* youth associated with American hip-hop: a tanned complexion, brightly colored makeup, strands of pearls and oversized gold jewelry, a fur wrap, and an Afro-puff hairstyle.

The *f*-holes on the female figure's face resembling those on stringed instruments may be Rozeal referencing her interest in music, thereby inserting her own markers of identity.



Chalky Lives, *This Years Shibuya Style (ganguro)*



By contrast, the woman in Plate 24 is more modestly clothed, her apron and gown likely fashioned from cotton, linen, or wool, and her lace adornments are less flashy. In place of the fur muff, she wears simple gloves, their light color suggesting that she did not work with her hands. Here, Hollar may be capturing the impact of contemporary sumptuary laws that aimed to regulate the consumption of luxury goods and uphold strict social codes.





The small cartoon figure in the text bubble at the center right of the composition is the main character from a 1952 animated short, *Rock-a-Bye Bear*. *Rock-a-Bye Bear* is ultrasensitive to noise. Repeatedly and comically awakened from hibernation, this bear screams at the other characters to remain silent.

The translation of Rozeal's Spanish title is "the bear asked me," which begs the question: what is the bear asking the female figure?

Given that the cartoon character asks all those around him to be quiet, could this be a statement on suppressing one's identity, or more broadly pointing to the challenges of existing between cultures in an increasingly connected world?



Tex Avery  
Cartoon still, *Rock-a-Bye Bear*, 1952



U.S. motel chain logo, 1960's



Anthony van Dyck. *Lady Mary Villiers, Later Duchess of Richmond and Lennox (1622–1685), with Charles Hamilton, Lord Arran, c.1637*, North Carolina Museum of Art

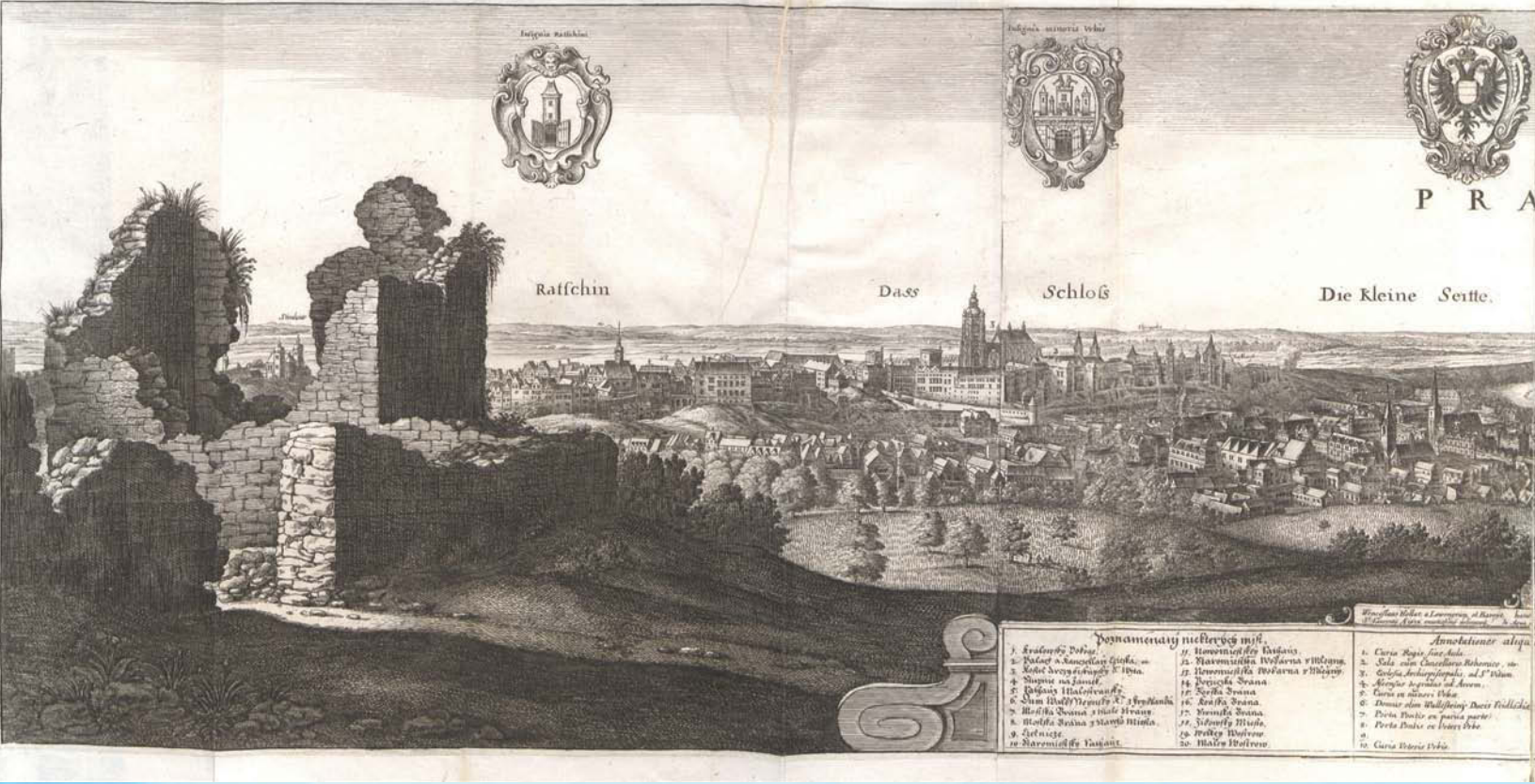
Plate 4 has been linked to a portrait painted by Van Dyck around 1637, which offers a better sense of the materials in which English gentlewomen clothed themselves.

Whether Hollar intended his figures to be recognizable or generic is debated. More certainly, he is recording the costume of the day.

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Over: Panoramic views of Prague & London by W. Hollar, 1636 & 1647; panoramic photo of Minato-ku Tokyo, Japan, by Tokyoship. CC-BY-SA





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