



MEMOS.
ON FASHION
IN THIS
MILLENNIUM

EDITED BY MARIA LUISA FRISA

Marsilio

MEMOS
ON FASHION
IN THIS
MILLENNIUM

Milan, Museo Poldi Pezzoli
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who prefer to remain
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Nadia Saccardi

Exhibiting fashion means both celebrating it and providing a critical reading of it. The idea behind fashion shows is not so much to present fashion as an art as to use it as a means of reading society. Fashion is an extremely popular means of communication, capable of causing complex short circuits and narratives in relation to all the disciplines of the contemporary world. It is for this reason that the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana, which is conducting an articulated project to enhance the value of Italian fashion, acts by interacting with different means in the awareness, today more than ever, of the need to build a narrative that defines the qualities and characteristics of Italian fashion in a culturally and politically crucial moment of engagement with international developments. *Memos. On Fashion in This Millennium* is an exhibition that approaches the issues in a questioning mode: it proposes and does not preclude. It is a project that seeks to trigger a series of reflections on contemporary fashion, its qualities and attributes, starting from Italo Calvino's *Memos for the Next Millennium*. Fashion as a cultural industry, communication system, tool for reflection and design of objects and ideas, a rich, welcoming, hybrid field. *Memos* is installed in a charismatic venue in Milan, the Poldi Pezzoli house-museum, the moving spirit in a series of exhibitions – such as *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* curated by Grazietta Butazzi (1980) – which have presented a pioneering view of fashion as a field of historical, critical and curatorial investigation. Through the dialogue with the museum and the city of Milan, *Memos* relates directly to the storytelling actions programmatically promoted by the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana with awareness of the need to systematically reflect on the cultural policies that need to be undertaken to narrate and enhance the value of the history, present and future scenarios of Italian fashion.

I especially wish to thank the curator of the exhibition Maria Luisa Frisa and then Judith Clark and Stefano Tonchi. Thanks are also due to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Italian Trade Agency (ITA), the Municipality of Milan and the partner Tendercapital for making this project possible.

Carlo Capasa
President of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana

The Museo Poldi Pezzoli has so far experienced many fortunate situations, starting from its foundation as the result of a wonderfully generous act. Through the course of its almost 140 years of glorious history, it has chosen to often travel experimental paths, in countertendency, to open debates, discussions, intersecting thoughts and views, certainly not for the sake of controversy as an end in itself. In fact, to always be proactive, it still identifies itself, in a definition from more than forty years ago, in the museum as a "laboratory of history."

In 1980–81, under the direction of Alessandra Mottola Molfino and with the support of the then President and former Superintendent Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua, the Museo Poldi Pezzoli held an exhibition designed by Grazietta Butazzi, a historian of costume and fashion, in conjunction with the Civiche Raccolte d'Arte Applicata of the Castello Sforzesco. In addition to raising the issue of identifying a proposal for a fashion museum in Milan, through an intense dialogue between the fashion objects of the two decades from 1922 to 1943 (clothes, bags, shoes, designs, magazines...), it sought to acknowledge that this production had a cutting-edge role in Italian production, advocating the opportunity to credit it with an identity, a historical role, a model as a frame of reference. The interpretation of the garments and accessories was substantially immersed in the history of the taste and history *tout court* that had created them. The professional skills involved in this bold undertaking were those of the historian of costume and fashion, the director of the museum and its collections and the restorer of textiles. The exhibition also served to get a focus on the problematic theme of the creation of a fashion museum, which certainly needed new models matching the features of that output resting on very high craft skills, all too often considered an ephemeral representation of beauty and wealth.

With this exhibition, which starts from the 1980s, presenting garments as well as magazines and books devoted by the museum to the history of textiles, we propose a different model of interpretation. It is one inspired by some of the watchwords guiding Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* and capable of expressing the complexity of a world that embraces garments, bodies, forms, messages and philosophies mostly

mingled and not always distinguishable. The professional skills deployed are those of the critic-curator, exhibition maker and fashion photographer, in a curatorial process that impels our gaze and our minds in a thousand directions and evocations. It is a comparison and dialogue between methods that cannot actually be "compared," as they belong to two very different approaches-interpretations. In any case, a challenge to the future in the making that engages-deranges us daily. Hence our thanks go to Carlo Capasa, president of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana, to Maria Luisa Frisa, to Judith Clark, to Stefano Tonchi, protagonists, together with all the wonderful contributors, of this undertaking. It is also being held in synergy with Palazzo Morando | Costume Fashion Image, Civiche Raccolte Storiche of Milan.

The exhibition *Memos. On Fashion in This Millennium* is the outcome of a collaboration between the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana and the Italian Trade Agency (ITA) with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Memos celebrates the role and image of Italian fashion worldwide, presenting it to the attention of operators and the international press during Milan Women's Fashion Week. The exhibition intends to continue further along the path already begun very successfully through the exhibitions *Crafting the Future. Stories of Craftsmanship and Innovation* and *Italiana. Italy through the Lens of Fashion 1971–2011*, held respectively in 2016 and 2018.

Memos fits in with the promotional path indicated by the Comitato della Moda e dell'Accessorio (Fashion and Accessory Board), which coordinates the leading players in the Italian fashion system to define priorities and practices in an important sector of the Italian economy. A promotional strategy that the ITA is putting into practice with a wide range of initiatives to promote the visibility and identify of Italian manufacturing worldwide.

The project *Memos* starts from *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*, one of Italo Calvino's most famous books, to question itself on fashion and its features, such as "lightness," "quickness," and "exactitude." Concepts to which, in today's world, we can also add "innovation," and "sustainability," now indispensable ingredients of an innovative vision of fashion and an approach aimed at new consumer models, new digital markets and the Web.

Memos is a travelling exhibition, to be presented to be at major international events, so enabling operators and visitors to discover the profound reasons for the success of this important segment of Made in Italy around the world.

Fashion has always been a protagonist of the customs, lifestyles and culture but also the economy of Milan, Lombardy and the whole national system. For these reasons, the Department for Labour Policies, Productive Activities, Fashion and Design has long worked in conjunction with the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana. We share the commitment to synergistic and concrete actions to favour the whole system, the promotion of creativity and young talents, the culture of inclusion and sustainability, the passion for excellence and quality, the care for tradition and curiosity towards innovation.

The exhibition *Memos. On Fashion in This Millennium* bears witness to the way fashion is an integral part of the city, not a parallel and inaccessible universe. It is no coincidence that the exhibition is being held in a historic, refined and highly symbolic institution, the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, so creating a felicitous and exemplary combination of excellence.

The thousands of fashion operators present in Milan during Fashion Week, as well as the citizens and tourists increasingly drawn to the city's energy and attractions, will be able to enjoy a special account stemming from Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*. Lightness, quickness, exactitude, visibility and multiplicity are the keys to describing the present, questioning contemporary fashion and reflecting on its qualities. It is a narrative that provides tools for the future and its challenges and for this reason it deserves our support.

In *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* Italo Calvino observes: 'Who are we, who is each one of us, if not a combinatoria of experiences, information, books we have read, things imagined? Each life is an encyclopedia, a library, an inventory of objects, a series of styles, and everything can be constantly shuffled and reordered in every way conceivable.' It is in this shuffling and combining in different ways that contemporaneity is manifested and this region is the meeting point between Tendercapital and the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana.

Drawing its inspiration from Calvino's memos, the exhibition *Memos. On Fashion in This Millennium* prompts us to meditate on the transformations of the contemporary world and find tools to adapt to them, starting from the concepts of *Lightness* and continuing with *Quickness*, *Exactitude*, *Visibility* and *Multiplicity*. Words that resonate in Tendercapital's soul and philosophy, as a guide to interpreting the current situation and the economic-financial world in which we operate with modernity: attaining simplicity by starting from a profound understanding of complexities (*Lightness*); looking at things clearly shunning all inaccuracy (*Exactitude*); imagining and not just seeing (*Visibility*); understanding the value of time and its effective use (*Quickness*); weaving together the different facets of reality and enhancing the value of each item (*Multiplicity*).

The *Memos* exhibition is a project that reflects on the permanencies, qualities and values defining the practices of fashion design in this millennium. In a dimension open to all the impulses of a system, that of fashion, which is continuously evolving and capable of acting as a seismograph of our time. A three-dimensional reflection, one that we cherish for its ability to be shared by a broad public.

In keeping with the spirit that animates our art incubator TenderToArt, Tendercapital and the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana have formed close ties with *Memos*, acknowledging fashion not only as an industry, but as a cultural system with an immense potential for communication and the capacity to explore present and future in unconventional ways.

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ON FASHION IN THIS MILLENNIUM



MARIA LUISA FRISA

The scientific and the poetic attitude [...] coincide: both approaches involve research and planning, discovery and invention.

Italo Calvino, *La sfida al labirinto*, 1962

Apparatus. In *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, Michel Foucault defines a *dispositif* or apparatus as a set of heterogeneous elements that form a network of discourses, institutions, administrative measures, scientific statements and philosophical, moral, and philanthropic positions. An apparatus is a strategic concatenation that functions at a specific historical moment of urgency.

Warren Neidich, *Glossary of Cognitive Activism (For a Not So Distant Future)*, 2019

Thus, astride our bucket, we shall face the new millennium, without hoping to find anything more in it than what we ourselves are able to bring to it.

Italo Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*, 1988

Memos. On Fashion in This Millennium is a reflection on design, a reactivation of repetitions, a stratification of temporalities, a constellation of arguments and theses, an incomplete list, a series of notes, digressions and scribbles, a map of allusions and obstacles. An inventory of oversights. A work in progress. A notebook that takes the form of an exhibition, along with a book that is offered as a summary of attitudes and methods, of conversations, memories and researches that are still under way. The project stems from a recent reassessment of Italo Calvino stimulated by a general revival of interest in his work, and more precisely from an illuminating rereading of the *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*, the series of lectures that the writer was supposed to give for the Charles Eliot Norton Poetry Lectures at Harvard University in the academic year 1985/86.¹ A reading that

1. The first Italian edition of the book, entitled *Lezioni americane*, was published by Garzanti in May 1988. It was given this title by his widow Esther (Calvino had thought only of the one in English), who based it on something Pietro Citati had said. In fact the latter, who often used to come to see Calvino during that last summer in which he was working on the *Memos*, would ask the writer every time he arrived: 'Come vanno le lezioni americane?' [How are the American lectures going?].

I shared, at the time, with Judith Clark, in a lengthy conversation that was carried out via telephone, email and messages and that marked the beginning of a close dialogue on the applications and perspectives that a study of the *Memos* suggested to us with regard to the fashion curating we teach in our respective universities.²

Can in fact these lectures, devoted to ‘certain values, qualities or peculiarities’ of literary practice, serve, today, as a useful starting point for the investigation and connection of the creative practices, the processes, the techniques, the cultural, political and economic values that mould the language and models of production of fashion?

I am not systematic in my study and my work. I proceed by images and concepts that always take the form of notes. Words, maps, phrases that can become a project: for an exhibition or book. Or remain just an exercise or test. The approach Italo Calvino took to the *Memos* has suggested to me a method that I can apply to my own way of working. Annotations, outlines of ideas. Sketches that rapidly establish a theme but without defining its boundaries, exploring the web of relationships that they set in motion. Calvino had no intention of providing solutions, all he wanted to do was map out possible roads: values on which to reflect in order to investigate and comprehend the contemporary world. Marco Belpoliti has written: ‘The task that Calvino assigned literature was precisely “to stand amongst different languages, in order to keep alive the communication between them.”³

In the preface to the *Memos* Calvino declared: ‘We are in 1985, and barely fifteen years stand between us and a new millennium. [...] However, I’m not here to talk of futurology, but of literature. The millennium about to end has seen the birth and development of modern languages of the West, and of the literatures that have explored the expressive, cognitive, and imaginative possibilities of these languages. [...] Perhaps it is a sign of our millennium’s end that we frequently wonder what will happen to literature and

2. I teach Curatorial Practices in Fashion in the master’s degree course in Visual Arts and Fashion (IUAV University of Venice); Judith Clark is course leader for MA Fashion Curation at the London College of Fashion (University of the Arts London).

3. Marco Belpoliti, *L’occhio di Calvino*, new expanded edition (Turin: Einaudi, 2006), ix.

books in the so-called postindustrial era of technology.⁴ The writer looks forward to the new millennium, offering a series of locations and literary figures to which the task of constructing the spaces of awareness and imagination is entrusted. Open zones, areas of transit, in which it is possible to derail those fragments, those thoughts, those sensations, those memories with which the involuntary memory is crammed. And, as I write, another passage from Calvino’s *Memos* resurfaces, one I had jotted down in one of my black notebooks, this time from the fifth of the lectures, significantly entitled ‘Multiplicity’: ‘Each life is an encyclopedia, a library, an inventory of objects, a series of styles, and everything can be constantly shuffled and reordered in every way conceivable.’⁵ Thus each of us can configure a textual fabric of our own in which digressions and chance occurrences act to interrupt the flow, creating a discontinuity. Then the destruction of continuity obliges us to start over, to explore.

The *Memos* have turned out to be devices of an essentially strategic nature, which can be used to identify those points that possess the capacity for development. I trace this idea back to the view of Foucault evoked in one of the quotations at the beginning, through Giorgio Agamben’s reworking of it in *Che cos’è un dispositivo?*: ‘I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions or discourses of living beings’; thus ‘the pen, writing, literature, philosophy’ are apparatuses too.⁶

So it is not so much that the concepts used as titles for the *Memos* (‘Lightness,’ ‘Quickness’ and so on) become points of application for our discipline as that the indication, the quotation, the wandering around in a continual play of cross-references suggest a web of narratives capable of bringing into focus the relationship between objects, time and space, which is the central question of the practices of fashion curating. The exhibition is a work of art in its own right, not an interpretation – the great Swiss curator

4. Italo Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 1.

5. Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*, 124.

6. Giorgio Agamben, *Che cos’è un dispositivo?* (Rome: nottetempo, 2006), 21–22. English trans. ‘What Is an Apparatus,’ in *What Is an Apparatus and Other Essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 14.

Harald Szeemann, shaman and guru of all curators, defined himself in this way: 'I am not a curator. I am an author.'⁷ On this occasion it is a reconfiguration of the existing that has been put into effect in the dialogue with the project of the exhibition-maker Judith Clark, 'author' of a presentation that occupies the space, reformulating its perception.

It is the taste of the time that influences the way we see things and the choices we make. Avant-garde, universalism, progress and radicalism belong to the last century, while what pertains to ours are the present, experimentation, the relative, the fluid and geopolitics: the principles that act in the contemporary world and its forms. Every exhibition of fashion in our day becomes a means of marshalling and questioning the conventions related to the making of clothes and the time to which they belong. So if the selection of objects that make up an exhibition on the one hand recalls Calvino's magic objects, the ones at the pole of a magnetic field, on the other it expresses in a dialogical manner the always present tense of fashion. Objects activated by the gaze of the curator and his or her choice, solely at that precise moment. It is the intuition (and the ability to express it clearly) that between the design of the garment and the design of the body there is the visionary, revolutionary design of the imageries that are today more than ever at the centre of a conception of fashion which has regained possession of the network of ideas that has generated them and amplifies them.

In 2012 Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev wrote in the presentation of the *documenta* exhibition she curated: 'Due to the fact that there are many truths valid, one is constantly confronted with unsolvable questions: thus it has become a choice between not making a choice [...]; or, on the other hand, making a choice that one knows will also be partially and inevitably "wrong..."'⁸

Thus this exhibition seeks to clarify what it means to tackle a curatorial project and what relations curating has with the practices of design that shape contemporary fashion, in order to make it clear that it is not just the end result of an exhibition that

7. Harald Szeemann, in Cecilia Liveriero Lavelli and Franklin Sirmans, 'Harald Szeemann: Curator as Author; From Ljubljana to Lyon to Kwangju (interview),' *Flash Art*, 195 (Summer 1997), 90.

8. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, "'The dance was very frenetic, lively, rattling, clanging, rolling, contorted, and lasted for a long time...'" in *Documenta (13): The Book of Books* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2012), 37.

is important, but also (and perhaps above all) the process that has generated it. That is the dimension in which questions take shape, and in which the objects, display and texts are intertwined in the attempt to come up with some possible answers. Curating an exhibition is an act that today is closer than ever to the activity of the fashion designer and the creative director: I am reminded of Virgil Abloh's 'shortcuts,' Maria Grazia Chiuri's statements that become feminist banners or Alessandro Michele's 'fields of poetic reactivation.' For fashion (and this is something I have said many times) is not just a matter of clothes: above all it is a discipline that deals with the contemporary, that interrogates it, that defines it without enclosing it. And in doing so it speaks of us, of our being in our time.

An exhibition project like *Memos* has chosen to take shape and act partly in relation to an expressive territory, one whose locations are pervaded by the power of a history that is also blended with the civil, political and aesthetic value of the events and of the actions of those who have inhabited or governed it. The arrangement of the artefacts, the atlas that they open out in relation to this precise place, the Poldi Pezzoli house-museum, and the reactivation-reproduction of a salient episode of the past like the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana*,⁹ thanks to the conceptual phantasmagorias of Judith Clark's display design,¹⁰ are a mode of presenting documentary materials that is not intended to serve the critic's discourse, but respects the visual and allusive information they convey. Their efficacy over time permits a 'recognition' capable of revealing, of illuminating the relevance of that event.¹¹

9. See Gabriele Monti's essay in the catalogue.

10. See her essay in the catalogue.

11. In December 2018 I was asked to sit on the commission set up to study public policies in support of Italian fashion by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, chaired at the time by Alberto Bonisoli. The experience came to an end for me with my resignation, given the impossibility of it coming up with something concrete. I had proposed a project of promotion of the places where seminal experiences for the culture and the advancement of Italian fashion had occurred, starting out from the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in order to draw attention to the pioneering activity of Grazietta Butazzi and Alessandra Mottola Molfino, in particular the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana*, staged there in 1980: a wide-ranging and multifaceted project that was intended to further the idea of a national museum of fashion. It was then that I started to think about a project for the Museo Poldi Pezzoli that could be a reactivation of that exhibition and the significance that it had had in marking a stage in the forging of the identity of Italian fashion.

We could describe the *Memos* project in many ways: it is a place in the place; it is an operation that aims to explain the practice of staging exhibitions; it is a partial selection of objects, each of which evokes the influences of which it is the product or that it has sparked off; it is a strategy for presenting the different forms of fashion design; it is a series of objects of sentimental value that play a different role in the atlas of emotions they mobilize.

