



ABSTRACTS

Transcultural Fashion AND Costume Narratives

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

September 5-7th, 2025

Esterházy Castle, Fertőd | Hall of Art, Budapest

BUDAPEST
CENTRAL
EUROPEAN
FASHION
WEEK
SS26



PTE BTK KOMMUNIKÁCIÓ
ÉS MÉDIATUDOMÁNYI
TANSZÉK



ESTERHÁZY-KASTÉLY
- FERTŐD-ESTERHÁZA -

Sofia Pantouraki

Professor of Costume Design
for Theatre and Film, Aalto University, Finland

Fashioning Identity in the Camps: From Dehumanization to Personal 'Style'

This presentation explores the complex role of clothing in Nazi concentration camps, revealing how dress functioned both as a tool of dehumanization and, paradoxically, as a medium of self-respect, resistance, and survival. Clothing was both a necessity and a rare possession – something to trade, adapt, or treasure. Drawing on over two decades of research, including survivor testimonies, oral histories, material evidence, and archival documentation, this talk examines how clothing shaped prisoners' daily lives and their sense of self within one of history's most extreme environments.

In Auschwitz and other Nazi camps, clothing was used to systematically strip inmates of identity and subject them to surveillance and humiliation. Striped uniforms and marked civilian garments, along with tattooed numbers, visually erased personal histories and reduced individuals to anonymous figures. Yet within these constraints, survivors' recollections highlight clothing's significance beyond utility, revealing persistent, often subtle efforts to maintain dignity, appearance, and a sense of aesthetic agency. Garments could mean protection from illness, access to work, or simply the chance to feel human. For many prisoners, "looking decent" became a form of personal resistance and a quest for normalcy.

This keynote engages with concepts not typically associated with the concentration camps – such as neatness, elegance, and personal style – to reveal how inmates cultivated minimal forms of expression. Within the constraints of uniformity, and despite the dangers and threat of punishment, many found ways to personalize their appearance. Swapping for better-fitting clothes, sewing discreet alterations, keeping clean, and –when possible– wearing garments or accessories in ways that hinted at individual style became key strategies in preserving identity. In this context, being "fashionable" did not mean following trends but appearing "decent" – clean, tidy, respectable, and recognizably human.

The research suggests that notions of *decency* and *style* operated as social constructs and motivating forces, even in the bleakest conditions. Clothing enabled inmates to assert individuality, maintain morale, and navigate the brutal hierarchies of camp life. Ultimately, it reveals how the human impulse toward self-presentation and recognition persisted even within spaces designed to annihilate both individuality and life itself.

Transcultural *Costume* Fashion *AND* *Narratives* INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Academic Committee:

Doris Domoszlai-Lantner (USA)

Petra Egri (HUN)

Ildikó Tamás (HUN)

Gyula Maksa (HUN)

Jolán Orbán (HUN)

Zara Korutz (USA)

Abstract editors:

Doris Domoszlai-Lantner (USA)

Petra Egri (HUN)

Zara Korutz (USA)

Cover:

Designer/Photo: Zóra Borbála Körösi

Designer: NATIPUREIDEA, Photo: Jahnatán Csaba Almási

ISBN 978-615-6669-24-7

Official partner:


BOCK
EST. 2009

Nick Rees-Roberts

Professor of Media and Cultural Studies,
New Sorbonne University, Paris, France

The Fashion Entertainment Complex

This lecture examines the transformation of fashion into a cross-platform media entertainment business. Moving image content is an integral part of the promotional imagery produced by the fashion industry. In today's platform economy, in which film, TV and video are constantly remediated via the Internet, entertainment has become a central pivot in the communications strategies of the global luxury/fashion brands. Online image-sharing culture (particularly across Instagram, TikTok and Youtube) has locked the fashion/luxury industry into a commercial relationship with the platform economy, with entertainment and tech. With the increased consumption of online video since the 2000s, fashion houses have morphed into hybrid studios that produce both material objects and digital content. As the launch in 2023 of Saint Laurent Productions would indicate, no longer content to operate as cultural brokers, fashion brands are now also extending their domain by repositioning themselves as producers. This territorial move into prestige auteur cinema therefore allows the brand to compete with the traditional financial stakeholders of the film and entertainment industry. The desire for narrative (in whatever format) illustrates how film and TV are constantly being commercially reconfigured and revitalized by the proliferation of fashion narratives.

Ágnes Fülemile

Professor of Ethnology,
Institute of Ethnology,
ELTE Research Centre for the Humanities

Identity, politics and nostalgia in the sartorial cliché of national image - the Hungarian case

The so-called „Hungarian dress” that emerged in the second half of the 19th century represented an attempt at creating a romanticized national costume – one that simultaneously evoked and trivialized elements of both the historical Hungarian style noble attire and traditional peasant dress of the time. This simplistically synthesizing theatrical fancy costume utilizing the national tricolour scheme gained broad social acceptance. Its creation was profoundly shaped by – and in turn reinforced – romanticized visual tropes that defined stereotypical images of Hungarian national character. Across various media and public platforms of popular culture, the Hungarian dress served as an unambiguous, commonplace reference. As a sartorial expression of national sentiments, it grew increasingly prominent at public events during the interwar period. Despite being an oversimplified, easily reproducible iteration of Hungary's once-rich costume heritage, this sartorial/visual stereotype has maintained stubborn persistence in popular culture, the tourism industry and mass-media, retaining its appeal for certain audiences. To this day it continues to appear in diverse contexts, with motivations for its use ranging from aesthetic preference and commercialization to identity expression, nostalgia, political symbolism and the perpetuation of a “popular tradition.”

Doris Domoszlai-Lantner

Adjunct Professor of Fashion History,
Massachusetts College of Art and Design, New York, USA

Contextualizing and Understanding The Relationship Between Fashion Magazines and GenAI

In 2012, when Vicki Karaminas proclaimed that “the accelerated delivery of fashion images to a mass audience has resulted in the hypertrophy of the image,” fashion blogs were outperforming traditional print magazines because of their willingness to break ground on emerging social media technologies. Just two short years later, Robin Givhan declared that “the golden age of ‘fashion blogging’ [was] over” because magazines had embraced the social trend, bridging the gap between themselves and bloggers such as Leandra “Manrepeller” Medine. The digital landscape, especially that of the digital fashionscape, has changed dramatically since the early 2010s, most notably in the last five years with the increased use of generative artificial intelligence, or GenAI. Much like their hesitancy towards using social media, many major magazines have been—for better or worse—slow to integrate GenAI into their output. The May 2023 issue of *Vogue Italia* featured an AI-designed editorial, as did the June 2023 digital cover of *Harper’s Bazaar Serbia*, yet, aside from coverage of the latest advancements, mass media has not used AI generated content regularly. It is once again smaller, independent entities that are experimenting: namely, the creative agency The Copy Lab’s COPY Magazine, which was created using Midjourney and ChatGPT; Fogue AI Magazine, a data-based project by a UAL student. This presentation will discuss the use cases of GenAI in fashion magazines, highlighting major developments in this burgeoning field, and provide two case studies that touch on issues such as discussing prompt engineering, racial homogenization, and beauty standards by analyzing the visual and textual content of the aforementioned projects, while contextualizing them within the greater fashionscape and its history, and moreover, within three “hypo/ers:” Karaminas’s *hypotrophy*, and the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard’s *hyperreality* and *hyperconsumerism*.