DISCONTINUOUS/INTERMITTENT _NOTES IN LOOSE ORDER

In drawing on Calvino I have in reality been helped by a particular word, useful in bringing into focus one aspect of the way in which I have made my choices. It is the word that the writer put at the top of the pages of the lecture that he left in the form of a note (the last, the one he was going to write once he had arrived in the United States): 'Consistency.' 'We live in a world in which, increasingly often, we are incapable of determining the "value" of things, their consistency. A term, consistency, that appeared around the 15th century in its Latin form to indicate the foundation of something, what makes it solid and firm. Since then it has assumed the canonical meaning it still has today, that of a strength deriving from its own structure. Nor is that all: reliable dictionaries tells us that the term has within it the idea of accord, coherence in both the proper and the figurative sense and resolve.'¹²

Each aspect of the project has adhered to an idea of consistency, in order to take on meaning in relation to the values and processes that run through fashion today: from the choice of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli as a venue – for its relationship with the culture of fashion and for the significance that it assumes today, with respect to all the lost opportunities to promote the narrative of Italian fashion – to the materials on display. As regards the specific "consistency" of these, it is worth citing what George Kubler wrote in *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*: 'Every important work of art can be regarded both as a historical event and as a hard-won solution to some problem. It

12. Italo Calvino, in Marco Filoni, *Inciampi. Storie di libri, parole e scaffali* (Trieste-Rome: Italo Svevo, 2019), 31.

is irrelevant now whether the event was original or conventional, accidental or willed, awkward or skillful.'¹³

So it is a selection made up of exhibits of various kinds, not just artefacts of fashion in the strict sense but also all those materials that amplify and redefine the consistency of the authorial act. Like the photographic features selected by Stefano Tonchi, double-page spreads that cover the – more or less recent – history of fashion publishing and exemplify the imagery which generates and amplifies the power of fashion, and the desire it is able to trigger. Like again the catalogue of the exhibition *Disobedient Bodies*,¹⁴ curated by the designer J.W. Anderson, who in order to express his point of view decided to take on the role of curator, just as artists like Francesco Vezzoli or directors like Wes Anderson have now done with success too. Or the catalogue of Romeo Gigli's Spring/Summer 1990 Collection,¹⁵ an object poised between the Byzantine atmosphere of the mosaics of Ravenna and diaphanous female figures that recall the empress Theodora, a book that conveys better than any item of clothing the change which the designer has brought about. Or again, the pages of the latest-gen magazine *The Happy Reader* with the interview with Grace Wales Bonner, in which she expresses an alternative way of operating in the fashion industry. Wales Bonner's project redefines the rules of dress and identity for the male, and has also involved some curatorial ventures, like the exhibition staged at the Serpentine Sackler Gallery at the invitation of Hans Ulrich Obrist, *A Time for New Dreams*, which imagines different possibilities and worlds in the interactions between the practices and languages of creativity (music, fashion, art, design).

_The surface is the arena of dialogue between the idea of style, as an operation carried out on appearance, and the growing importance of the brand (and not only that of fashion) as a creative and all-embracing force. For many people choosing a

13. George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* [1962] (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2008), 30.

14. Andrew Bonacina (ed.), *Disobedient Bodies: JW Anderson at the Hepworth Wakefield* (London: In Other Words, 2017).

15. With photographs by Ilvio Gallo.

logo signifies declaring not just an aesthetic aspiration, but also a political and cultural one, turning them into walking manifestos of the imagery that each brand embodies. An emblem that stands out clearly in the immediate communication of Instagram.

A few months after Hillary Clinton's defeat in the US presidential elections, Demna Gvasalia transformed the logo of Balenciaga (one of fashion's most charismatic brands) with a take on the campaign logo of Bernie Sanders, Hillary's rival in the Democratic primaries, placing it on quilted jackets, sweatshirts, padded shawls and rubber shoes. Gvasalia declared that it was a reflection on the corporate culture that dominates fashion as well as politics. For the scholar Giuliana Bruno the surface is the place of material relations, the aesthetic root of modernity, a place where forms of memory and transformation can find concrete expression. In a world increasingly thronged with similar objects it is the use to which the surface is put that makes the difference. Thus the act of writing a name in big block capitals or stamping a brand on a bag or a T-shirt brings us back to the practices adopted by conceptual artists. In a sort of Duchampian ready-made, the aura and the value of that bag stem chiefly from the fact that it is of a particular brand.

The point obviously is the meaning of that gesture. Because while on the one hand it seems to negate the value of fashion, its creativity, on the other it acts in the realm of the questioning of a system and its values. It is not the death of fashion that is simplistically – and above all sensationally – asserted by Li Edelkoort, who continues to think in terms of a fashion system that ceased to exist some time ago. For today fashion has been transplanted onto heterogeneous terrains and deals with all available formats. As Alessandro Michele has done when he decided not to lose himself among the Gs: inventing constellations of meaning, or even including the obsessions of others. Challenging them, he acts by selection, through additions and multiplications. Michele has created an experimental laboratory of identity, accepting the comparison with tradition, but also making explicit the route that he takes between this and its various contexts. The logo today is serious and ironic, it is tradition that turns into pop, it is recognizability in the social media. It was for good reason that Riccardo Tisci, on his appointment as

creative director of Burberry and while waiting to make his debut, shared on Instagram the house's new logo and new monogram, developed in collaboration with Peter Saville. Paul Andrew, on arrival at Ferragamo, also revived a historical attribute like the hook motif of the *gancino* and turned it into a pattern that immediately became the icon of the new course taken by the brand. A logo that is no longer just a monolithic element imposed from above, but above all an object undergoing continual change. No longer solely an emblem of recognizability, but a space of action that expresses the will of the figure who has the greatest influence over the global trajectories of contemporary culture: the creative director. Who can make choices like that of Maria Grazia Chiuri once she was placed in charge of Dior, that of combining on the elastic tape that defines the house's clothes and lingerie the name of its founder Christian Dior with 'J'Adore,' the motto of one of her predecessors, John Galliano, so as to create the short-circuit 'J'Adior' that clearly expresses the creative director's relative importance with respect to the permanence of the brand.

'I work from obscure abstract images to create a fresh concept of beauty.'¹⁶ This is how Rei Kawakubo, the charismatic founder of Comme des Garçons, explained her shamanic process of creation in one of her very rare interviews, tracing her creativity back – as the Surrealists did – to a disorienting and automatic gesture that draws on the most hidden and therefore disruptive sources of creative energy.

Like Martin Margiela, she adopts a critical attitude toward the system fashion, despite being an integral part of it. In some respects both are reminiscent of the subcultures of the 1970s that put themselves forward as an alternative to the mainstream in a continual battle that seemed to make sense and to be possible only if fought from within. Figures who acted in that area which went under the name of Radical Fashion,¹⁷ and who continue to be a source of inspiration today.

But radical is a description that can also be applied to the

16. Rei Kawakubo in *The Face* (March 1987), quoted in Andrew Bolton, *Rei Kawakubo Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between*, catalogue of the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 4 May–4 September 2017 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017), 220.

17. See Claire Wilcox (ed.), *Radical Fashion*, catalogue of the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, October 2001–January 2002 (London: V&A, 2001).

acrobatic exercises in couture in Pierpaolo Piccioli's work for Valentino, which lay claim, in each collection, to the relevance and unique quality of this form of fashion. It is a form that becomes an arena for experimentation, invention and reflection on the most extravagant possibilities of design. And on materials that are symbolic of an Italian history of couture: thus lace, emblem of the brand, becomes a grating, at once extremely soft and sculptural, that redefines the female figure and image.

Many fashion brands have chosen to explore the contents of their archives and use them as a means of preserving the identity of the brand and as a source of stimuli for the imagination. In the same way they have grasped the importance of sharing those contents, as is reflected in the growing number of foundations, galleries, museums and exhibitions that, by bringing poetics and narratives back into circulation, reveal the extent to which some fashion designers of the second half of the last century are still points of reference.

The words of Anna Piaggi in a text she wrote for the show of Prada's Autumn/Winter Collection 1994–95, 'Notes of Miuccia on the collection (with Pina Bausch in mind),' focus on the immaterial design of one of the figures who have had the greatest influence not just on the new generations of designers but also on the course taken by fashion and art. It was Germano Celant, theorist of Arte Povera and curator of the Fondazione Prada, who made clear the extent to which the crucial relationship between fashion and art has evolved in their practices: '[...] the fact that clothing belongs to the realm of art is no longer a revelation but a necessity, considering that since 1950 fashion has become a global project of democratization and aestheticization of people's appearance. What was considered futile and frivolous, decorative and eccentric, has become a quest for identity where the things that count are originality and continual change. The difference between art and fashion is tending to vanish, as if the cut that defined their outlines had succeeded, through the subsequent process of collage, in superimposing and uniting them.'¹⁸ Today it

18. Germano Celant, 'Tagliare è pensare,' in *Il Tempo e la Moda. Biennale di Firenze*, catalogue of the exhibition in Florence, 21 September 1996–12 January 1997, ed. Germano Celant, Luigi Settembrini and Ingrid Sischy (Milan: Skira, 1996), 36.

is more evident than ever that the latest generations of designers were moulded in a culture in which fashion was closely connected with the other arts.

_ Francesco Risso, the creative director of Marni, with a past at Prada, offers one of the most interesting contemporary Italian perspectives on the design of the body, and the clothed body, through his continual questioning of the classic forms of the wardrobe, and in his revisiting of its constituent elements, which appear to be continually contradicted, which are never what they seem at first glance. Risso says: 'It's a world full of censors. There's never been such an incredible time for freedom of being whatever gender or sexuality you feel. I just want to send the message of the beauty and joy of eroticism.'¹⁹

_ In the depths of contemporary fashion lies the word genderless, which owes a great deal to Giorgio Armani's 'radical gender' revolution. It is the one that best describes the new forms inhabited by the imageries, clothes and objects designed, affirming the fact that the desire to reconsider and restructure oneself is something felt indistinctly by male and female: no longer two genders that represent different physicalities, mentalities and roles, but two attitudes toward dressing unconstrained by the division between the sexes which mix the characteristics of both. Stefano Pilati, one of the most incisive talents on the contemporary fashion scene, gave the name *Random Identities* to the collection that emerged about two years ago out of his desire to assemble a hybrid, malleable wardrobe: 'Every morning, when we choose what to wear and how to wear it, we basically define a new public identity for ourselves. These identities are based on intuition, need, taste, but the shape they take is totally random. Hence the name: I basically want to convey this idea of daily restart through our look.'²⁰ It is the recognition of a culture of appearance shared by women and men, probably one of those

19. Francesco Risso, in Laura Rysman, 'In Milan, a Look Into Marni's Color-Filled World,' *T: The New York Times Style Magazine* (23 February 2019): <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/23/t-magazine/marni-francesco-risso.html>.

20. Stefano Pilati, in Angelo Flaccavento, 'Stefano Pilati's Next Move,' *BOF The Business of Fashion* (30 April 2019): <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/professional/outside-the-system>.

complex areas of understanding that recent feminism has metabolized and passed on to us and of which fashion has made itself the manifesto and megaphone.

‘Can fashion serve as a means of resistance?’ writes Giovanni Attili, professor of urban planning and author of the texts that accompany the collections of his partner Alessandro Michele, a designer who in turn has always insisted on the importance of the word, or rather of new words, in the explanation of his approach to design.

‘Fashion has another function instead: to hint at fields of possibility, suggest clues and openings, cultivate promises of beauty. To make any idea of diversity sacred [...]. It is only in this way that fashion can be constitutionally resistant, allowing each of us to reconstruct creatively his or her own place in the world [...]. A space of poetic self-affirmation in which to make the desire of self stand out [...].’

‘There are all these shortcuts that you can take:’ this is the advice that Virgil Abloh would like to have been given at the start of his career as a designer and the one that he gave to the students of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design during a lecture in 2018.²¹ Abloh suggested finding shortcuts in the search for a ‘personal design language.’ Talking of his sweatshirts, T-shirts and sneakers, he explained his rule: you don’t need to change more than 3% of an article to make it new and original. Thus the lecture became the manifesto of a new language of design that is permeating contemporary fashion: the shortcut is symbolic not so much of a “quicker,” or more “wily,” way of doing things as of a less institutional approach – made up of notes and intuitions – that subverts customs. It is the acceptance of new aesthetic paradigms which reflect the awareness that today, when dealing with fashion, or at any rate with styles, the short-circuit between cultural values and practices of production, marketing and communication is spreading fast.

‘Fashion that speaks of fashion. A phenomenon in a way analogous to the ‘description of the description’ of which Giorgio Manganelli wrote in the afterword to one of the Italian editions of the *Six*

21. The text of the lecture, given the name “*Insert Complicated Title Here*,” and published in the Sternberg Press series *The Incidents* with the graphic design of Åbåke, is a bountiful reflection on the world of the designer and DJ, founder of the Off-White brand and creative director of Louis Vuitton’s menswear.

Memos for the Next Millennium: ‘There may be something that can accommodate games and enigmas, illusions and clarity, inventiveness and silence even better than the smooth surface of the mirror: and it is a mirror placed in front of another mirror. In this second mirror will be found all the lucid intangibility of the first, but another game as well, the enigma that responds to the enigma, the description of the description.’²² Thus I chose to ask the writer Chiara Valerio and the film director Roberta Torre to intervene in the exhibition with texts that would not be captions or interpretations but descriptions of some of the objects: following the promptings of their imagination, they alluded to the critical act of ekphrasis, in an exercise, or a *dérive*, that might have no end.

‘For can we not compare to the curatorial practice of restaging seminal exhibitions of the past – as Germano Celant has done with Harald Szeemann’s *When Attitudes Become Form*²³ – the exact replica of one of Gianni Versace’s most spectacular inventions, the metal mesh worn by Jerry Hall and Gia Carangi in the Autumn/Winter 1982–83 campaign photographed by Avedon, that Donatella Versace produced in 2017 (twenty years after her brother’s death) and sent out onto the catwalk for the Spring/Summer 2018 show on those top models – Cindy Crawford, Carla Bruni, Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer and Helena Christensen – that Gianni had “invented,” for himself at the beginning of the 1990s and who had helped to define his style?

Forms of re-enactment that make things relevant to the present and go beyond the idea of citation because, by bringing designs and ideas back into circulation, they offer a reflection, which may also be critical, on today. When, for the Dior Autumn/Winter 2019–20 Couture Collection, Maria Grazia Chiuri sent Ruth Bell out onto the catwalk in a tunic on which the question ‘Are Clothes Modern?’ – provocative title of Bernard Rudofsky’s fundamental exhibition at the MoMA in 1944 – was embroidered in exactly the same lettering as had been utilized for the catalogue published

22. Giorgio Manganelli, ‘Postfazione,’ in Italo Calvino, *Lezioni americane. Sei proposte per il prossimo millennio* (Milan: Mondadori, 2016), 146.

23. Germano Celant (ed.), *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013*, catalogue of the exhibition at the Fondazione Prada, Ca’ Corner della Regina, Venice, 2013 (Milan: Fondazione Prada, 2013).

in 1947,²⁴ the designer was provocatively questioning the sense of dress and the rules of high fashion today, from within a *maison* that is automatically associated in the collective imagination with fashion, with its unreasonable ‘whims’ (as Rudofsky himself would have defined them) and with the construction of the feminine. Thereby reminding haute couture and its protagonists of the importance of questioning the definition of the female universe, before setting out to dress it.

_Mature fashion that acts on different planes. Historical event and at the same time hard-won solution to a certain problem – to borrow the words of Kubler quoted earlier on. Conceptual paradox. Challenging of practices. Transformation, change, rupture that comes not from below but is imposed from above. Unexpected act, and therefore revolutionary. Which uses the rules to transform them, break them or follow them, revealing their relevance to the present.

As does Giambattista Valli, an Italian member of the *Chambre Syndicale de la Couture* in Paris, who follows the rules of couture as laid down in 1945: his wedding gown, created to fit exactly the body of Charlotte Dellal in 2010, evoking in the midst of the English countryside the Claudia Cardinale of *The Leopard*, became perfect publicity that went viral on Instagram. Attesting to the way that the aura of fashion and the desire for it today pass through the cult of socialites and celebrities that has been refined on the social networks.

Memos is a mark of the desire to convey a complexity. An outgrowing of the idea of the poetic gesture for its own sake, of the idea of creators as shamans (which they are, but that’s not all). A choreography of curiosity. A cosmogony of aptitudes that holds together the transformation of bodies, of heads, and thus the transformation of the ways of dressing those bodies and those heads. That ‘we are all different’ asserted by the feminist theologian and nun Teresa Forcades. The figure of a multiplicity understood as permanent questioning, open-mindedness, creation, invention. Not just clothing, therefore, but design strategies that restore value to those bodies and the minds that inhabit them.

This open project raises questions without worrying about coming up with answers. It is first of all a dialogue with Judith Clark, with

whom I have been sharing projects and ideas on the directions in which curating is moving for some time. Questions that are the framework of the courses we teach at our respective universities and that have transformed and continue to transform our work. And that today are making us doubt the validity of the label of curator. Clark, who is an architect, describes herself as an ‘exhibition-maker,’ a formula that alludes to a more multifaceted and comprehensive approach.

It is a dialogue with Stefano Tonchi, with whom I have been working for decades on things like the magazine *Westuff*, as well as exhibitions and books. And with whom, once again, it has been fundamental to reflect on fashion photography: those images that give voice and form to the changes in attitude in every generation. It is a dialogue with Gabriele Monti, who has shared with me the materials of the research he carried out into the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent’anni di moda italiana* at Poldi Pezzoli and thus made me reflect on the difficult relations between fashion and the institution of the museum in Italy.

It is a dialogue with Marta Franceschini, an outstanding student of mine with whom I have begun to exchange views on the ideas behind the unpredictable paths taken by fashion in our time.

It is a dialogue with Coppi Barbieri, who have photographed the materials on display in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, succeeding in capturing the silent aura of each object.

It is a dialogue with Chiara Valerio and Roberta Torre, who have described some of the objects in the exhibition in narrative form, showing how each of them can echo in a series of cross-references thanks to an informed gaze and the quality of its translation into words.

It is a fundamental dialogue with the director of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli Annalisa Zanni, with whom the exchange of ideas – as well as with the staff of the museum – has been crucial in determining many steps in the planning of *Memos*. It is a dialogue with Carlo Capasa, president of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana, who carries out perfectly the role that the institutions of fashion in Italy must play more than ever today, that of being the gathering point for the different, and sometimes conflicting aspirations that permeate a fashion system undergoing continual transformation.

24. Bernard Rudofsky, *Are Clothes Modern? An Essay on Contemporary Apparel* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1947).

.MEMOS

AN EXHIBITION
TO DEFINE
A MUSEUM
1922–1943:
VENT'ANNI DI
MODA ITALIANA
AT POLDI
PEZZOLI



GABRIELE MONTI

In 1981 Grazietta Butazzi wrote:

At a time when the “consumption„ of fashion is becoming frenzied even in terms of theorizing and interpretation, a new book about fashion may seem pleonastic. It is precisely in a key of interpretation – or, much more modestly, as a suggestion of some keys of interpretation – that, we hope, it will not be. [...] The texts are therefore not intended to present a history of fashion, but rather to propose some – and only some – ways of tackling this history: social symbols, the status of groups such as women or young people, the behaviours of power in relation to fashion, the impact of political events and deep-seated changes in customs, and cultural movements.¹

This is an excerpt from the presentation to the book *Moda. Arte / storia / società*, which is still a pioneering example of a manual that seeks to recount fashion through time – without troubling to follow a timeline – and according it a central role in the mechanisms of design and the functioning of society and culture. It is an extraordinary book, also in the way it uses and reassembles images and short-circuits them, without following the supposed linearity of time, but explicitly and inventively researching new relations between the formal qualities of the iconographic materials employed and the themes addressed by the critical texts.²

A year earlier, in 1980, Grazietta Butazzi curated the exhibition at the Museo Poldi Pezzoli *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana*. This experience enabled us to raise central questions about the cultural status of fashion in relation to the exhibition machine and the museum at the beginning of a decade, the 1980s, that proved fundamental not only in developing the fashion exhibition but above all in defining fashion itself as a discipline, through the focus on themes and issues such as the reconstruction of its history, the conservation of objects and the problem of cultural and

1. Grazietta Butazzi, 'Presentazione' in Id., *Moda. Arte / storia / società* (Milan: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, 1981), 5.