Antal Bókay

University of Pécs, Hungary

Fashion, Desire, and Perversion: A psychoanalytic interpretation of McQueen’s Voss fashion show

Beyond their practical role, the act of dressing up, and the resulting costume always offer an opportunity to express a secret compulsion. The clothes we wear in everyday life, just like the glittering garments of fashion, always signal (or conceal) some intention, desire, or message relating to the self, whether conscious or unconscious, social, economic, or personal. As a significant and unique fashion designer, Alexander McQueen created outstanding and deeply personal fashion performances, presenting images that were sometimes uplifting, sometimes frightening, but always powerful. The clothes in his shows are not merely displayed; they are incorporated into performances, giving rise to complex discourses on clothing. His 2001 fashion show, Voss, is particularly compelling because it explores how clothing and fashion conceal a layered communication of desire that is both suppressed and manifest yet also regular and perverse. Voss is a three-act post-dramatic theatre performance set in a unique narrative space of glass and mirrors. Even before the fashion show begins in the first act, McQueen attempts to psychoanalyse the audience, breaking down and even exploding the role of the gaze and the act of looking. The second act reveals the secret, repressed fetishistic nature of fashion objects and clothing. The third act, perhaps the most profound, strips the human body of fashion and presents it naked on stage. This performance of unconscious desires and perverse intentions eliminates the designer’s profession and identity by abolishing clothing and fashion. Voss is a personal confession and self-analysis that reveals the desire-constructive nature of costume performance. Its gaze enchants, confuses, and shocks us, the audience.

Ákos Windhager

Hungarian Academy of Arts, Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology, Hungary

Rewriting Stories Through Costumes: Based on Kodály's Two Stage Works

This paper examines how costume design functions as narrative reinterpretation in Zoltán Kodály's *Háry János* (The Adventures of John Háry; 1926) and *Székely fonó* (The Spinning Room, 1932). Through archival research spanning nearly a century, this study explores how these operas' divergent costume approaches effectively rewrite their original stories, creating new cultural meanings through visual design choices. While both works draw from Hungarian folk traditions, their costume narratives reveal fundamentally different tolerance for textual transformation. *Háry János*, set during the Napoleonic Wars across locations from the Hungarian-Russian border to Vienna and Milan, has enabled directors to rewrite the protagonist's story through costume: transforming him from folk hero into drunken tavern-dweller, aging ex-soldier, or romanticized puszta figure with pastoral clichés. These costume-driven reinterpretations have produced diverse narratives reflecting different political and cultural agendas. In contrast, *Székely fonó*, anchored by the patriotic imperative "Itt élned, halnod kell!" (Here you must live and die!), has resisted such story rewriting. Directors have shown reluctance to alter the original narrative through costume choices, resulting in more conservative approaches adhering to prescribed regional folk traditions.

This comparative analysis examines three key productions of each opera: for *Háry János*, the 1926 premiere, the 1977 Kádár-era (communist dictatorship) production, and 2013 modern staging; for *Székely fonó*, the 1932 premiere, 1982 socialist-period production, and 2016 contemporary revival. Through production photographs, design sketches, and critical reception, this study reveals how costume design can function as a powerful tool for narrative transformation, demonstrating that identical cultural source material generates radically different stories depending on designers' willingness to reinterpret through visual means.

Camilla Leonelli Calzado

Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada

The Cuban Carnavalesque: Body and Cloth as Archive

This paper explores fashion and costume design in live performance as vital conduits for cultural memory, identity formation, and narrative reclamation within globalized and postcolonial contexts. Focusing on Cuban Carnival, it positions fashion as both an embodied archive and a visual language of resistance, empowerment, and community. Drawing on Fernando Ortiz's theory of transculturation, I examine the hybridities embedded in costume and dress, emphasizing the political and performative dimensions of fashion as a medium of cultural translation.

Stuart Hall's essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" introduces the notion that cultural identity is not a fixed essence but an evolving production shaped by historical and cultural contexts. Hall describes the migrant experience as one of dislocation, displacement, and hybridity, framing this narrative as the source of a desire to return to "lost origins" (Hall 236). Live performance is framed here as a temporal and spatial disruption, an ephemeral yet potent archive wherein fashion articulates intergenerational knowledge, communal joy, and historical trauma. The body, adorned in creolized costume, becomes an active site of knowledge transmission, particularly in diasporic contexts where traditional archives are absent or violent. The documentation of archives plays a critical role in shaping cultural identity and in perpetuating colonial violence and misconceptions. Saidiya Hartman's work advocates for the use of narrative as a tool to humanize individuals beyond the violence, commodification, and objectification found in traditional archival practices (10). Her concept of *critical fabulation* offers a way to reimagine the archive, constructing narratives that move beyond sterile statistics and violent imagery (Hartman 11). Both Hartman's work and my own deliberately refuse to "replicate the grammar of violence," aiming instead to amplify decolonized perspectives that question the authority and authenticity of dominant historical records.