2. Iconographic research by Marilea Somaré, graphic design by Luciano Marco Boschini.

museum exhibition practices in relation to commercial forms of display.

Retrieving this exhibition means moving between an account of an important exhibition event and the analysis of its role within fashion studies, in years when, especially in Italy, an awareness developed of the need to imagine devices and institutions capable of preserving and studying fashion. We should not forget that, if the decade began with *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana*, it came to an end in 1989 with another important exhibition, *Gianni Versace: L'abito per pensare*. Looking at these events today means reflecting primarily on the Italian situation, because even today one of the central issues in Italy is the absence of institutions in the promotion of a national fashion museum capable of dealing fully with the international scope of fashion.

The exhibition *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* was held at the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan from 5 December 1980 to 25 March 1981,³ with the participation of the Civiche Raccolte d'Arte Applicata at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan. It was promoted by the City of Milan (Culture and Entertainment Department), the Lombardy Region (Culture and Information Department), with the contribution of Assomoda (Italian National Association of Fashion Representatives), the Italian Clothing Industry Association and the Italian Association of Producers of Knitwear. The organising and promoting committee directly drew on the work of: Carlo Bertelli, Superintendent for the Artistic and Historical Heritage of Milan; Clelia Alberici, director of the Civiche Raccolte d'Arte Applicata at the Castello Sforzesco; Grazietta Butazzi, consultant in the costume sector of the Civiche Raccolte; Rosita Levi Pisetzky, fashion historian; Alessandra Mottola Molfino, director of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli; Roberto Manoelli, president of Assomoda and president of CIMM (Italian Centre for Fashion Exhibitions).

Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua, president of the Poldi Pezzoli Artistic Foundation, in the presentation that opened the catalogue,⁴ underlined the important institutional effort behind the project,

3. The exhibition was then extended until 31 March 1981, partly to attract the public at the Milanese prêt-à-porter fashion shows.

4. Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua, 'Presentazione,' in *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana*, curated by Grazietta Butazzi, catalogue of the exhibition (Milan, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, 5 December 1980–25 March 1981), (Florence: Centro Di, 1980), 9.

the collaboration with the fashion system, and highlighted the importance of the event which marked the first collaboration between the Museo Poldi Pezzoli and the Civiche Raccolte d'Arte Applicata not only in the exhibition itself, but as part of the wider project of promoting a fashion museum in Milan. Significantly, the subtitle of the exhibition on the title page of the catalogue reads *Proposal for a Fashion Museum in Milan*. The exhibition, curated by Grazietta Butazzi with the coordination of Alessandra Mottola Molfino, was a pioneering project in the Italian panorama of fashion exhibitions. It proved comparable to the work of Diana Vreeland starting from 1972, when she began her career at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York as Special Consultant and as a first gesture organised the exhibition *The World of Balenciaga*.⁵ The exhibition at the Museo Poldi Pezzoli directly addressed the 20th century. Therefore, as it evolved, it began to develop methods of research, conservation and display that were different from those used for garments and objects from the more distant past, which are usually placed in the costume category. It was a fashion exhibition and, over the years (above all through the catalogue), it has become a landmark for those seeking to understand contemporary fashion.⁶

This is not to say that in Italy there were no important and significant fashion exhibitions in the years preceding the project in question, but certainly this exhibition – by the period it explored, its exhibition design and the questions it dealt with more or less directly – clearly raised not only the issue of how to exhibit fashion, but also that relating to the role of the exhibition display within the broader cultural project of a museum devoted to fashion. The exhibition significantly formed the conceptual introduction to the international conference *Per un museo della moda*, held at the Milan trade fair site on 27 March 1981 and coinciding with the end of the exhibition. A project explicitly devoted to reflection on the fashion museum, commissioned

5. *The World of Balenciaga*, curated by Diana Vreeland, New York, Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 23 March–9 September 1973.

6. In this respect, see the detailed essay by Marialuisa Rizzini, 'Grazietta Butazzi. Le origini di un metodo,' in *Moda Arte Storia Società. Omaggio a Grazietta Butazzi*, edited by Enrica Morini, Marialuisa Rizzini, Margherita Rosina, conference proceedings (Como, Antonio Ratti Foundation, 20 June 2014), (Como: Nodo Libri, 2016), 13–32.

by a scholarly committee that basically replicated that of the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent’anni di moda italiana*.

The research preceding the exhibition coincided with the study and recovery of a crucial period for contemporary Italian fashion, which gained a focus as a system during the twenty years of Fascism. Butazzi’s task was to bring together materials from museum collections⁷ with pieces found in private collections through extensive research. At the same time, the articulation of the exhibition and therefore the objects on display were not limited to women’s fashion, but represented the twenty years in question through all types of materials related to fashion: linen, children’s fashions, men’s fashions, sportswear, shoes, hats, shawls, up to and including posters and periodical publications capable of exemplifying the discourses on fashion produced at the level of commerce and publishing. More than three hundred exhibits in all, with more than eighty display mannequins (both whole figures and busts).

The elaborate exhibition project⁸ occupied the whole of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, the ground floor and first floor, so fully taking over the museum space. On the ground floor the exhibition developed among what are currently named the Salone dell’affresco (Fresco Room), Stanza dei tessuti (Textiles Room) and the Sala dei pizza (Lace Room), with a complex structure of display cabinets designed by the architect Takashi Shimura, to contain and stage the sequence of themes identified. The designs kept in the museum’s archive tell of a progressive focus of the structure, a maze of display cabinets which visitors weaved between, enlivened within by different levels⁹ and multiple display modules and painted different colours, so enabling them to display accessories, textiles, mannequins and busts. A group of mannequins “engaged in conversation,” at the foot of the ancient staircase provided

7. In particular, the one she was engaged in – following its cataloguing – at the Civiche Raccolte d’Arte Applicata at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan. The exhibition included materials from the Vittoriale at Gardone Riviera and the Centro Internazionale delle Arti e del Costume in Venice.

8. I wish to thank the Museo Poldi Pezzoli and Martina Franzini from the Ufficio Conservatori for access to the documentation of the exhibition preserved in five folders stored in the museum archives.

9. On the ground floor, the display cabinets installed in the Salone dell’affresco (Fresco Room) were set on a raised level with scenically seated mannequins that conversed from above with those standing in the foreground.

a scenographic introduction to the display on the first floor, where the visitors had to move between the different rooms. Scattered among the exhibits presented in the museum were a series of groups of mannequins in dialogue with each other. In the Salone Dorato (Gilded Room), the installation grouped mannequins seated and standing before the large window, in an arrangement recalling a conversation piece. The only element that reproduced the features of the exhibition design on the ground floor was set in the Sala del settecento veneto (18th-Century Venetian Room): a vitrine devoted to fashion magazines guided the visitor to the Saletta dei trecenteschi (14th-Century Room) which had another group of choreographed mannequins. With the exception of this one vitrine, the elements on the first floor were not protected by cabinets, and these allusions to possible conversations between elegant ladies cinematically reactivated the form of the museum home, making the most of a space not originally designed to host museum displays.¹⁰ Among the documents preserved in the Poldi Pezzoli’s archives, a highly interesting item is a letter sent by Alessandra Mottola Molfino to Anna Piaggi.¹¹ The initial idea was to involve the gaze of a fashion editor and her contemporary sensibility to create a dialogue with the architect responsible for the exhibition project, Takashi Shimura. Also among the documents kept in the museum’s archives, there is a suggested colophon for the exhibition in which Piaggi would be entrusted with the artistic coordination. As Mottola Molfino remembers today,¹² there was a meeting with Piaggi, although the collaboration came to nothing. The decision was not to introduce the contemporary language of fashion with too obvious styling actions. The mannequins were lacquered white, avoiding anthropomorphic colour, and completed by sketchy white paper wigs. In this respect, the choices were set within a debate that took as points of reference the experiences of the newly founded Kyoto Costume

10. The Museo Poldi Pezzoli is a private house that was turned into a museum in the late 19th century at the suggestion of its owner Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli, who left it – together with the collection of artworks – to the Pinacoteca di Brera.

11. Letter dated 14 October 1980 kept in the first of the five folders deposited in the archives of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli.

12. Email conversation with Alessandra Mottola Molfino on 1 February 2019.

Institute¹³ and the exhibition *Curiosità di una reggia: Vicende della guardaroba di Palazzo Pitti*, curated in 1979 at Palazzo Pitti by Cristina Aschengreen Piacenti and Sandra Pinto. (It would eventually lead to the establishment of the Costume Gallery at the Palazzo Pitti in 1983.)¹⁴

The working party engaged in the restoration and preparation of the clothes on display at the Poldi Pezzoli consisted of Francesco Pertegato, Gabriella Pelluccani, Laura Marelli, Carlo Barzaghi and Elena Pasti. Francesco Pertegato was responsible for designing the display of garments and mannequins.¹⁵ At that time, he was a young textile restorer who had just returned from the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, where he had restored some garments and seen the design for the exhibits in the renewed costume gallery. Pertegato's testimony is precious today because he makes it clear that the exhibition acted as a testbench for testing and verifying specific techniques for the conservation and display of 20th-century fashions, moreover in a museum, as we have already said, that did not have spaces designed for preparation and display or any specific equipment. A working environment was developed to be as efficient as possible with instruments for the restoration and care of clothes. Gabriella Pelluccani, coming from the staff of the Castello Sforzesco, had worked extensively for a haute couture dressmaking establishment, and her work was of fundamental importance, not only in restoring but also displaying the garments as effectively as possible. The aim in organising the working conditions was also to form a team that would combine a scholarly background with a series of inventions that could only be tested and developed during the work in progress.¹⁶ Pertegato still recalls that it proved impossible to

devote all the time and materials required to reproduce the stylised wigs designed by the Kyoto Costume Institute. Following Butazzi's indications, thin white shaped and modelled pieces of pasteboard were used to sketch out the hairstyles, without reconstructing them fully.

Pertegato's words are central also because they express the project's role in the training of those professional figures who revolve around an exhibition and a museum that collects and exhibits fashion. Pertegato speaks specifically of a 'paradigmatic trio for every operation carried out on the museum collections' which was developed during work on the exhibition at the Poldi Pezzoli: the project director, the curator-conservator, the restorer.¹⁷

The experience of the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* at the Museo Poldi Pezzoli thus still appears today a pioneering experience for exhibitions and museums devoted to fashion in the national panorama but also internationally. Not surprisingly, as briefly mentioned earlier, the international conference *Per un museo della moda* held at the Milan trade fair site on 27 March 1981, coinciding with the end of the exhibition, recorded the presence of Alberici, Bertelli, Butazzi, Levi Pisetzky and Mottola Molfino on the scholarly committee, and that of the trade associations already involved in the project installed at the Poldi Pezzoli.¹⁸ The opening words of the then Mayor of Milan Carlo Tognoli, clearly expressed the direct connection between this conference and the exhibition. And the event was structured as an important international exchange of ideas, which presented the testimonies of the most important museums of costume and fashion worldwide. Among the participants were Penelope Byrde from the Museum of Costume in Bath, Madeleine

13. Founded in 1978 with funding from the Wacoal Corporation in collaboration with the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The first mannequins specifically designed for historical costume were also developed in collaboration with the Costume Institute of New York in 1978. See https://www.kci.or.jp/profile/history_e.html, last accessed 10 February 2019.

14. Kirsten Aschengreen Piacenti, Sandra Pinto (edited by), *Curiosità di una reggia: Vicende della guardaroba di Palazzo Pitti*, exhibition catalogue (Florence, Palazzo Pitti, January–September 1979), (Florence: Centro Di, 1979).

15. Email conversation with Francesco Pertegato on 2 February 2019.

16. 'I recall that on a silk organza dress embroidered with beads (therefore heavy) the shoulder straps were reinforced with men's socks bought at Lpim, perfect for softness, resistance and colour.' (Francesco Pertegato, conversation via email on 2 February 2019).

17. A collaboration 'fundamental above all in the case of garments, which, as Grazietta often reminded us, are, by their nature, dynamic objects that cannot endure being embalmed.' (Francesco Pertegato, conversation via email on 2 February 2019). Pertegato's words enable me to highlight a debate that still oscillates between two terms: conservator and curator. On the one hand, a professional who studies and restores the object, and who in studying it also identifies the most effective ways to exhibit it and bring it back to life; on the other, a figure who acts with greater freedom, using the exhibition design to develop an argument, often regardless of the materiality of the objects to be exhibited. The conservator appears to be more closely associated with the dimension of the archive and museum conservation, while the curator is more focused on exhibition design.

18. See *Atti della conferenza internazionale 'Per un Museo della Moda': 27 marzo 1981* (S.l.: n.n., [1981]).

Delpierre from the Musée de la Mode et du Costume in Paris (the Palais Galliera), Jun Kanai from the Kyoto Costume Institute, Stella Blum from the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, Valerie Mendes from the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. The reports focused not only on accounts of the formation of the museum collections, but also the actions necessary to implement them, and the techniques of conservation and display adopted by each museum. It was a true exchange of ideas that saw museums engaging in discussion with each other in the search for shared standards and practices and their common awareness of the need for an active and effective reflection on fashion by museums.

Clearly the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana*, as the testimonies of Mottola Molfino and Pertegato have confirmed, addressed the display of costume with a concern for its material values and the needs of conservation and restoration. Underpinning Butazzi's work and the collaboration between the Poldi Pezzoli and the Civiche Raccolte was their sense of the urgent need to establish a museum collection. The approach they advocated was clearly expressed by the reasons that had led a few years earlier to the foundation of the CISST (Centro Italiano per lo Studio della Storia del Tessuto), with Mottola Molfino significantly its first president (and as such she took part in the 1981 conference mentioned above).¹⁹

Those were the central years for the affirmation in Italy of a culture of fashion in relation to the museum. The experience at the Poldi Pezzoli came exactly one year after the project presented at the XVI Triennale di Milano, which opened in December 1979 and presented a section specifically devoted to fashion: *Il senso della moda*. This section called on a number of leading institutions, including the Dxing research centre founded by Elio Fiorucci, who understood fashion as an eminently visual phenomenon, inextricably bound up with the spectacular forms of mass culture.

19. The CISST (Centro Italiano per lo Studio della Storia del Tessuto) was founded in 1978 by a group of Italian historians with the aim of promoting and coordinating research for studies on the history and conservation of the Italian textile heritage, and consequently also on costume, fashion, embroidery, lace, tapestries. Mottola Molfino is the first president of CISST.

The design of the section *Il senso della moda* at the XVI Triennale stemmed from a reflection on the importance that fashion has acquired in recent years through by both its economic and productional aspects, and in a symbolic sense as a manifestation of imaginary and unconscious processes, connected with social and political transformations and cultural trends in society.²⁰

The exhibition, designed by Eleonore Peduzzi-Riva, was a visualisation of research (conducted by Giannino Malossi, Nicoletta Branzi, Veronica Levis, Claudio Possenti) investigating the connections between fashion and mass communications, the cultural industry and social movements, 'to reveal the mechanisms of formation of the language of fashion.' The *Fashion Map* and the *Multivision* project on five screens were its two main features, and both emphasised the visual power of fashion in defining our imaginations and social movements. The scholarly committee included Francesco Alberoni, Anna Piaggi and Umberto Tirelli, as well as the Superintendent Carlo Bertelli, who testified to a clear project. The intentions of this section included the wish to contribute to the establishment of a fashion museum in Milan, with the actions of the XVI Triennale intended specifically as an experimental anticipation of it. In enabling these two experiences to interact with each other, while they were also enmeshed in their respective institutional engagements, a debate was begun between the different approaches to dealing with fashion: on the one hand with a greater concern for the materiality of fashion in its relations with historical customs and with museum practices that link conservation and exhibition issues in indissoluble ways; on the other, a gaze that reflects on the relationships between fashion and language, in an interdisciplinary horizon that unites mass communication theory, semiology and sociology and tends to dematerialise fashion into the dimension of the image. On the one hand, fashion in its relationship with the museum; on the other, fashion in the system of cultural studies. This is a debate that we probably have not yet resolved to this day, and

20. See *XVI Triennale: Il senso della moda* (S.I.: n.n., [1979]). The XVI Milan Triennale ran from December 1979 to February 1982.

that concerns not simply the interpretation we give of fashion itself, but also our understanding of exhibitions and museums. In addition to the experience in Florence mentioned above, which in 1983 led to the establishment of the Costume Gallery at Palazzo Pitti, we should not forget that the 1980s were also a central period in the activities of the CSAC (Study Centre and Communication Archive) of the University of Parma, established by Arturo Carlo Quintavalle in the late sixties, which had been devoting itself to fashion since the end of the seventies, with a focus on the project understood as drawing, graphics and the photographic image, and simultaneously on constructing an archive rather than holding exhibitions.²¹ And in 1981 Alessandro Mendini, when officially endorsing the entrance of fashion into the Italian temple of architectural and design culture with the invention of *Domus Moda*, focused precisely on the issue of a fashion museum in Milan, suggesting that a project of this type should not be confused 'with a few clothes resting on mannequins like ghosts.'²² In this way, at the start of the decade, we began to reflect on issues that associated the definition of fashion with its relationship to the museum and exhibitions. In 1989, at the close of the decade inaugurated by the Poldi Pezzoli, the exhibition *Gianni Versace: L'abito per pensare*, to a project by Nicoletta Bocca in collaboration with Chiara Buss, was held at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan from 14 April to 21 May 1989. It analysed Versace's creative processes, focusing on his definition of stylistic elements and the way he experimented with materials.²³ The catalogue *Gianni Versace: L'abito per pensare* is still an almost unsurpassed example of an exploration of the recesses of a designer's fashion project, combining an attention to the garments, the cataloguing of textiles and a reflection on the imaginary through the contributions of Omar Calabrese and Enrica Morini. It directly involved the designer and his staff, so dealing with

21. For a detailed study of CSAC and its research into fashion, see the recent contribution by Elena Fava and Manuela Soldi, 'Moda media storia. La ricerca di moda allo Csac,' in *Laboratorio Italia. Canoni e contraddizioni del Made in Italy*, curated by Malvina Borgherini, Sara Marini, Angela Mengoni, Annalisa Sacchi, Alessandra Vaccari (Milan: Mimesis, 2018), 174–89.

22. Alessandro Mendini, 'Musei della moda? Considerazioni teoriche a proposito di un museo della moda per Milano,' in *Domus Moda*, no. 2, supplement to *Domus*, no. 621 (October 1981), 1.

23. The exhibition was designed to a project by the architect Gianfranco Cavaglià with lighting by Piero Castiglioni in the Sala della Balla on the first floor of the Castello Sforzesco.

contemporary fashion in relation to its protagonists. It was, once more, an event sponsored by the City of Milan, again with a view to favouring the conditions for a Milanese fashion museum. On the scholarly committee we find names we have already encountered: Cristina Aschengreen Piacenti, Grazietta Butazzi, Alessandra Mottola Molfino.²⁴

The exhibition and the catalogue were closely connected, as Mottola Molfino pointed out. In her introduction,²⁵ she stressed the importance and innovative demands of a project that combined the study and cataloguing of objects in accordance with the most traditional methods of the decorative arts with the historical-critical analysis of Versace's fashions. The exhibition and catalogue were correlated in the way they dealt with themes and problems, analysed Versace's work and decoded his stylistic vocabulary. The first two sections of the exhibition dealt with his origins and first experiences with prêt-à-porter in the seventies, comparing the garments with technical drawings and images from fashion shows and advertising campaigns. Then it continued with a section devoted to Versace's experience with theatrical costumes. The two central sections then focused on the materials (processes, experiments, uses) and the form of the project (design, prototyping and manufacturing, creation of the advertising image). The conclusion of the exhibition was the staging of Versace's stylistic vocabulary (from drapery to the comparison between female and male and the renewal of tradition), understood as a tool for interpreting the design of the garment and the cultural references reactivated by the stylist in his project (from art, to the history of costume and references to exoticism). Grazietta Butazzi contributed a text that reflected on the relationship of creativity with the past and tradition. Gillo Dorfles, in the afterword to the catalogue, stressed that the exhibition 'once again confronts us with the problem of how fashion should be placed and considered within a broader cultural horizon.'²⁶

24. In addition to Carlo Salsi (director of the Civiche Raccolte di Arte Applicata), Nicoletta Bocca, Chiara Buss and Omar Calabrese.

25. Alessandra Mottola Molfino, 'Introduction,' in: *L'abito per pensare*, curated by Nicoletta Bocca and Chiara Buss, exhibition catalogue (Milan, Sala della Balla of the Castello Sforzesco, 14 April–21 May 1989), (Milan: Mondadori, 1989), 13–15.

26. Gillo Dorfles, 'Postfazione,' in *Gianni Versace: L'abito per pensare*, edited by Nicoletta Bocca

The two Italian events, *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* in 1980 and *Gianni Versace: L'abito per pensare* in 1989, enclosed a debate over the organisation of fashion exhibitions that is still relevant at the Italian and international levels. In fact, these exhibitions directly addressed contemporary fashion, with the problems of exhibiting it, making it relevant to the visitor, and at the same time recognising the status of a cultural object that is collectable. These were projects that not only questioned the exhibition mechanism but also the way of exhibiting in relation to the actions necessary to imagine what a fashion museum should preserve and what professional skills it should develop, in order to contribute to the definition of a discipline profoundly related to the contemporary world and commerce. These are still relevant exhibitions in the Italian panorama, which has to come to terms with the striking absence of a museum project comparable to the finest international institutions, even though in recent years some things have changed. In 2018, the exhibition *Italiana: L'Italia vista dalla moda 1971–2001*, curated by Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi at Palazzo Reale in Milan,²⁷ was an opportunity to take stock of the qualities of Italian fashion in a key season for its international success. At the same time it was also a chance to reiterate the need to imagine and design a museum space capable of collecting and exhibiting Italian fashion by working on the questions and narratives necessary to understand and relaunch it. *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* reminds us today that the insights of Grazietta Butazzi, in her relationship with the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, represent a wealth of ideas and projects²⁸ on which to reflect, without nostalgia, so triggering a virtuous process to define a precise cultural policy for fashion in Italy.

and Chiara Buss, exhibition catalogue (Milan, Sala della Balla of the Castello Sforzesco, 14 April–21 May 1989), (Milan: Mondadori, 1989), 342.

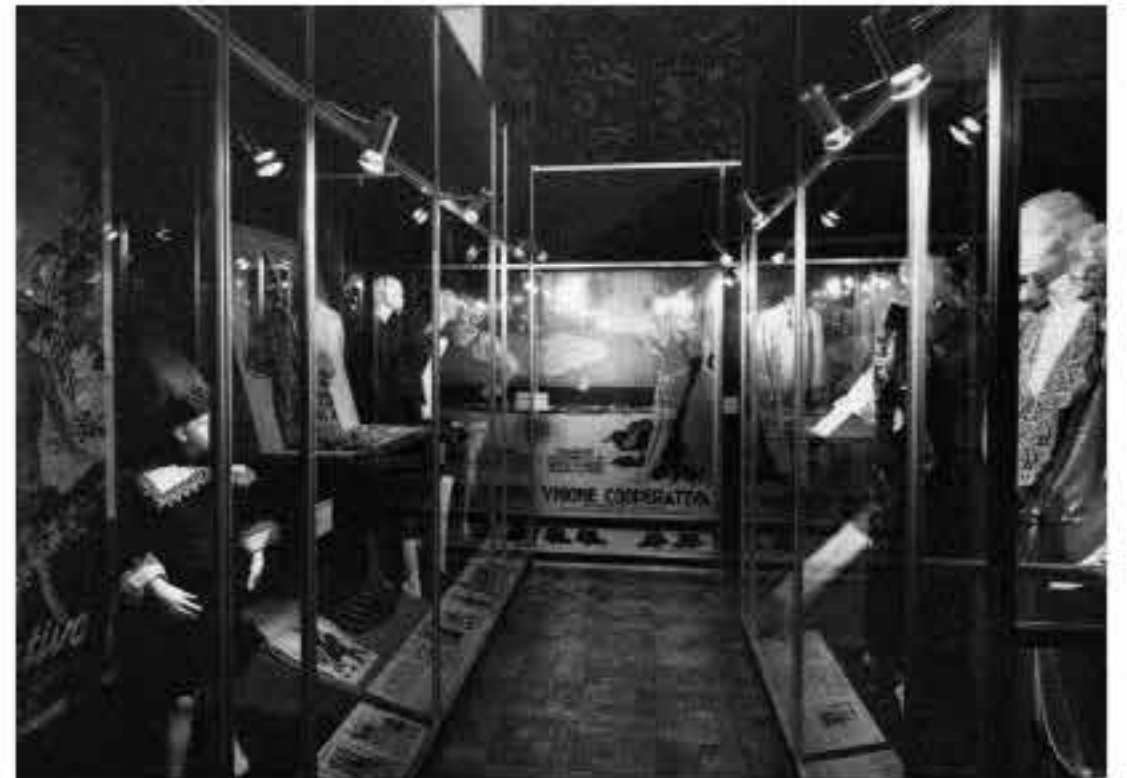
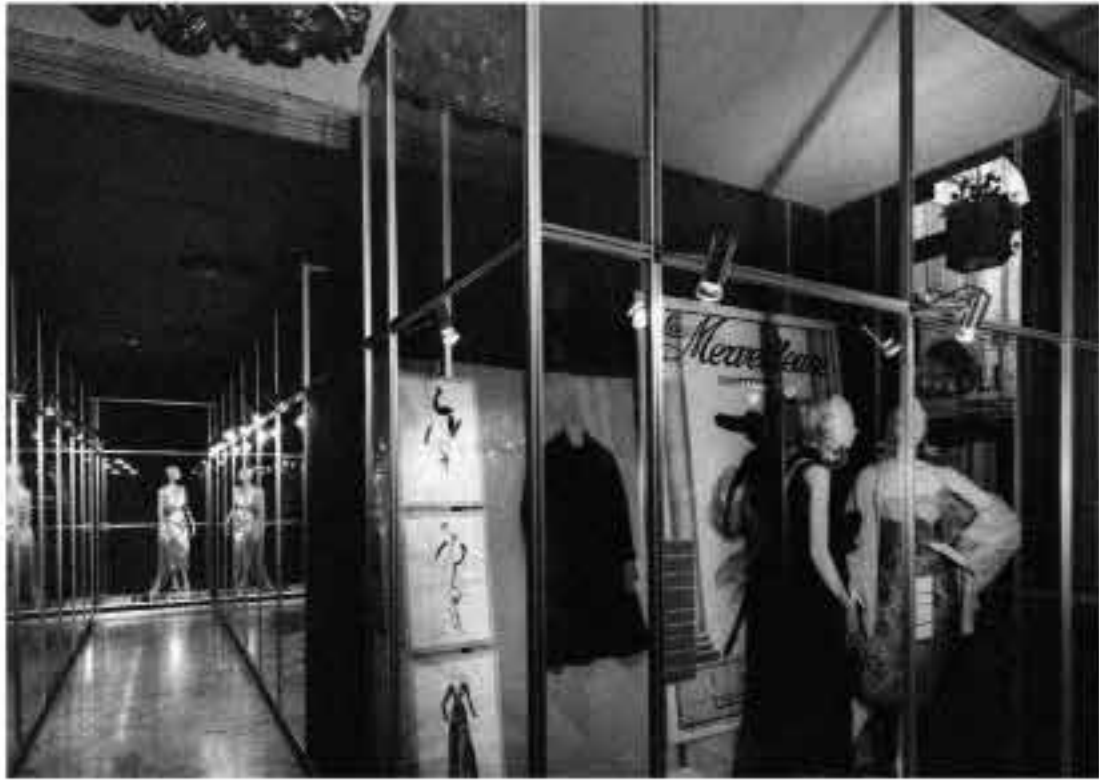
27. See *Italiana. L'Italia vista dalla moda 1971–2001*, edited by Maria Luisa Frisa, Gabriele Monti and Stefano Tonchi, exhibition catalogue (Milan, Palazzo Reale, 21 February–6 May 2018), (Venice: Marsilio, 2018).

28. See Annalisa Zanni, 'Grazietta Butazzi e il Museo Poldi Pezzoli', in *Moda Arte Storia Società. Omaggio a Grazietta Butazzi*, edited by Enrica Morini, Marialuisa Rizzini, Margherita Rosina, conference proceedings (Como, Antonio Ratti Foundation, 20 June 2014), (Como: Nodo Libri, 2016), 39–41.

An Exhibition to Define a Museum



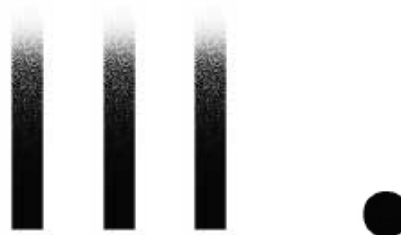








ON FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY



STEFANO TONCHI

As the culture of the image dominates our everyday lives and fashion is gaining increasing space in the collective imagination, I have wondered why we do not see many fashion photographs that manage to inspire and leave a mark. Yet we are constantly bombarded, on Instagram and the web, on the street and in the pages of magazines, by millions of fashion images and by those who call themselves a photographer or stylist or both.

I then started to try and understand what qualities define a fashion photograph, which images have influenced my professional career, and which I consider relevant in view of a future increasingly crowded with visual signals.

I went back to look at the photo shoots I have done and those I have commissioned and published in my thirty years of work. I searched for the influences that guided me and traced the course of the river of memory back toward its source, dwelling in known ports and discovering new tributaries.

A selection of these influences are completely arbitrary, and not just because it is absolutely subjective. In fact, every photo I chose also revealed a series of relationships. Each is a Chinese box concealing new surprises and references. The photos tell explicit stories but also contain messages that impel me in different directions. Their temporal context enables their significance to evolve continuously. How to separate personal and temporal choices and classifications? How to separate nurture from nature?

Looking at history, we see that the fashion image was born long before photographic technology itself, when the act of dressing acquired complex social meanings and codified uniforms were replaced by rapidly changing styles. The fashion image, understood as the representation of a fashion garment (the first illustration dates back to the 11th century, while the first photograph is from 1839) stems from the idea that dress is a form of both personal expression and social classification. It records individuals' continuous striving to distinguish themselves from the group and affirm their creativity and leadership. This practice became common starting from the second half of the 19th century as a result of the democratisation of fashion, the growth of the press and the technological progress of the photographic medium. One hundred years later, with fashion

journals moving from elite publications to mass-circulation magazines and vice versa, and in the midst of the digital revolution, some principles remain valid.

Fashion photography is always a consciously constructed image, never casual; and since its primary purpose is to present and sell the product of a designer or brand, it has to convey a desire or an emotion. But to go down in history and enter the collective memory, a fashion photo has to express, beyond the commercial function, the ideals and aspirations of its time.

Even when it seems to capture the “fleeting moment,” every fashion photo arises from an artifice, and often from the endless repetition of a pose, of a gesture, until they appear completely natural, as in Bruce Weber’s photos.

It may happen that a chance snap, a shot of a stranger, can become a photo that influences fashion, but it will never be a true fashion photo. To take a fashion photo, awareness of fashion is essential. For this reason, even a photo without clothes, a nude, can be a fashion photo. In this respect, I am reminded of the photos by Mikael Jansson for *Dutch Magazine* of a group of naked young people whose attitudes and physicality were attributed to different fashion brands.

The use of images in a sequence, at first as a pretext for showing variations on an idea of style, has evolved through the lenses of photographers such as Tim Walker or Philip-Lorca diCorcia into almost cinematographic storytelling with changes of scene, location and, of course, costume.

Fashion photography has the ability to mark a moment in time and exclusively reflect the present in which it is taken without ever looking to the future. So much so that the best photographers, like Steven Meisel, not only capture the present but also manage to quote a moment from the past. The result is doubly powerful because it is at the same time absolutely contemporary and totally nostalgic.

Like fashion itself, in its twofold nature of art and commerce, fashion shoots can offer a perfect cultural synthesis, combining high art and mass culture, aesthetics and politics, ephemera and history. They record our obsessions and value systems, continually questioning identity, race and class, and capturing the spirit of time in an immediate and profound way.

On Fashion Photography

IN THE MIRROR

I have always been fascinated by photos that reveal what is happening behind the scenes. All the more so in fashion. I like the juxtaposition of the real backstage with the artificial one. It’s like entering the photo, and looking at the set, but from behind a magic mirror. In his famous shoot for *Nova*, Helmut Newton used a mirror to reflect and reveal the artifice, entering the set, putting himself in the picture, and many then followed him, like Juergen Teller.

On a cover of *Vogue Italia*, Steven Meisel portrays all those who work behind the scenes together with the model. But are they really working or just posing for the photo? One of the revelations of my career, during a shoot with the backstage photographer Roxanne Lowit (who also appears on the *Vogue* cover mentioned above) was that none of the things she photographed happened naturally. Instead, they were “provoked,” by the presence of her lens or else she choreographed them tenaciously and with an iron will.

In short, in the fashion photo nothing is as natural as it might seem, not even the scene backstage or a party photo. Verisimilitude is part of the fashion photo project. It is never reality but its double, perfectly staged.

IN THE STUDIO

The first fashion photos, and perhaps most of those that come to my mind, are those created in the studio. There, the perfection of the composition is fundamental, to the point where it shapes fashion and the model in completely idealised poses, often borrowed from painting and sculpture. For decades, this was the cliché and the models were always Caucasian. We had to wait until 1959 to see the Sino-American China Machado on the cover of *Harper’s Bazaar*, and 1974 for an African-American model, Beverly Johnson, to be on the cover of *American Vogue*. For an image in the studio to be successful, and not something trivial for an advertising catalogue, there has to be a perfect tension between the dress and the subject who wears it, between the ideal and the natural, perfection and error, tradition and transgression.

Stefano Tonchi

The portraits by Malick Sibidé in his studio in Mali that I commissioned for *T Magazine* absorb and subvert the tradition of studio photography by Avedon and Penn, heirs to the Baron de Mayer, Horst, and Beaton. The contemporaries David Sims, Craig McDean, and Willy Vanderperre decompose and deconstruct that studio, while Nick Knight rips it apart in the literal sense of the term.

I have spent many hours beside a photographer in a studio. Sometimes respectfully at a distance, spying on Horst P. Horst or Steven Meisel as they worked their magic, unable to utter a word unless they spoke to me. At other times, amicably opening polaroids to see a preview of the photo and discuss what was to be done. More recently, sitting in front of a screen with a group of technicians and maybe a photographer duo, listening to various viewpoints and suggestions.

Fashion photography finds its best observation point in the studio to identify changes in the meanings and obsessions of fashion. The studio is the fashion psychoanalyst's couch, and my biggest regret is never having worked with Richard Avedon, perhaps the finest fashion photographer to date. In the studio, a photographer also becomes the art director of their own work, creating the layout and suggesting how the photos should appear in the magazine or advertising campaign.

ON LOCATION

One of the false myths of outdoor photography is its spontaneity and immediacy. I think that a fashion photo shot on location requires even more concentration than a studio production. The clarity of the photographer's vision and his or her team has to be monolithic and obsessive because there are so many variables that cannot be completely controlled, such as light, weather, movement and setting. An outdoor fashion photo is never just the result of "chance," but rather the best possible variation of chance ritualised and tested, so that even error becomes programmed. Certain masters of the on-location shot may appear spontaneous, but always know what they want and pursue it time after time with an obsessive perseverance. Only in this way can they repeat the same photo hundreds of times on

command. I'm thinking of the photo by the street photographer Bill Cunningham that regularly appeared in the *New York Times* every winter, the one with the girl in the coat (every year a different girl, every year in a different coat) caught jumping a puddle on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street. Or I think of the model walking in the crowd, heedless of the traffic, in photos by William Klein, Peter Lindbergh, or Inez and Vinoodh. Capturing the fleeting moment, as in some beautiful images by Gordon Parks, requires an absolute mastery of the medium. It is no coincidence that on-location photos started to appear regularly in magazines only when the technological evolution of the photographic medium offered new possibilities. Shutter speeds were even faster and film was increasingly sensitive: a new instrument of control in the service of the photographer's vision. With the advent of digital photography, the possibility of photographing in any condition and correcting any error has impelled a new generation to try to recreate that programmed error by returning to the use of film and the negative with surprising effects, as in Jamie Hawkesworth's work.

CASTING

When does the choice of subject define a fashion photograph? When does it pass from the anonymity of beautiful models to the recognisable face, to the cult of personality? When did the celebrities of our time arrive? Diana Vreeland certainly influenced the definition of the "fashionable model," and codified the idea of beauty linked to the current moment. We also should not forget, in the Sixties, the revolutionary courage of the photographers of the Paris Mob and the London Mod groups. To me, growing up in the golden age of the fashion system, the decade of sex, money and power, where supermodels dominated not only magazine covers and advertisements but the whole imagery of fashion, the London underground publishing scene of the 1980s changed the rules of the game. Kate Moss in photos by Corinne Day and punk youth portrayed by Nick Knight in *The Face* or *i-D Magazine* redefined the fashion photo. These and other photo shoots of the period paved the way for a new method of presenting fashion: on people chosen

for their style and imperfections, rather than a conventional ideal of beauty. This concept of innovative and inclusive casting has never left us, and today it is a fundamental factor in the way fashion photos are taken. It is no coincidence that when I assign a fashion shoot to the young photographer Ethan James Green, whom I admire immensely, it always starts with casting, and genderfluid models have become an integral part of his aesthetic.

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STYLING

The figure of the stylist deserves to be studied in depth, not just in relation to fashion photography but the fashion system as a whole, because this new role has changed the way of presenting, distributing and selling fashion. For years, the unified vision of the fashion designer dominated every aspect of the presentation of a collection on the runway, in the stores, and in communication. The designer collaborated with the photographer on the advertising campaign and the fashion editors reported or interpreted the designer's diktat with slight variations. Some magazines, in particular *Elle France*, began to mix designers and products to recount a lifestyle. The stylist goes much further, and replaces the designer to establish his or her own style and way of photographing fashion, mixing clothes of one brand with others, choosing the type of model and style of photography. The collaboration of stylist and photographer, who are often joined by a team of make-up artists, hair stylists, and casting director, creates this type of fashion photo. I remember the surprise and seduction that I felt looking at the work by Ray Petri for *The Face*, where he presented for the first time the aesthetic universe of Buffalo, fashion without a designer but created by the sensibility and taste of a stylist. Ray Petri, like Carine Roitfeld or Camilla Nickerson, some of the most revolutionary and influential stylists, were the living expression of the images of fashion they created, starting by being a part of it themselves. Through styling, fashion photography opens out to a multiplicity of personal interpretations, offering infinite combinations of clothes, faces, attitudes, and models.