My participation in *critical fabulation*; through research, writing, and making, reconceptualized fashion and costume as narrative devices that critique, supplement, and subvert dominant archives. My Carnavalesque cloth intervenes in research gaps by questioning how Carnival resists commodification and challenges the reductive binary of ethnographic versus spectacular representation. This work foregrounds fashion's dual role in both upholding and disrupting cultural hierarchies and aesthetics, showing how costume, crafted through intentional color, texture, and form; materializes subaltern agency and speculative futurity. Through the lens of Cuban Carnival, fashion emerges as a syncretic force that bridges the historical, spiritual, and aesthetic transforming how identity, memory, and belonging are expressed and experienced both on stage and in community.

Casci Ritchie

Northumbria University, UK

Studying Prince's dressed moving body on screen: Embodied intimacy and fannish dress practices

Carol Vernallis (2004) alludes to the tactile immersive qualities of clothing featured within music videos, 'we hear the music, follow the body, and feel the cloth' (p.101). Building on film scholars Jackie Stacey (1994); Laura Marks (2000); and Vivian Sobchack (2004); alongside fashion and cultural researchers Barbara Brownie (2016) and Becky Peterson (2024), I propose the term 'embodied intimacy' as a means to allude to the relationship between spectator and the moving dressed star body. Audiences can feel an embodied response to the dressed star and choose to express this sartorially (Lamerichs 2018a; 2018b; 2023, Smith et al. 2020; 2021) but this also shifts beyond a literal visual representation to an unseen embodied sense of style. I also use the term to discuss the visceral bodily reactions experienced by the audience when watching the moving dressed star body. These reactions are often difficult to articulate in words and, as such, require a methodological framework to slow the active viewing process and enable a deeper understanding. Adopting a combination of watching, drawing and self-reflection, I will introduce the 'embodied looking' framework which encourages researchers to slow down becoming aware of their responses to the dressed moving body on screen, in addition to the thorough documentation of dress. I will explore 'embodied intimacy' in relation to my connection to Prince's dressed moving body using the framework, in particular, a recorded performance of 'Hot Thing' from the Sign o' the Times (1987) concert film. Alongside my personal response, excerpts from fan interviews regarding Prince's dress will explore 'embodied intimacy' in the ongoing ageing experience of fans and how they dress their bodies.

Diya Wang

De Montfort University, UK

Visualising Hybridity and the Idealised Chinese Modern Woman: *Yuefenpai* Calendar Posters, Advertisements in 1910s–30s Shanghai

The early 20th century witnessed China's transition from imperial collapse to modern nation-building, during which the female body and dress became highly politicised symbols. Between the 1910s and 1930s, *yuefenpai* (calendar advertisement poster) proliferated within Shanghai urban Sino-Western hybrid cultures, functioning both as commercial media and as a key site in shaping modern femininity and articulating ideals of national modernity.

At a time when the profession of fashion designer had yet to emerge, *yuefenpai* illustrators took on the dual role of cultural translators and arbiters of style. They synthesised traditional Chinese garments—like the *Qipao* and *Daodaxiu* tunic—with Western elements like high heels, lace, and prints. This sartorial hybridity, along with imported consumer symbols and modern settings, collectively constructed the visual identity of the 'modern woman'. These images depicted robust, full-bodied, and assertive women—markedly different from the reality of the physically restrained and modest bodies of most Chinese women, which were shaped by practices like foot binding or chest-binding. In this transcultural media discourse, the female body was fashioned as the embodied ideal of national modernity.

This study undertakes a visual analysis of *yuefenpai* from the 1910s to 1930s, drawing on Homi Bhabha's theory of *cultural hybridity* and Benedict Anderson's concept of *imagined communities*, alongside frameworks of nationalism, modernity, and body politics. It argues that these images did not merely transmit the prevailing condition of Sino-Western sartorial hybridity. They actively participated in shaping conceptions of nationhood, gender, and modernity. Within this representational space, the female body was transmuted into the visual site for the nationalist project of modernisation, becoming a symbolic projection of state aspirations. As products of intertwined state discourse and gender politics, *yuefenpai* as both cultural artefacts and media texts, offer crucial insights into the dynamic relationship between body, fashion, and national narrative in China's modernisation.

Dorothea Nicolai

AMD Academy of Fashion
and Design, Germany

Takarazuka

In the tradition of Asian theater, as well as in Japan, all roles on stage, both female and male, are played by men. In Kabuki, a distinction is made between Aragoto (“hard style”) and Wagoto (“soft style”) for men, and Onnogata (“female character”) for women. Takarazuka is the exact opposite: all roles are played by women on stage: Onnogata for female characters, and Otokoyaku for male characters. Takarazuka is a city located in Hyōfo Prefecture, Japan, where, in 1913, an entrepreneur and founder of a railway company, Ichizo Kobayashi, invented this genre of theater to promote his company's new line. Since then, Takarazuka has become a veritable institution in Japan, with famous actresses organized into several troupes in permanent theaters. They are adored by a large and passionate audience, the majority of whom are women. This paper aims to explore the phenomenal success of this genre of role-swapping theater, which also reflects the limited roles of men and women in Japanese society.

Francesca Manzari

Aix-Marseille University, France

Archipelagic Transculturality in the Contemporary Fashion Era

After first demonstrating how fashion can be considered as a visual art, this presentation will interrogate the transcultural dimension of Dior's and Dolce & Gabbana's haute couture fashion shows, more precisely from the moment when, since the late 1980s, D&G has introduced the Sicilian cultural space into fashion creativity, thus turning the fashion object into an extension of Sicilian artistic production ('Sicily bag', 'tabernacle heels', 'references to the Sicilian carretto decorations in dresses and shoes', 'Sicilian lace', etc.) On the Parisian scene, this approach will be compared to Maria Grazia Chiuri's at Dior's from 2016 on, turning the culture that had inspired Christian Dior into a mode of reinvestment and a rereading of the same francophone patrimony. Maria Grazia Chiuri came from the emblematic Roman fashion house Valentino, thus posing the question whether a fashion style can be representative of a national culture any more in the age of globalization. On the contrary, the contemporary tends to the post-national cultural narrative of a World Fashion, in the sense of world literature and world music, that generates a creolized, or rather an archipelagic style, whose creativity is characterized by a profusion of cultural references and the cross-fertilizations. In its final part, the presentation will go further by studying some characteristic examples, related in particular to initiatives of the International Trade Center for the development of the fashion industry in emerging countries.

Hannah McIntyre

Parsons School of Design (New York), USA

Threaded Tropes: Fashion, Class, and Identity in Coming-of-Age Films

While fashion is understood as a tool that enforces and shapes social order, in-motion mediums such as film demonstrate how fashion actively does so. Within the coming-of-age genre, fashion is used as a means to inform one's own unique coming of age experience while simultaneously shaping the social hierarchy and culture that exists within. This paper explores how fashion in coming-of-age films functions as a tool to explore, negotiate, and express oneself as they come into their own social beings. However, this technique fails to explore the psychological implications and experience for those characters within the film, and viewers alike, who lack agency in how they present themselves. While some characters are shown in these films utilizing fashion to communicate their emerging identity, for those who face financial limitations and are unable to do so, their social identity is thus defined by what they cannot wear and express. Utilizing dominant examples from this genre, my research seeks to explore that while majority of the protagonists are depicted to be in a position where they are afforded the luxury of navigating choice when it comes to their dress, the characters that fulfill the mocked and marginalized tropes in these films typically align with a lower class. Drawing on cultural, film, and fashion studies, I will analyze how coming-of-age films are intended to follow the psychological and moral growth of their characters. However, by centering narratives around those with access to fashion as a means of self-expression, I will argue how this genre of film alienates both characters, and viewers, who are excluded from this practice. In doing so, they promote the idea that one's value is tied to their outward and material expression and this has harmful implications on the self concept and coming-of-age experience had among viewers.