STYLE

I wonder if in this very subjective selection of mine, innovation and experimentation have received more recognition than consistency of style and rigour of execution. I remember how irritated I was when I worked with Barry McKinley, who wanted to use only the light of sunset, or my terror of Deborah Turbeville, who refused to take photos on sunny days. Pursuing a photographic style and perfecting it through daily practice requires discipline and complete fidelity to self-imposed rules. Something that is lacking in our world today, with its passion for speed and novelty.

Certain images by Peter Lindbergh or Paolo Roversi do not surprise me, but they never tire me either, because they have the purity of something perfectly successful, unmoving in time yet open to new interpretations. Just like the photos by Bruce Weber, whose simplicity conceals the most complex production and thousands of hours of tedious effort, and for this reason I never cease to love them.

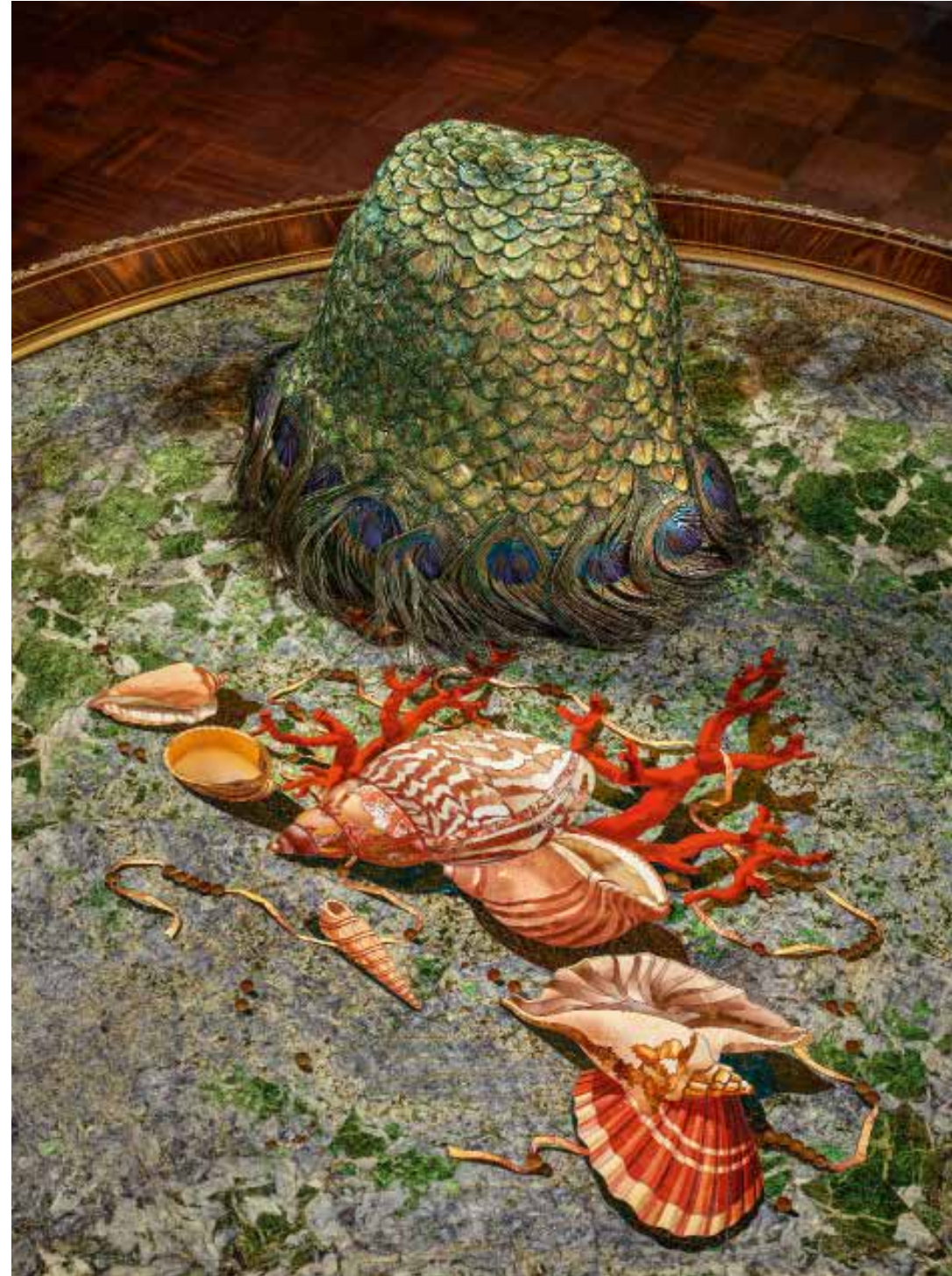
The persistence of a unique vision, achieved by a deliberately imperfect and superficially amateur technique, makes Juergen Teller's long portfolios the prototype of fashion photography entering the art world. I'm not speaking of decorative art, which fashion and fashion photography have long flirted with. Rather I mean the world of contemporary art, where the image not only expresses what appears on the surface, but elicits more profound concepts and reflections.

Walking the fine line that separates art from fashion, a new cosmopolitan generation is changing fashion photography by following the evolution of fashion itself, from the discipline of the decorative arts to conceptual art territory.

IN THE MUSEUM.
PHOTOGRAPHS
BY COPPI BARBIERI

IV .

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A selection of contemporary fashion garments and accessories, each chosen for its significance, each with many interpretations. The rooms of a Milanese building where a 19th-century gentleman, following his passions, assembled a varied collection of precious art and common objects. Twenty-four hours available.

These are some of the specific elements of this project. Still-life photography and the use of mannequins together with that of an abstract body are not only preferable but also necessary choices.

A recurrent image is our guide: the catalogue of another exhibition, many years ago in Florence, on Gabriele d'Annunzio's wardrobe, in which the close-ups and almost clinical definition of each garment offset the romanticism and literature of those garments worn by the Poet.

The photographs by Coppi Barbieri – a name that conceals the couple Lucilla Barbieri and Fabrizio Coppi – are minimalist and precise, the digital technology applied correctly, the colours vivid and hyper-real, with the same gloss and brightness as an image on a monitor screen. They are the perfect antidote to the excess of romanticism and the light and shade of a museum-home where the ghosts of people are said to visit their portraits at night. But their goal is distant yet complicit. To create juxtapositions and contrasts between fashion and places, details and objects. surfaces and fabrics.

In the photos I want the modernity of the clothes and their meanings to play with the history of this building and its collections. Nothing is what it seems: logos become emblems. Not a statue, but an evening dress.

Stefano Tonchi

Working Notes

Carolina Davalli

PRADA

**S/S 2005. Headdress with peacock feathers.
Prada archive**

- In this collection Miuccia Prada sought to move towards a sportier but still sophisticated fashion.
- The inspiration began with 'a vague idea of birds, the vanity of birds, like peacocks, parrots and swans.'
- The collection was so rich in details and visual references that it unsettled the public, but at the same time made it one of most vivid in the brand's history.



PRADA

**S/S 2008. Skirt with "fairy" print by artist James Jean.
Silk.**

Prada archive

- James Jean's designs reproduce floral and fantasy patterns, as if the women on the runway were true fairies. The colours are acid and strong, wrenching the figures from the dimension of dream and bringing them into the contemporary world.
- The influences derive from fantasy aesthetics, Art-Nouveau and digital graphics; while the silhouettes allude to styles between the 1960s and late 70s.
- An aura of restlessness (created through the use of make-up and details such as striped socks) compensates for the stereotypical idea of the "fairy" and makes the woman a fairy-tale heroine of the digital age.



Studiolo
Cf. p. 69

KATHERINE CLARK

**2008. Necklace with floral motif. Bronze plated in gold,
pearls and fabric.**

Private collection, Venice

- Flowers hand-modelled in wax, then cast in bronze and gold plated.
- Complex techniques that follow one after the other, such as fashioning the flowers, making them bloom and freezing them in an exquisite but still evolving form.
- A piece made with the lost-wax technique for a friend. An object that seeks to celebrate female friendship.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 71

PRADA

F/W 2008–09. Light blue shirt, knitted collar and black lace dress with detachable basque. Cotton, silk and elastane.

Archive Prada

- The stylistic references reprise Prada in the nineties, minimal, simple but aesthetically powerful.

- The elements of transparency and the opaque fabrics with different overlapping collars make this collection the perfect example of Prada femininity, conveying strong allusions to uniforms and typically female roles turned into an aesthetic project.

- Allusions to bourgeois elegance, and creators of high fashion such as Balenciaga, but translated into Prada's typical "anti-pretty" vocabulary.

- For this collection Miuccia Prada was inspired by a piece of lace that lay in the studio, a texture that ended up taking over the whole collection.

- Fetish allusions and an underlying restlessness, as in every Prada fashion show, are elicited by the colour palette and aesthetic pastiche between bon ton and the eroticism of the allusions in the Prada fashion project.



Sala delle Archeologie
Cf. p. 72

COMME DES GARÇONS

S/S 1994. Hat with feathers.

Judith Clark Studio

- An example of "anti-fashion" fashion, like all Rei Kawakubo's collections.

- Eccentric, cacophonous, yet highly emotional and poetic. Always midway between visual art and fashion, her garments are performative, like this headdress that moves with its wearer's movements.

- This object was included by Cindy Sherman in her well-known photographic series from 1994: a cornerstone of a new type of fashion photography, evoking and alluding rather than objective and posed.



Sala dei Vetri Antichi di Murano
Cf. p. 75

PRADA

**Badge with metal logo. Saffiano leather.
Archive Prada**

- The badge in Prada collections is invariably reinterpreted in different ways.
- From being a card holder, it became a document holder, then a business card holder. As its function is renewed, there follows a review of the Prada logo.
- It is a democratic, highly visible unisex object, designed to be worn externally.
- The badge is an object that identifies: in this case, it indicates membership of an aesthetic universe.
- The badge is made from treated Saffiano leather, whose finish was designed by Mario Prada in 1913. The finish makes the leather extremely rigid and resistant to scratches, being also coated with wax to make it highly durable.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 76

GUCCI

**Cruise 2020; creative director Alessandro Michele. Dress with embroidery. Silk, wire and applications.
Gucci Historical Archive**

- A dress that alludes to the Roman peplum, with a large panel of embroidery in the middle depicting a uterus with flowers instead of ovaries.
- Set in the Capitoline Museums, the showing of the collection that included this dress was a journey between ancient pagan culture and issues highly relevant today, such as the female body and its meanings in relation to the construction of society and gender identity.
- The dress highlights the political discourse of the female body.
- 'Safeguarding the ability to think in images:' imagining the body, seeing it differently.
- Imagination as a political act.
- Images themselves that develop their implicit potential. The designer is a vehicle.
- Dress and body: visible/invisible; tamed/disobedient. The forms of the body constricted and remodelled, left free to express themselves, reproduced to create illusions and alternative visions of reality.
- The fact that the uterus is embroidered might epitomise the historical moment when this was the main occupation of women at home, their daily form of expression, but in this case taking the form of a political statement. (For instance, there is a piece of embroidery from 1800s into which a woman embroidered in detail the rape she had suffered, expressing her fragility and anger in a slow and contemplative action.)
- Embroidery represents an "activist" tradition, because it is considered a potentially subversive gesture.



Scalone Antico
Cf. p. 79

CHRISTIAN DIOR

S/S 2017; creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri. Dress and lingerie. Pleated soleil tulle and elastic straps. Christian Dior Heritage

- Tulle dress with elastic straps embroidered with the Christian Dior J'Adior script.
- The embroidered elastic strap is a technical feature, recalling the laces and elastic of sportswear.
- J'Adior: this is a tribute to John Galliano's J'Adore Dior, updated with Chiuri's contemporary vocabulary. The crisis of J'Adore and Dior – J'Adior – represents the speed at which information and images are consumed in the contemporary world.
- This dress comes from the collection that marked Chiuri's debut as creative director at Christian Dior, the first woman to take on this role in the fashion house. References to the universe of sport – in particular fencing – reinterpret the codes of femininity automatically associated with the brand, turning the collection into a statement about contemporary forms of feminism. A collection that has as its manifesto "We Should All Be Feminists," a saying of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's that became a generational banner on T-shirts.



Salone Dorato
Cf. p. 81

GIAMBATTISTA VALLI

2010. Two-piece dress made for the wedding of Charlotte Olympia Dellal. Tulle and silk satin. Charlotte Olympia Dellal



- The wedding dress was designed for Charlotte Dellal: a one-off creation for the person for whom it is made. An exact project: a contemporary couture dress that revives the rules written in the last century.
- The dress is a tulle ballgown with a train and draped neckline.
- The bond between the couturier and his client is expressed through the dress, as the common ground between idea and desire. Dellal worked for Valli, and is a close friend of his.
- Giambattista Valli founded his brand in 2005; in 2011 he showed his first haute couture collection and he was entered as an official member of the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture. He is a couturier (French tradition) and also a designer (Italian tradition).
- The stylistic traits of his garments are layering, the stratification of materials to manipulate the proportions of the body and obtain a dramatic and spectacular effect (influences probably absorbed during his apprenticeship under Roberto Capucci).

Scalone Antico
Cf. pp. 82-83

MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA

S/S 1997. Shaped jacket. Linen.
Private collection, Venice

- Reproducing the mannequin recalls certain artistic experiments, especially by de Chirico. Margiela claims the metaphysical feature of fashion.
- This is an alternative, a shift in perspective. A contrary, cyclical process, starting from the mannequin and returning to the finished product.
- The lettering 'Semi Couture' is printed at the bottom of the jacket as the title of the whole collection, recalling how many anonymous hands lie behind the creation of fashion.
- Linen, the raw material par excellence, becomes the protagonist of this collection, defining a new type of conscious and proactive fashion that reflects on the process and the project, on the link between the body and the construction of the dress, and not on ornament (which is subsequent).
- For the S/S 1997 collection, Martin Margiela focused on the discourse of the body and the "making" of fashion, by parading raw linen garments (reminiscent of the calico covering dressmakers' mannequins).
- Margiela works on the idea of deconstruction, in this case she deconstructs the idea of fashion and brings it back to an act of design, a mental work that immediately confronts the physical world.



Sala d'Armi
Cf. p. 85

MARIA SOLE FERRAGAMO

2016. Laser-cut accessory. Recycled leather and magnets.
Maria Sole Ferragamo, SO-LE Studio

- An architecture to be worn; this gem is extremely versatile, becoming a mask, shawl or hat.
- The leather is reclaimed tannery waste. The magnets give it mobility and dynamism, so that it can be manipulated at will.
- The object is apt and customisable. It is also apt in the sense of right for the planet (in terms of productive and aesthetic sustainability).
- Maria Sole Ferragamo gained a degree in architecture and attended a Master's course in Jewellery Design. Her practice combines both disciplines, testing their limits and applying the techniques of the one to the design of the other.



Salone Dorato
Cf. p. 87

MARCO DE VINCENZO

S/S 2015. Fringed checked top and skirt. Silk.
Marco de Vincenzo

- The silk fringed suit is a garment built on the basis of repetition.
- Marco De Vincenzo's primary urge was to manipulate fabrics in such a way as to amaze and make them something for which they were not initially designed.

- 'I have often been called an Italian with an English spirit, because it does not always turn out to be in good taste. The power of certain garments lies precisely in moving on a subtle boundary [...] It is right to propose an aesthetic in which people can recognise themselves: we have to take risks!'



Sala del Settecento Veneto
Cf. p. 88

GIORGIO ARMANI

S/S 1994. Long embroidered dress. Linen, silk and beaded applications.
Armani/Silos

- Regal and remote atmospheres are evoked by this dress from the S/S 1994 collection. The austere cut, given by the long fitted sleeves and long, flared trapezoid skirt, is offset by the rich embroidery with a floral design, covering it with shimmering bouquets arranged in bands, alternating with motifs with a Greek and Arabic touch.
- An ancient beauty underscored by the colour, a very fine pearl grey, inspired by the dust motes that cling to the skin after a tour of the ruins of the temples of Palmyra, the Syrian city known as the 'bride of the desert.'
- Imagining historical, archaeological figures through purely fanciful references.



Salone Dorato
Cf. p. 91

CHRISTIAN DIOR

Haute Couture, F/W 2019–20; creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri. Draped dress with braided belt. Silk and black jet beads.

Christian Dior Heritage

- The white draped dress features Bernard Rudofsky's question 'Are clothes modern?' hand-embroidered in black jet beads on the bodice.
- 'Are clothes modern?' was the title of the exhibition curated by Rudofsky himself at the MoMA, New York, in 1944. The exhibition questioned the relationship between people and their clothes in the contemporary era. It displayed garments in which the cuts in the fabric were minimal, looking above all at clothing traditions other than contemporary Western fashion (focused on a "violent" and contrived tailoring, made up of complicated and constricting cuts and constructions).
- The draped dress embodies the concepts expressed in the exhibition: comfort, functionality and intelligence in dressing.
- Chiuri's discourse reflects on the role of the female body in fashion design. It is a gesture of liberation, working with allusions to classical models (caryatids).
- The white tunic as a white canvas.
- The dress opened the show. It is a contemporary interpretation of caryatids – archaic female figures that support the weight of the world – draped in their peplums as perfect and austere as this white dress, the only one that Chiuri inserted into a collection exploring the many-sided power of black.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 93

BURBERRY

F/W 2019–20; creative director Riccardo Tisci. Trench coat. Cotton and wool gabardine. Burberry

- A trench coat that turns into a blanket with the TB logo, a soft and amorphous cape.
- The overload of the new Burberry logo, designed by Tisci, is the most visible demonstration of the brand's heritage. Taking the past, or even inventing it, to revive it in the present.
- 'Tempest' is the name of this collection that marks the beginning of Riccardo Tisci's project for Burberry: a reflection on England's inner conflicts and unstable climate, yet releasing a tendentially positive sense.
- The collection takes references from all the cultural spheres that define English culture, from polo-shirted hooligans to more formal bon ton.
- The silhouettes, precise on one side and unexpectedly deconstructed in some features, express a new type of English identity, a globalised image composed of infinite cultural influences, yet unified and linked by a strong common identity.



Sala degli Stucchi
Cf. p. 94

FENDI

F/W 2019–20; creative director Silvia Venturini. Male fur inlaid with logo. Brown and beige mink.

Fendi

- Fur coat covered with the FF logo devised by Karl Lagerfeld between, which becomes FL. The fur is treated as if it were a real fabric, and the logo becomes an inlaid graphic motif repeated over its whole surface.
- The logo becomes an emblem: a transfigured but always recognisable symbol, the bearer of the brand's values.
- Karl Lagerfeld began designing with Fendi in 1965, with a collection of "modern" furs, which he named 'fun fur' – hence the idea of developing a double F logo. This particular logo seems to almost entwine an F and an L, so fusing the bond between the creator and the brand.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 97

MOSCHINO

Early nineties. "Chanel" dress with contrasting profiles. Blue and black denim.

Private collection, Venice

- A denim dress that reprises the construction of the Chanel suit jacket.
- Chanel's historical jacket is here made contemporary by the choice of fabric, jeans, not at all refined compared to the wool and tweed originally used.
- The copy that is never an offprint of the original, but a new interpretation, questioning the authenticity of the original itself.
- Franco Moschino's irony in taking references and making them a part of his own vocabulary, muddying them through materials and structural modifications to the original model.



Salone Dorato
Cf. p. 99

PRADA

F/W 2007–08. Business suit. Wool, mohair, leather.
Prada archive

- Excess of texture/idea of maximalism. The different materials tell multiple stories.
- 'Simple but strange' is the stylistic code and inspiration for the different textures of this collection.
- A speaking collection: 'This is all fashion – processed better through the eyes than words' Miuccia Prada.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 101

GIORGIO ARMANI

Early nineties. Male suit consisting of a double-breasted jacket, trousers with central crease and striped shirt. Cool wool, viscose and cotton.
Private collection, Venice



- This suit speaks of a softer masculinity and a "new" body.
- "Unstructured jacket": a jacket without internal structures that follows the movements of the body. The unstructured jacket leads directly to a complex reflection on the male gender, questioning its fixity and stereotyping.
- Armani is able to make men's clothing "sensuous" – in direct dialogue with the skin – impelling men to take pleasure in wearing what was always considered their "uniform," which identified their role and gender in society.
- In 1980, Armani designed Richard Gere's garments in the film *American Gigolo*. It became the manifesto of a masculinity confident of its sensuousness and erotic energy. The experiments proceeded during the eighties, but it was the collections of the early nineties that made explicit Armani's approach to the gender discourse.
- The Armani jacket is an invention of industrial intelligence, the symbol of an Italian approach that finds the most appropriate solutions in technology and manufacturing to dress men's and women's new social identities.

Sala del Palma
Cf. p. 102

YUJIE DING

2020. 'Mochi' hat – Ushanka hat. Fur felt.
Yujie Ding

- In 2015, a friend of Yujie's, Mochi Liu, gave her a form used for creating the ushanka hat, of Russian origin, before she left for New York.
- This was the first hat shape she owned. The 'Mochi' collection has become one of the designer's most significant collections, speaking of unforgettable memories, personal ties and budding dreams.



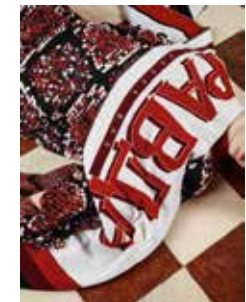
- In China, the ushanka hat is known as the one worn by Lei Feng, soldier and icon of Chinese Communism. The pictures of him wearing this headgear mean it is inextricably bound up with his image.

Sala dei Vetri Antichi di Murano
Cf. p. 103

MSGM

F/W 2018–19. Sweater and skirt with ogival pattern and scarf with logo of the Pravda Vodka Bar in Milan. Wool and acrylic.
MSGM archive

- The most striking feature of the collection is the use of the logos of some iconic Milanese bars on the scarves. They're almost football-style scarves, just as the sweatshirts are reminiscent of the strips of some soccer teams.
- The name of the place as the equivalent of the atmosphere of the place.
- MSGM's style grows out of the culture of Milanese streetwear, through an aesthetic based on the mix-and-match of classic garments with those typical of club culture and the urban scene.
- Drawing inspiration from the visual culture of Milanese nightlife, hangouts become symbols as a way of asserting one's belonging and identity.
- The Pravda Vodka Bar (opened in 2007) quickly became a symbol of the new 'Milano da bere,' which Massimo Giorgetti references in this collection.



Vestibolo primo piano
Cf. p. 105

GUCCI

1970s. Tunic with dolphin pattern. Linen.
Gucci Historical Archive

- Long tunic with a variation of the Gucci logo, with sea creatures entwined with the stylised letter G, the brand's logo and symbol.
- There have been many variations on the Gucci logo from the seventies on. The code of the brand is the continuous changes and graphic experiments that use the G as a fixed point, modifying, transfiguring it.
- The logo that becomes a blazon, the blazon transformed into an emblem.
- The letter linked to animals suggests heraldry, an ancient but indefinite time in the realms of the fantastic.



Sala delle Porcellane
Cf. p. 106

LOEWE

Capsule Collection, 2018; creative director Jonathan Anderson. Men's suit consisting of a long knitted woollen poncho with embroideries with patterns from tiles, embroidered hat, knitted rug and gloves.
Loewe

- The logo of the Loewe fashion house merged with the illustrations of William De Morgan, English illustrator, ceramist and writer, an exponent of the Arts and Crafts movement, who made decorative arts his principal field of expression and reflection.
- The ceramics: fixed, durable and water-repellent, they are juxtaposed with the fabrics, which are mobile and in some ways precarious. The decorative project is interpreted in materials with different souls and natures.
- De Morgan's creatures and his fantastic illustrations give life to a new and versatile imagery, plausible yet incredible. The patterns are made visible through the artistic medium and transfigured through the technology of knitting.



Sala dei Lombardi
Cf. p. 107

BALENCIAGA

F/W 2017–18; creative director Demna Gvasalia. Men's suit comprising shirt, trousers and overcoat, with large padded and printed scarf. Wool, cotton, jacquard silk and polyester. Archives Balenciaga Paris

- The outfit is formal and "normal," and it's broken by the quilted scarf with the Balenciaga logo repurposed starting from the graphics used by Bernie Sanders for the 2016 presidential campaign.
- The project method uses copying and rewriting as creation techniques. The inspiration for this collection is archetypal clothing: that of CEOs, motorcyclists, contemporary politicians, making their work a comment on today's society.
- Visibility in modifying the recognisable code.



Galleria dei Ritratti
Cf. p. 109

MARNI

S/S 2018; creative director Francesco Risso. Panel dress with embroidery and asymmetrical skirt. Silk satin, linen, applications. Marni

- The silhouette reprises the lines typical of the Twenties: a slip dress with draped neckline and lowered waist. However, it denies the "rigidity" of the canon and becomes more deconstructed: a free and light reading of a historical period imagined and not experienced.
- Francesco Risso described the inspiration for this collection as the vision of 'two English gardens in Tim Burton style [...] with candies,' an interpretation alluding to the imaginary room in Willie Wonka's factory. A tale, a paradise where nature is reproduced in the form of candies and various sweets: the dimension of the fairy tale, the fable, which keeps the imagination vivid and does not impoverish the interpretation.
- The references to the silhouettes of the 1920s, deconstructed and remodelled, demonstrate Risso's knowledge of fashion history and his skill at adapting these features to modernity.



Studiolo
Cf. p. 110

BOBOUTIC

F/W 2018–19. "Ziggy Stardust" suit. Cotton, viscose and paper yarn.

Bobutic



- The suit reprises the silhouette of the iconic vinyl suit designed by Kansai Yamamoto for David Bowie's alter ego Ziggy Stardust. In this case the suit is not made out of vinyl but knitwear, with yarns that allow for the same play of volumes, in particular the fullness of the legs, and of light, since it also uses glossy, brightly coloured yarns.

- The suit is sleeveless.
- The infinite possibility of multiplicity of characters and personalities is expressed in the form the garment adopts, changing depending on the wearer and taking on different shapes for aesthetic effect.

Sala Visconti Venosta
Cf. p. 112

FAUSTO PUGLISI

F/W 2014–15. Suit consisting of shirt and skirt. Silk twill shirt with harlequin pattern, woollen crepe skirt with inlays referencing the Ballets Russes with metallic embroidery and Swarovski crystals.

Fausto Puglisi

- The silhouette fully expresses Fausto Puglisi's style: the liveliness of the geometric lines; strong colours on a pitch black ground. These are the dichotomies present in the designer's whole aesthetic.

- Popular stories. Devising stories that are quick and easy to understand. Levels of interpretation that multiply, and speak to people differently. Recounting places through fashion, with the freedom that fashion allows.

- Since 2010 the Sicilian designer Fausto Puglisi has been creating formal and hyper-tailored garments for women, whom he sees as strong and bold.

- His visual references start from classical culture and then move on to Baroque.

- Narratives about his homeland, Sicily, are also a fundamental part of his aesthetic and poetic as a designer.



Studiolo
Cf. p. 113

ARTHUR ARBESSER

F/W 2017–18. Long-sleeved top and skirt printed with "pixel" motif. Polyester and Elastan.

Arthur Arbesser

- Knitted top with graphic patterns, skirt printed with graphic pattern evoking pixels.
- Strident colours, repetitive and hypnotic graphic pattern. Continuous repetition, interlocking of clean geometric lines.
- Superimposition of graphics and colours/accumulation/visual intermittence.
- This collection was inspired by Wim Wenders' movie *Wings of Desire*.
- Unlike the film in black and white, the collection is an explosion of colours combined in daring ways.
- The graphic elements are repetitive and almost obsessive, creating a dynamism that the straight lines of the garments seek to contain.



Vestibolo
Cf. p. 115

GABRIELE COLANGELO

F/W 2018–19. Suit comprising turtleneck sweater, jacket and trousers. Gabardine wool, plonge nappa leather, cashmere.

Gabriele Colangelo

- The jacket is superimposed on what looks like part of a nappa leather trench coat, but here it is an integral part of the jacket and a distinctive element that creates overlapping proportions.
- It is as if multiple bodies could wear this garment, as if it were versatile and with hidden functions.
- Harmony that is not synonymous with symmetry.
- Colangelo plays with the proportions and constructional elements of garments, merging them into a patchwork of volumes and forms. 'Fabrics are what I love most, together with clear shapes, purity of volumes,' he has stated.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 116

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

Resort 2019; creative director Paul Andrew. Trench coat with the *gancini* (hook) motif. Silk and cotton.

Archivio Salvatore Ferragamo

- Trench coat printed with the *gancini* motif, embodying Ferragamo's essence, also made of craftsmanship and elegance.
- The *gancino* was devised as a metal clasp for Ferragamo handbags in 1958. It is said to have been inspired by the wrought-iron gate of Palazzo Spini Feroni in Florence. Soon it became the Italian brand's definitive logo. Even after the creation of the Salvatore Ferragamo signature-logo, it has remained the outstanding symbol of the brand.
- An icon associated with the Ferragamo brand and the aesthetic it represents, perfectly redesigned into a monogram logo by Paul Andrew.



Sala dei Lombardi
Cf. p. 117

FENDI

Baguette: Heavenly Spring S/S 1999; Hell's Winter F/W 1999–2000; Haute Summer S/S 2000; Fall in Fall 2000–01. Haute Summer: raffia, silk, snakeskin and silver applications. Fall in Fall: silk, velvet, tejus and golden applications. Heavenly Spring: multi-colour silk, snakeskin. Hell's Winter: velvet, silk, snakeskin and silver applications. Fabrics by Fondazione Arte della Seta Lisio.
Fendi

- The Baguette is considered one of the first "It Bags" – an object so iconic as to become magical.
- The idea for the Baguette grew out of the intention of creating a versatile and discreet bag, one that could be carried first of all under the arm (hence the name). The date was 1997: the Baguette had a simple shape yet one capable of taking the boldest decorative experiments on its surface.
- Being an icon, the Baguette transcends time and so questions the ephemeral time of fashion.
- Each season the Baguette is transformed and interpreted in different materials and decorations.
- It is an example of craftsmanship and know-how made reproducible, hence an object that fits perfectly into the Italian manufacturing tradition. It strengthens the canonical procedure for the production of a bag, especially from unconventional materials (such as wool, raffia, silk...).
- It is an object associated with popular culture, having been promoted by successful series such as *Sex and The City* and celebrities, often seen photographed with the baguette under their arms, making it an object of desire for the general public.



Sala Nera
Cf. p. 119

VERRSACE

S/S 2018; creative director Donatella Versace. Long dresses.
Metal mesh and elastic straps.
Versace



- Garments made of metal mesh consisting of small octagonal modules with four-pointed hooks on the back. Each module is joined to the next by links that attach to the hooks on the back.

- Homage by Donatella Versace to her brother Gianni Versace's most famous and innovative collections,

and to the supermodels that Versace himself made his muses and true icons in those years.

- Versace: a family history. The tribute multiplies the myth and brings it into our times.

Sala Nera
Cf. pp. 120-121

MONCLER GENIUS

F/W 2018-19. Braided sweatshirt jacket, T-shirt, panel skirt.
Padded technical fabric and cotton.
Moncler

- For the sixth edition of Moncler Genius, the designer Kei Ninomiya, a protégé of the founder and designer of Comme Des Garçons, Rei Kawakubo, presented a collection rich in fabric manipulation.

- This collection is totally noir, as the name suggests, and tests the manipulation of a multifaceted technique such as quilting. The quilted technical fabrics become the yarns with which to weave true garments, where every least movement marks transparencies and tensions on the object.



Sala d'Armi
Cf. p. 123

CHANEL

Pre-fall 2010: creative director Karl Lagerfeld. Suit consisting of jacket and skirt. Wool, sequins and metal chains.

Cecilia Matteucci Lavarini collection

- Jacket in wool and sequins with a cut recalling the Oriental tailoring tradition: side closure, structured raglan sleeve. The inspiration for the collection was the atmosphere of Shanghai, where it was presented at the pre-autumn 2010 shows.
- Although the atmosphere evoked is exotic, the codes of the Chanel jacket – bordered pockets, cuffs, finished hem and neckline – are all present.
- Chanel's suit, although practical, linear and informal, was haute couture. Lagerfeld democratized this style and made it accessible to a younger clientele.
- Karl Lagerfeld worked on the suit from the 1980s onwards, never removing it from his collections for Chanel, but producing a multiplication of invariably different copies.



Sala d'Armi
Cf. p. 125

GUCCI

Resort Arles 2019; creative director Alessandro Michele. Long dress with embroidery. Velvet, silk and raised applications. Gucci Historical Archive

- Velvet dress with large central embroidery panel depicting a rib cage encrusted with applications recreating jewellery, cockades, pearls and precious stones.
- Set in the necropolis of Alyscamps, in Arles, this collection was intended as a procession of 'widows who pass through burial places, children who pretend to be rock 'n' roll stars, ladies who are not ladies.'
- *Memento mori*: remember the inevitable future in the present.
- Overlapping and stripping away: the layers we wear cannot protect us.
- Familiar elements linked to "respectable" clothes, denied by the rich and decadent embroideries with an apotropaic value.



Scalone Antico
Cf. p. 127

VALENTINO

Haute Couture S/S 2019; creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli.
Long dress with full gathered sleeves. Lace, tulle and silk organza.

Valentino Archive

- A long, full dress in bright turquoise-coloured lace, enlivened by ruching adorning the collar.
- The lace creates a web of big flowers and leaves, giving glimpses of the skin.
- The garments in the collection are all named after flowers. The *hortus conclusus* of couture is peopled by fantastic women budding and blossoming on the runway.
- Technical expertise concealed to achieve an ethereal, light yet meticulously crafted result, concealing the effort and stirring wonder.
- The dress is a demonstration of Pierpaolo Piccioli's thinking about couture as a 'region of emotions:' a place where the uniqueness of the individual is weighted and heightened by the design of beauty.
- The interplay of different impulses comes to define Maison Valentino's approach to couture: sumptuousness and playfulness, hauteur and *sprezzatura*.



Galleria dei Ritratti
Cf. p. 128

SOPHIA KOKOSALAKI

S/S 2005. White dress, bias cut and draped. Silk.
Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation

- Dress inspired by the traditional Greek peplum, a female garment consisting of silk-jersey draped.
- The contemporary peplum is an object at the centre of a network of relationships that generates and influences it: the biography of the designer, the allusions to the history of ancient costume and recent fashion history.
- Sophia Kokosalaki was a Greek designer, and her origins were a central theme in the development of her creative vocabulary. Kokosalaki built true sculptures by using pleats, drapery, experimental modelling techniques and the manipulation of light, fluid fabrics.
- In addition to neoclassical creations (called 'Empire' and typical of the early 1800s), Rosa Genoni (who was inspired by Graeco-Roman costume for many of her creations), Madame Grès and Madeleine Vionnet were certainly three important references for Kokosalaki. The link with Vionnet was particularly strong, and Kokosalaki became creative director at the French brand from 2006 to 2007.
- The main technique used by Vionnet and taken up by Kokosalaki consisted in bias cutting the fabric (i.e. not following the weave of the fabric but cutting it obliquely) to attain greater fluidity and softness in the drape.

RANDOM IDENTITIES

F/W 2019–20. Men's suit. Wool and cotton.

Random Identities

- Tailoring is one of the foundations of Stefano Pilati's style and a distinctive feature of his Random Identities project.
- Tailoring techniques are taken to the height of their potential, creating clean, sharp silhouettes, yet completely revolutionary in terms of gender expression.
- Reflection on gender: a different masculinity, the male body aestheticised and the pleasure of dress enhanced.
- Since 2015, Stefano Pilati's Berlin-based brand Random Identities has sought to redefine gender perceptions, especially of masculinity.
- Oversized jackets, high waists, full trousers, mesh masks, chains and very high boots: these are formal garments that could last 12 hours in a club in Berlin, reinterpreted in the light of the high fashion experience.

NOTES ON THE INSTALLATION



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JUDITH CLARK

The inaugural exhibition at ModeMuseum, Antwerp entitled *Selection I, Backstage*, curated and designed by Bob Verhelst opened in 2002. The evocative title suggested, not only that there would, in the future, be more selections (and by implication that there was a huge collection to select from) but also that this was a moment of anticipation – of preparation – for whatever might be understood to be the *opposite* of backstage: a display, an exhibition.

I was invited to contribute to the catalogue that accompanied that exhibition *ModeMuseum. The Fashion Museum. Backstage* the title of which acknowledged the extended scope of a first exhibition and catalogue, and contained within it the ambitions of its brief. At the time I ran a gallery dedicated to exhibiting fashion in West London's Notting Hill. It was small (4 × 9 metre usable exhibition space and the same for storage downstairs), its main attribute was that it was the first gallery of its kind, and that it created exhibitions that felt like prototypes for larger museum shows, or what might have felt like a fragment of one. The 'Statement'¹ I sent to ModeMuseum acknowledged this parallel in the form of notes, carrying as its epigraph a quote from Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* and following it with 14 numbered questions and statements, that re-reading them today nearly twenty years later, are just as immediate and significant to me. The commission allowed me to start to articulate an attitude to my curatorial practice – for example, an allegiance to short form literature as a model for exhibition-making; or to the infinite games of classification; and the idiosyncrasies of selection, that Bob Verhelst acknowledged by numbering his.

Objects carry not only their explicit decorative references and histories, but also much more blurred (and to me interesting) affinities and memories. The title I took on as an exhibition-maker acknowledged the space around the object, not as an architect might (though I trained as one), but as the memory of previous storage, wear, or display. It was to corrupt the idea of a finite object. So working with exhibitions was about, what

1. J. Clark, in *ModeMuseum. The Fashion Museum. Backstage*, catalogue (Antwerp: ModeMuseum, 2002), 146–51.

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literary critic and poet Susan Stewart would call Nonsense, 'Nonsense [...] like its companion categories of Fate, Chance, Accident, Miscellaneous, and even Etc. [gives us] a place to store any mysterious gaps in our system of order;' in that it 'questions [...] the relationships between acts of classification and acts of transformation, relationships between the ways in which we organise, disorganise, and reorganise the world.'²

172 Maria Luisa Frisa invited me to design the display for this exhibition, *Memos* in Venice last year. The invitation comes from our friendship and collaboration that over 15 years has been organised around conversations about curating fashion and about how it might be taught, and our joint teaching sessions at IJAV where she is Director. *Pratiche Curatoriali della Moda*, the Unit she teaches is about curatorial practice that uses close reading of exhibition histories as a context from which to interrogate fashion further; fashionable dress and fashionable museologies. In 2012 those conversations were incorporated in *Diana Vreeland After Diana Vreeland* at the Museo Fortuny in Venice: Diana Vreeland as curator, and as representing an attitude to curating that changed the face of the discipline. We recovered not only elements of her iconic wardrobe, and individual garments she had displayed in her blockbuster exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute; but also recurring themes (for example the 18th Century; or early 20th century couture) and even colours, her love of dramatic props, and so on.

Memos is also haunted by the history of fashion display. It wonders what it might mean to recover not only an exhibition – of which there are now many wonderful examples – but also their ambitions. The exhibition of fashion that was staged at Museo Poldi Pezzoli in 1980 (*1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana. Proposta per un museo della moda a Milano*) was also a plea for a museum of Italian dress. Staged in the quintessential site associated with collecting great art, a site that is both domestic and institutional, the museum in the exhibition's

subtitle was about the future, the garments on display 'examples.'

Cecil Beaton had used his *Fashion Anthology* in 1971 as the beginning of a more intense period of collecting couture at the V&A, but the collection had already been established, and whilst fashion was a bad word at the museum at the time as we can read in the many Memos between director and staff, there was no suggestion of anything other than enlarging what was there, broadening its scope. The clashing design for the 1980 exhibition, that Gabriele Monti describes, brings the "commercial," right into the heart of the museum.

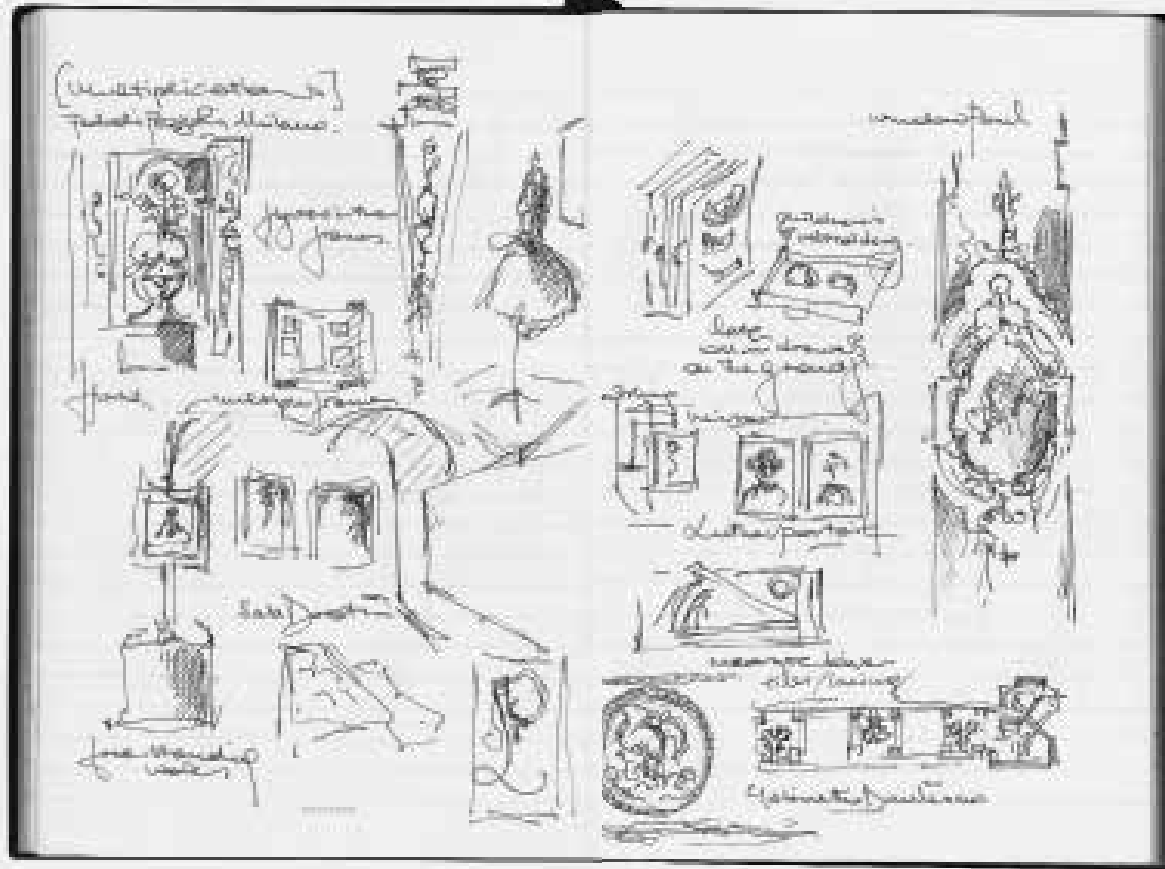
Maria Luisa Frisa's own research looks at Italian fashion's systems of design and production (as well as its critique and display of course in her own work). The historic exhibition poses, when re-examined forty years later, the question Calvino asked in his seminal Charles Eliot Norton lectures, of what values we might hold on to, what mechanisms of storytelling. What shapes and forms fashion's eloquence might take, and what kinds of re-description might be useful. My brief therefore was to acknowledge the historic exhibition whilst exhibiting the new, creating affinities with the museum collection that would resist over determining its themes.

My sketchbook double pages that follow represent a working out and working through some aspects of the brief. I have selected those pages that show: a visit to the museum in Milan in November 2019 (A); re-imagining the exhibition *1922–1943: Vent'anni di moda italiana* in 1980 for the new exhibition (B); doubling the spaces and ways of looking/seeing as well as the details (C); presenting fashion's attributes in 2020 (D).

2. S. Stewart, *Nonsense. Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978), vii.

I visited the museum last November to look at where the exhibition might be woven into such an extraordinary location. I realise looking at my sketches that I was looking for clues about display of course, but that each detail I was looking at looked at the idea of multiplication. Furniture details with figures inlaid in their margins, or carved into their legs – was that already a doubling when mannequins are brought into the space? Multiple frames under one plane of glass, creating a consensus in the way fashion curators work with their horizontal plinths; masterpieces on beautiful carved easels brought forward into the room as though the wall itself could not create sufficient emphasis; rows of drawers of lace, each with multiple fragments inside; a portrait set against a mirror, showing simultaneously the front and the back of the painted board, and in this case a portrait of life and death; the double portrait of Martin Luther and his wife Katharina von Bora; and perhaps two details that particularly struck me were the emblem-like painted initials that sit on top of the door frame to the ornate Gabinetto Dantesco, Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli's G.G.P.P. entwined; and a carved side window panel with incredible "nesting" frames.

The word nesting occurred to me as I was reading poet and literary critic Susan Stewart's literary *Play with Infinity*, which (like Calvino a couple of years later) guides us through the expanding patterns of repetition, quotation, circularity, serialisation, infinite causality and amongst them, "nesting." 'In folkloric terms, nesting is a phenomenon that can move "in" or "out" towards infinity [...] The possibility, if not the actuality,

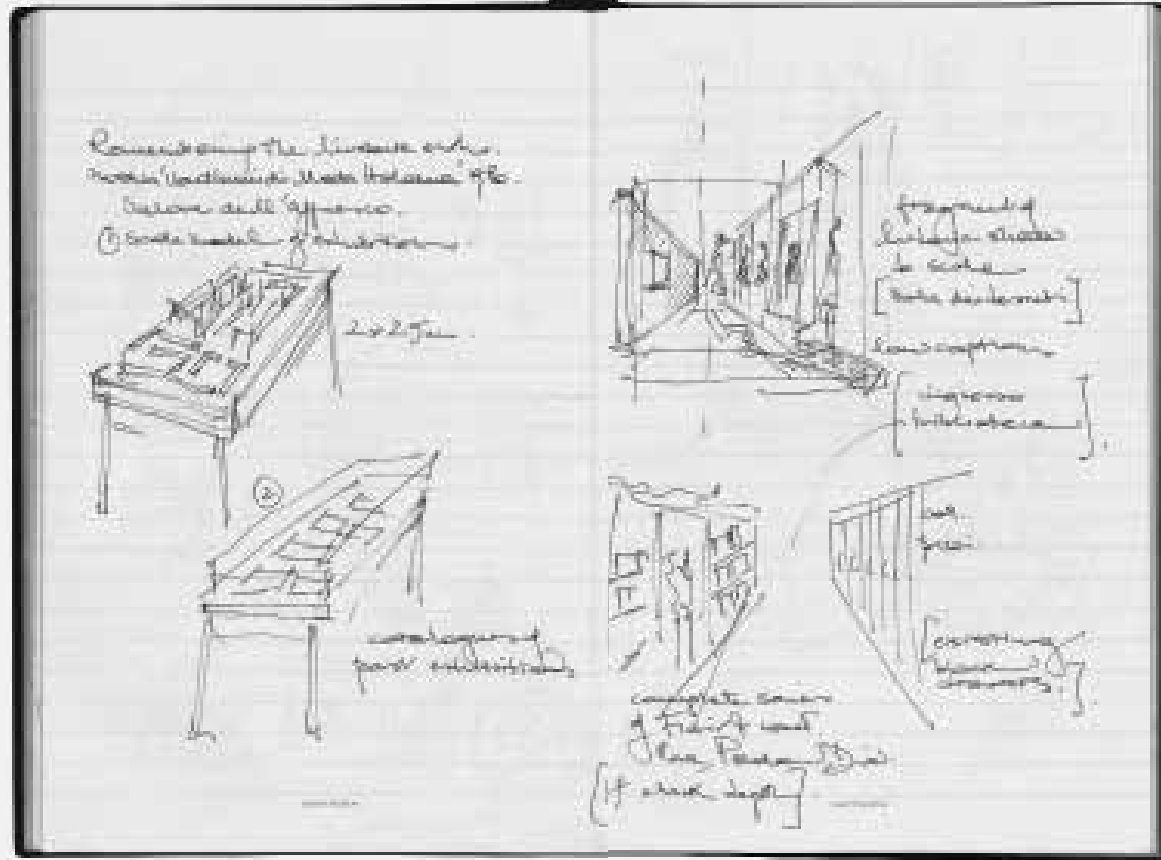


or infinity is thus presented. [...] Infinity becomes a possibility as soon as allusion turns reflexive: not just a text referring to itself and its own frame, but also a text exploring the nature of textuality.' I wonder whether the frames in the frames of the carved panel, where the lines become more than compositional, and carry, each time, the moulded attribute of a frame, was meaningful. I wonder how this works as the carved equivalent of those fictions that endlessly repeat themselves, like Stewart's example: 'It was a dark and stormy night, and the captain said to the crew, "Crew, tell me a story." And the crew said, "It was a dark and stormy night, and the captain said to the crew"...'

One of the questions the exhibition would raise, I knew, was how to incorporate the 1980 exhibition into the new one, how to use it as an intermediate frame between the museum and the new. And how the catalogue of works would have to "nest" within the permanent collection.

B. 1922–1943: *Vent'anni di moda italiana. Proposta per un museo della moda a Milano, 1980*

I knew the seminal exhibition had been studied in the fashion department at IUAV, and in a way it meant that I was using it to symbolise something: something of the history of our discipline in Italy that Maria Luisa Frisa actively recovers with her research projects; something about how one might recover an exhibition as a now fashionable act in itself; how it would be important that its record somehow would open the exhibition to reveal that this was not an exhibition about fashion *per se*, but about its systems and structures. The idea of infinite nesting was key. Whilst aesthetically so remote from the carved sumptuous window panel on the first floor of the museum, I wanted to present the idea of a place, situated in the same place – an architectural model which showed the historic exhibition installed in the very room the model would be displayed. The simplicity of the model and the cabinet holding past catalogues next to it as study tools. The conceptual context of the exhibition, the seminar rooms at IUAV, and the bibliographic exhibitions authored by the same department. The small room leading off the first room (la Sala Dei Tessuti), or *la stanzetta* as we called it could create another form of quotation, this time to scale 1:1. If we were able to recover the actual garments that were on display in 1980 the original rhythm could be given to the room, but built in my own idiom, lighter wood instead of the original metal, calico panels etc. The scale and rhythm of the layout provides the haunting, and remembers in turn the exhibition I designed at the Boijmans van Boiningen museum in 2008, informed explicitly by Harald Szeeman's 1988 *Ahistorical*



Notes on the Installation

Sounds exhibition that had been designed in the same space and itself was about the powerful resonance between objects in space. The room is multiplied by repetitions and allusions.

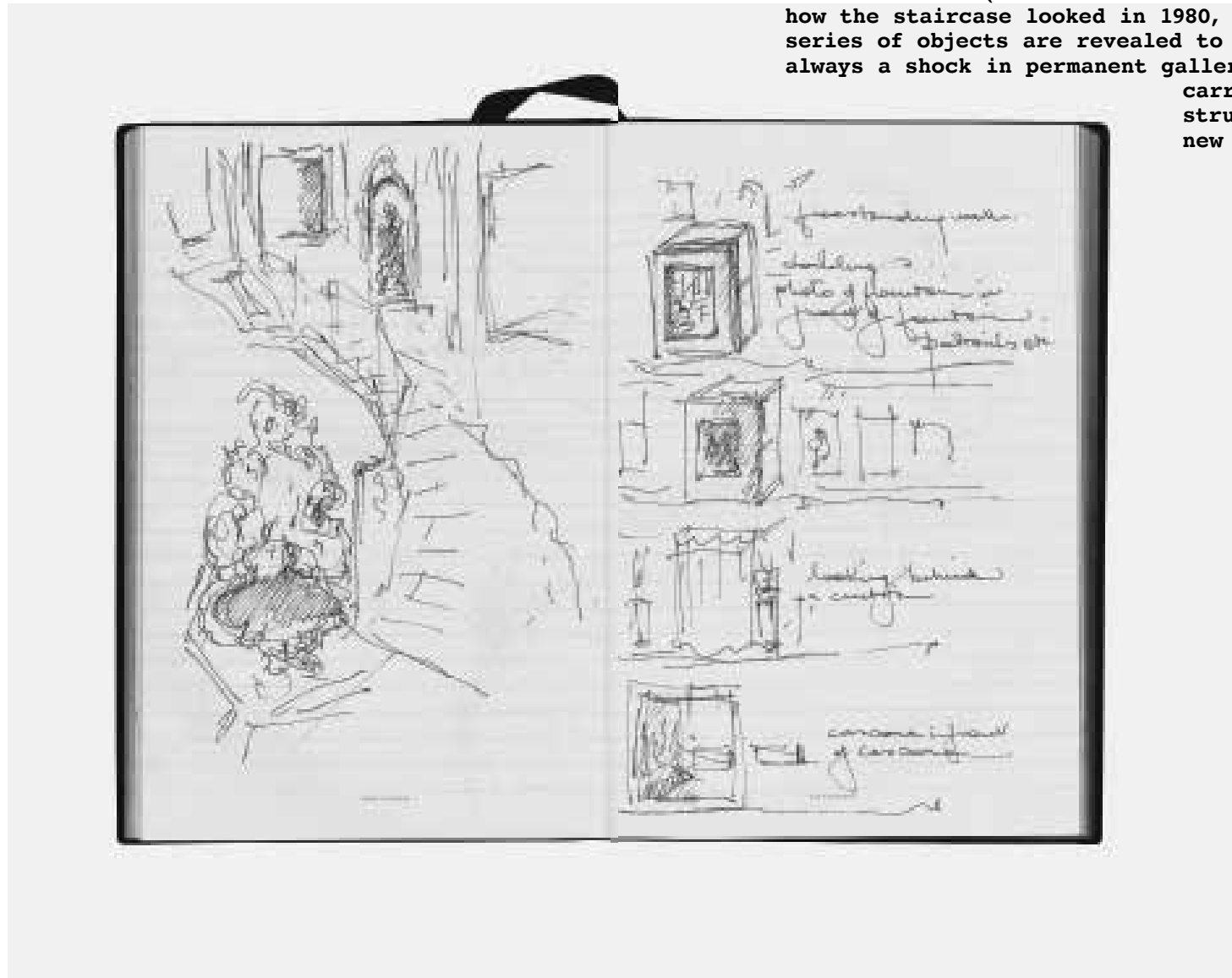
Flair Magazine, and I Pizzi The entire run of *Flair* magazine from the library could be exhibited opposite the Lace archive of vertical drawers. The exhibition in 1980 mixed together publications and garments stacked vertically and horizontally. When Professor Teal Triggs, spent time in the *Flair* archive, she found Cowles's notes on the magazine, she recorded: 'I wanted a magazine with ultimate dual reader appeal, male as well as female. And, in the framework (sic) of television's allure, I wanted a magazine of extraordinary visual excitement.' *Flair* achieved this with its unorthodox and experimental die-cut covers, unusual paper stock, tipped-in booklets, and luxurious use of space featuring illustration and photography. The original photographs in the collection show her sourcing

paper in Milan and capture her exuberance in creating a magazine that has 'a sense of surprise, a joy of discovery, with each new reading.' Lace always creates a double event, it contains and reveals, it creates startling new symbolism, and promises something else beneath it, like the exciting covers of *Flair* (or a Prada or Dior gown).

Judith Clark

C. Fashionable looking

The contemporary is about particular forms of selection. Like Calvino's six values. So the exhibition inevitably through its juxtapositions selects objects from the permanent collection to look at with contemporary eyes, to show how supposedly relevant one object or another might be to the fashion world. (New walls will carry photographs showing us how the staircase looked in 1980, for example, or where a series of objects are revealed to have been moved, itself always a shock in permanent galleries.) But what about simply carrying on the exhibition structure into rooms with no new objects in them?



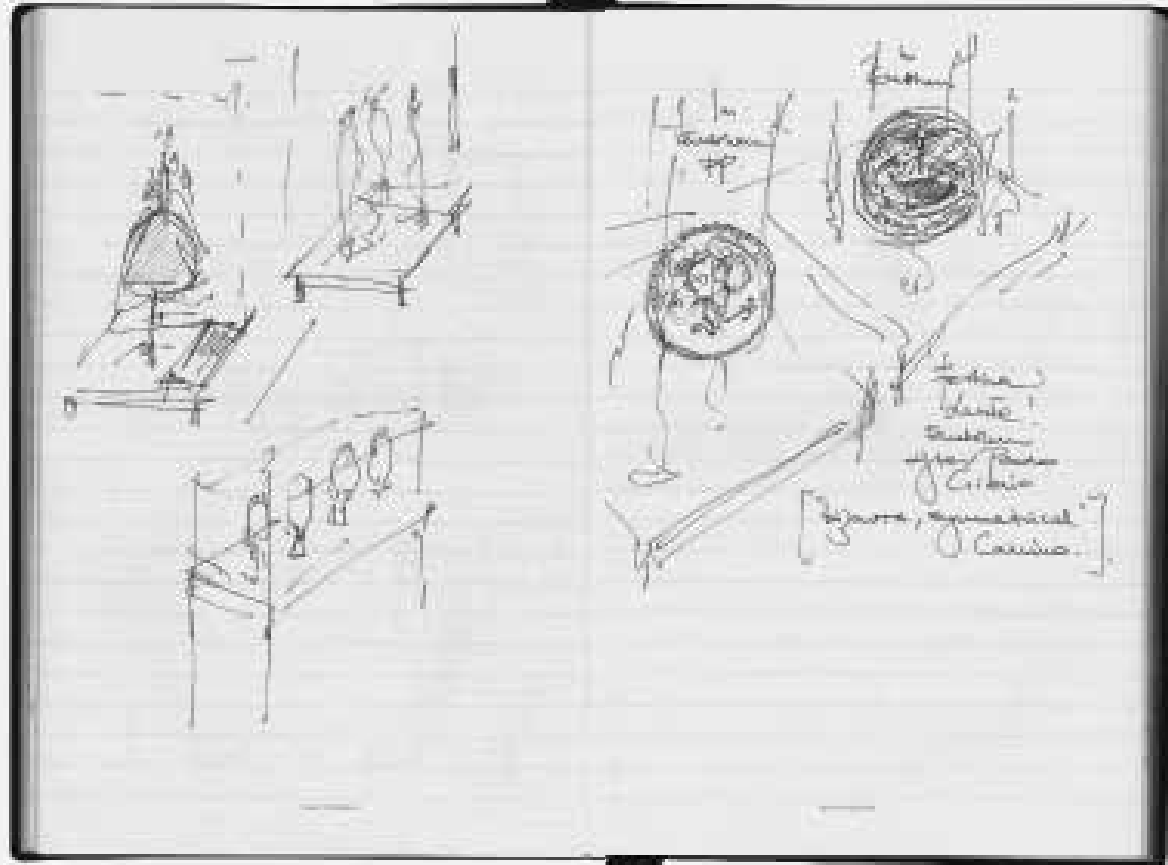
D. Fashion and The Emblems

The exhibition presents [38] garments installed within the museum, grouped across intersecting themes [Alessandro Malusà created 32 subthemes, from which 17 were chosen as new points of view within the museum, cf. pp. 182–5]. Two organising elements always emerge, that of structure (craft, couture, the rules of tailoring, the actual fitting to the body) and the “look,” the recognisability of fashion through the dissemination and multiplication of its signs and symbols.

The only empty room available in the museum could hold a further reflection on the new, in dialogue with itself perhaps (you need to recognise fashion to know it).

The efficiency of the logo reminds me of the efficiency of the emblem, and so I have derived two emblems to dominate the room. The first a reproduction of “GGPP,” Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli’s initials, the circular painted design that I took to be the house’s logo when I first visited it; and the second, one of the most recognisable 16th century emblems, “Festina Lente” (Make haste, slowly), Calvino’s favourite.

‘In my youth I chose as my motto the ancient Latin maxim *festina lente* – make haste slowly. Perhaps what attracted me even more than the words or the idea were its evocative emblems. You may recall the title pages of Aldus Manutius, the great Venetian humanist and publisher, on which the motto *festina lente* was symbolised by the dolphin snaking around the shank of an anchor. The elegant printer’s mark, [...] suggests the intensity and tenacity of intellectual labour. [...] I have always preferred emblems that, like a rebus, combine incongruous, enigmatic figures – such as the butterfly and the crab, which Paolo Giovio illustrated



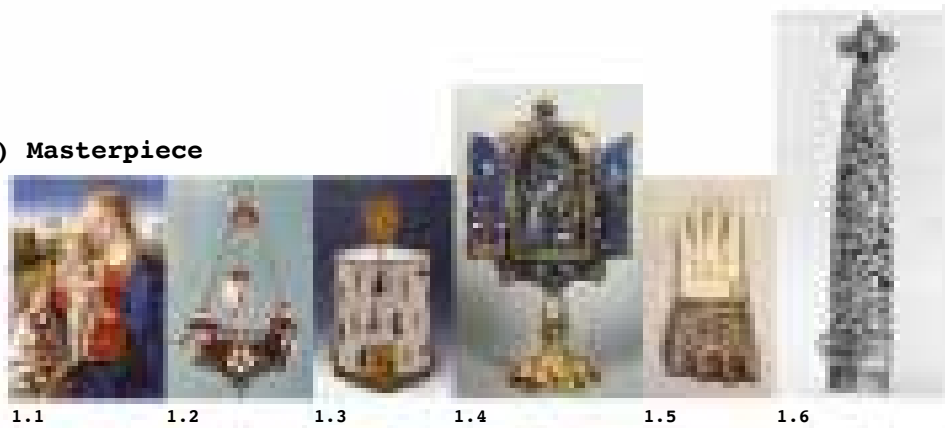
festina lente in his sixteenth-century collection of emblems: two animal shapes, both bizarre, both symmetrical, that creates between themselves unexpected harmony.’ Unexpected and unpredictable.

The Poldi Pezzoli Collection

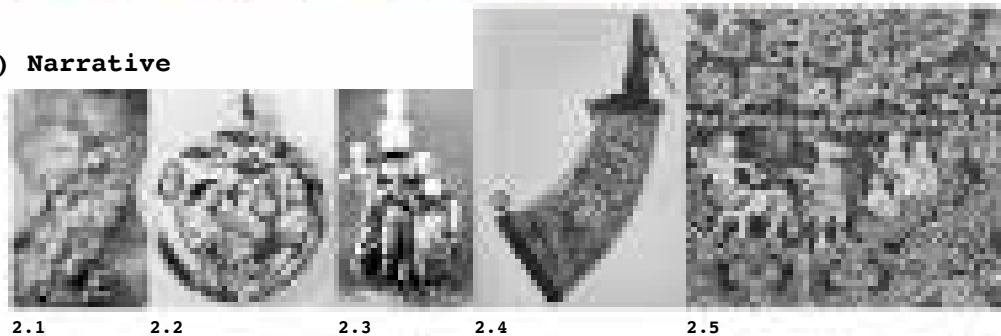
The beauty of researching a museographic collection lies in finding the unexpected, which – due to a variety of modern conventional criteria – is often restrained from display and public view. The collection of a museum like Milan's Poldi Pezzoli, whose breadth and diversity – similarly to the Wallace Collection in London or the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris – reflects the fervid and eclectic tastes of nineteenth-century collecting, requires a curiously free approach to avoid a decline into traditional categorisation. Museums are built upon strict pyramids of classification, organisation and archiving, and yet these rigorous formations are rarely broken up and reimagined on occasion of the new exhibitions that museums race to offer. Trained exclusively as a dress historian, my visual wander into the collections of the Poldi Pezzoli strived to solely rely upon my subconscious attraction towards everything sartorial in all art-forms. Whilst, this – seemingly liberal – re-envisioning of art could be linked to Aby Warburg's renowned methodologies and picture atlases, my approach to the Poldi Pezzoli, on occasion of the *Memos* exhibition, functioned upon the precept of reconsidering its collection via the semiotics and symbology of fashion – both historic and contemporary.

Alessandro Nicola Malusà

1) Masterpiece



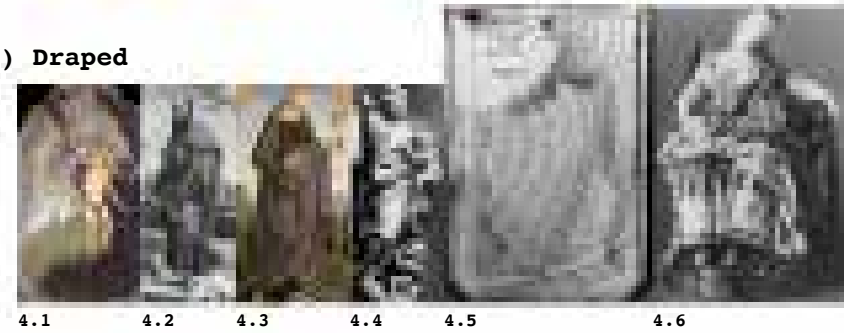
2) Narrative



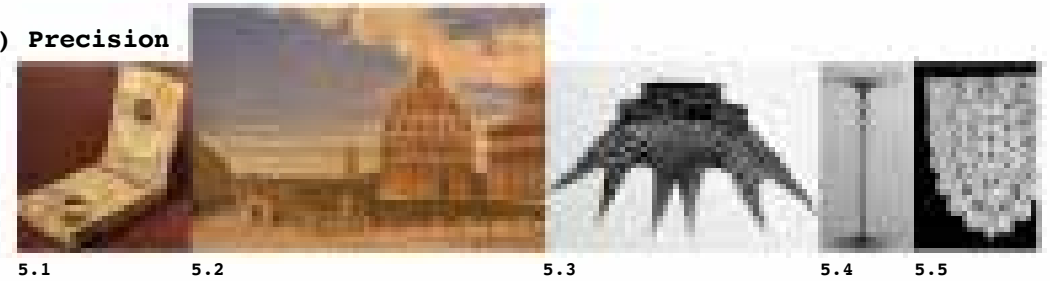
3) Vivid



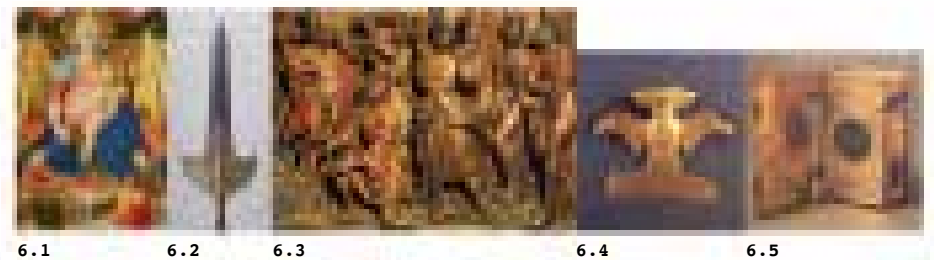
4) Draped



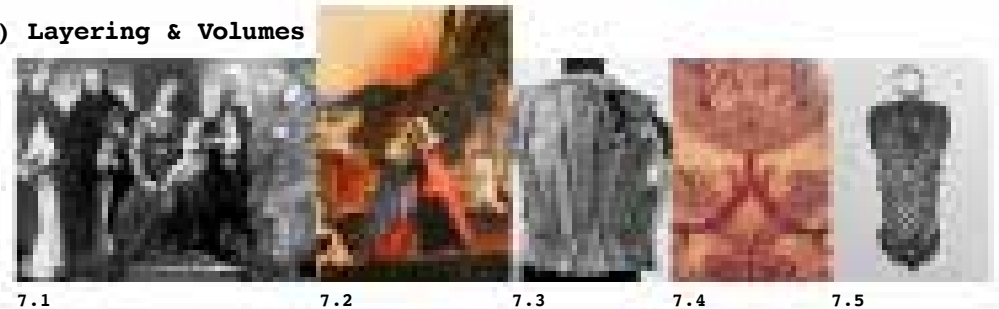
5) Precision



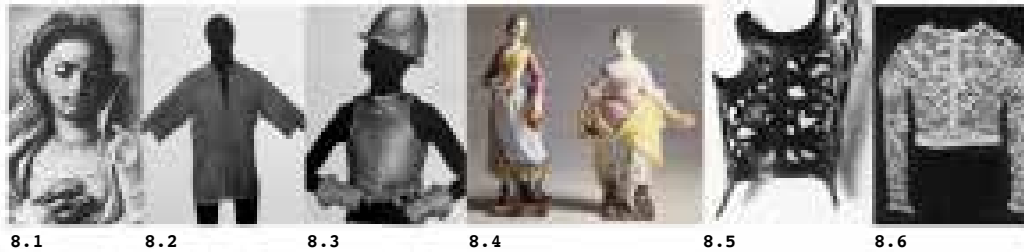
6) Shine



7) Layering & Volumes

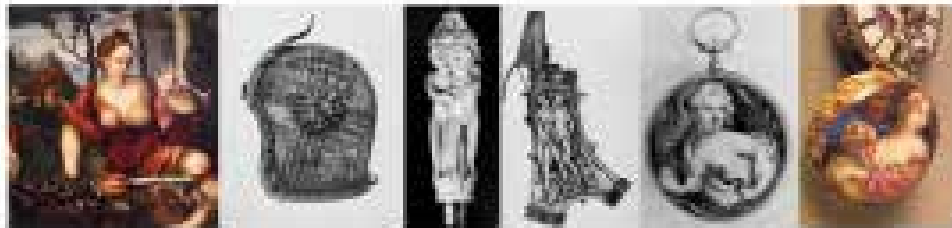


8) Tailoring—Sartorial



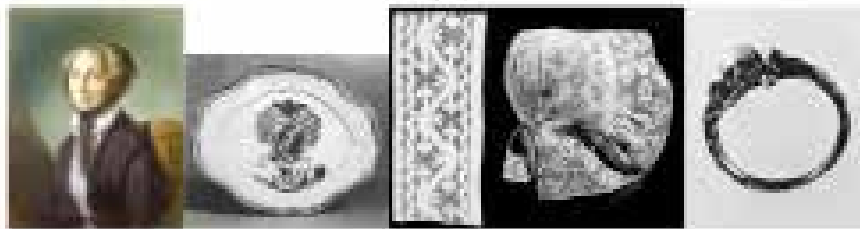
8.1 8.2 8.3 8.4 8.5 8.6

9) Seduction—Eroticism



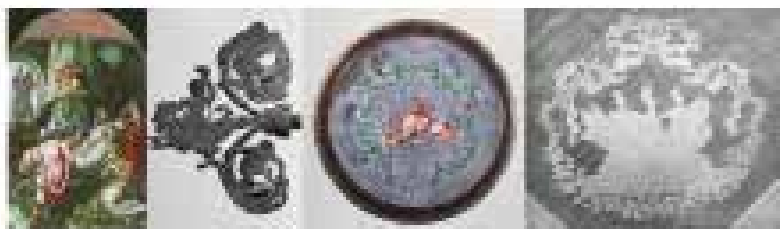
9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5 9.6

10) Humilitas



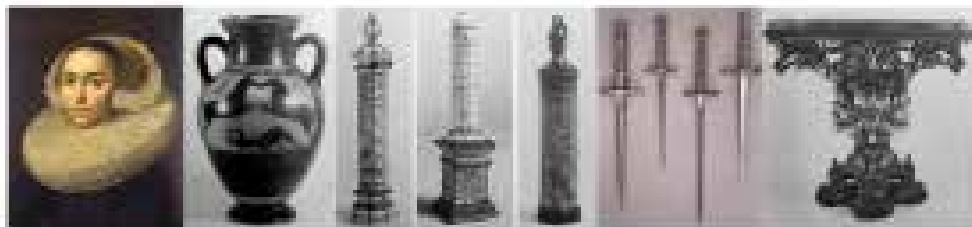
10.1 10.2 10.3 10.4 10.5

11) Liquidity—Marine



11.1 11.2 11.3 11.4

12) Symmetry—Equilibrium



12.1 12.2 12.3 12.4 12.5

1) Masterpiece

- 1.1 'Madonna con il bambino,' Biagio d'Antonio da Firenze, c. 1480, inv. 1578
- 1.2 Pendant, Venice, 16th century, inv. 691
- 1.3 Cist, Gio Ponti & Libero Andreotti, R. Ginori, 1927, inv. 3357
- 1.4 Rivolta d'Adda Reliquary, Lombardy, 15th century, inv. 541
- 1.5 Gloves, England or Flanders, c. 1630, inv. 1077
- 1.6 Schweizerdolch scabbard, Switzerland, c. 1570, inv. 2256

2) Narrative

- 2.1 'Apotheosis of Bartolomeo Colleoni,' Carlo Carloni Innocenzo, 1745, inv. 3268
- 2.2 Lovers, Meissen, 18th century, inv. 1024
- 2.3 Watch, David Bouquet, 1650, inv. 3446
- 2.4 Flask, Europe, 19th century (16th century forms), inv. 2150
- 2.5 Lace band, Germany, 18th century, inv. 3939

3) Vivid

- 3.1 'Enthroned Madonna,' Cristoforo Caselli, 1507-10, inv. 1589
- 3.2 Pitcher, Venetian art, 16th century, inv. 1269
- 3.3 Sword, Luristan (Iran), 12th-7th century BC, probably fake, inv. 3278
- 3.4 'Humility Madonna,' Veneto School, c. 1440, inv. 1552
- 3.5 Colleoni's armour, Milan (?), c. 1600-10, inv. 2192
- 3.6 'Saint Barbara' (Triptych), Mariotto Albertinelli, early 16th century, inv. 1116

4) Draped

- 4.1 'Saint Benedict,' Nicolò di Pietro, c. 1420, inv. 1573
- 4.2 'Saint Paul,' Bartolomeo Montagna, 1482, inv. 1605
- 4.3 'Artemisia,' Master of the Story of Griselda, c. 1498, inv. 1126
- 4.4 'Pietas,' Italy, 19th century, inv. 246
- 4.5 Sundial, Turin, 1925, inv. 4274

- 4.6 'Sleeping woman,' Meissen, end of 18th century, inv. 1027

5) Precision

- 5.1 'Campo dei Miracoli,' Emilio Cavenaghi, 19th century, inv. 262
- 5.2 Sundial, Hans Tucher, end of 16th century, inv. 3468
- 5.3 Collar, Italy, 1630-40, inv. 2516
- 5.4 Cup, Venetian, end of 19th century, inv. 1314
- 5.5 Fragment, Flanders, 1630-40, inv. 3788

6) Shine

- 6.1 'Humility Madonna,' Zanobi Strozzi, c. 1448-50, inv. 4744
- 6.2 Spontoon (half-pike), Magdeburg (Germany), 1629, inv. 1934
- 6.3 'Marriage of the Virgin,' Giovanni Antonio del Maino, 1496-1536, inv. 3274
- 6.4 Pendant, Pre-Columbian art, before 10th century, inv. 639
- 6.5 Watch, Southern Germany, 1595, inv. 3402

7) Layering & Volumes

- 7.1 'Madonna with Saints,' Gaudenzio Ferrari, 1520, inv. 1614
- 7.2 'The Visitation,' Antonio Pirri, 1480-1500, inv. 354
- 7.3 Brigandine, Italy (?), early 16th century, inv. 2342
- 7.4 Chasuble, Italy or Spain (?), 16th century, inv. 235
- 7.5 Corncob pendant, Italy, 17th century, inv. 723

8) Tailoring—Sartorial

- 8.1 'Vergine Annunciata,' copy after Francesco Solimena, c. 1720, inv. 3207
- 8.2 Chain mail shirt, Italy, c. 1540-60, inv. 2510
- 8.3 Corset, Milan, early 17th century, inv. 2044-1947
- 8.4 Laundress and peasant, Doccia, 1760-70, inv. 987-988
- 8.5 Bodice, Lombardy, c. 1560-80, inv. 2320

- 8.6 Blouse, Milan, early 20th century, inv. 3960

9) Seduction—Eroticism

- 9.1 'Allegory of vanity,' Giulio Campi, 1530-40, inv. 1543
- 9.2 Sallet, Northern Italy, 20th century (15th century forms), inv. 2560
- 9.3 Stylus, Veneto, 17th century, inv. 2255
- 9.4 Flask, Germany, c. 1580, inv. 2277
- 9.5 Watch, J.P. Kroese, 1750, inv. 3551
- 9.6 Watch, Joseph Norris, c. 1680, inv. 3447

10) Humilitas

- 10.1 'Rosa Poldi Pezzoli Trivulzio,' Giuseppe Molteni, c. 1845, inv. 278
- 10.2 'Borroмео' butter plate, Meissen, 1736-40, inv. 1034
- 10.3 Lace band, Sicily, 18th-19th centuries, inv. 3931
- 10.4 Bonnet, Piedmont, 19th century, inv. 4005
- 10.5 Ring, Venice, end of 16th century, inv. 666

11) Liquidity—Marine

- 11.1 'Deposition of Christ,' copy after Hendrick Goltzius, c. 1600, inv. 3218
- 11.2 Ensign/standard ending (?), Venice, 18th century, inv. 6578
- 11.3 Pietra dura table, Florence, 1818, inv. 1104
- 11.4 Handkerchief, Italy (Livorno ?), 19th century, inv. 3950

12) Symmetry—Equilibrium

- 12.1 'Portrait of woman,' Holland, c. 1620-30, inv. 199
- 12.2 'Attic amphora,' 6th century BC, inv. 1063
- 12.3 Cylindrical sundial, Germany, 17th-18th century, inv. 4077, 4076, 4075
- 12.4 Styluses, Italy (Brescia), 17th century, inv. 2250, 2252, 2251, 2500
- 12.5 Console, Italy, 18th century, inv. 3278

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