Heike Jenss

Parsons School of Design (New York), USA

Invested: A Diary in Expenses, Memory and the Value of Fashion

This paper is based on my reading and speculative contextualization of a three-month expense record from 1953 that I discovered in an old leather purse my late mother kept stored in the back of her wardrobe. In it she tracked her income and expenditures for essentials such as rent and electricity, food, transportation, entertainment, body care and clothing. How might we make sense of such a personal accounting booklet? While listing numbers and items purchased or sold, I view this record as a diary: as a narrative medium and invitation to imagine my mother's former self and everyday life as she was making ends meet in the predominantly working class and recuperating cities in the Ruhr-Region in mid-twentieth century West Germany. I will re-track and re-imagine what she chose to purchase, what she sold and saved, and what this might tell about her living conditions, potential attitudes and aspirations in the context of an economic upheaval and rising consumer culture in the 1950s. As part of my broader research interest in secondhand fashion and lives in/of clothing, I will further take this document as a vantage point to reflect on intergenerational threads and changes, considering how we are socialized and learn to view and practice fashion and consumption. Drawing on memory, time and material culture studies, I seek to bring narratives around an emerging mid-twentieth century consumer culture, and the value placed on new or old clothing, into conversation with shifting perceptions of clothing today and what it might tell us about our investments, aspirations, and how we relate to fashion and time.

Ildikó Tamás

Institute of Ethnology,
ELTE Research Centre for the Humanities

Matyó Embroidery: A Living Heritage in Cultural and Fashion Discourses

Ethnographic research has shown that Matyó embroidery is one of Hungary's most renowned forms of folk art, and its significance extends far beyond mere decoration. It plays a complex role in shaping social cohesion, cultural identity, and local economy. The visual language developed by the Matyó communities of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county has evolved into a powerful set of symbols—relevant and meaningful (in different ways) to several local, regional, national, and international frames. It forms an emblematic part of Hungarian folklore and has achieved national and international cultural representation. In recognition of its cultural value, "Matyó folk art—embroidery, traditional dress, and folklore" was inscribed in UNESCO's *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* in 2012.

In the 21st century, globalization and the fashion industry have placed traditional ornaments and folk design in a new context. Fashion has become a key player in the contemporary reinterpretation of cultural heritage, and Matyó motifs now also appear in discourses on folklorism, popular culture, art, and design. On the international stage, major fashion houses, like Dior and Dolce & Gabbana, paid attention to Central and Eastern European folklore. Nevertheless, it is primarily the Hungarian designers who have explicitly adopted Matyó elements in their work. Notable examples include brands like Matyodesign, Sugarbird, and Creabead, which reinterpret the traditions of Mezőkövesd in diverse and stylistically distinct ways. Their creations not only revive traditional motifs but also contribute to the resilience of the Matyó heritage community by popularizing these symbols in a modern context.

The presence of Matyó embroidery in the fashion industry carries both aesthetic and socio-economic significance. It relies on and often employs local artisans and enhances the visibility of Hungarian cultural identity in the global fashion scene. However, this process also inevitably raises criticism based on cultural appropriation, authenticity, uncontextualized representation, and the questionable modernization of tradition—questions that must be carefully considered to foster a responsible and ethical fashion practice. In my presentation, I will specifically analyze the collaborations between local communities, fashion designers, and scholars with their interweaving discourse on "tradition" and contemporary demands.

Ildikó Simonovics

Hungarian National Museum, Hungary

Hungarian Bride: Community memory - Collection - Online archive/Collecting interface - Collection item acquisition - Exhibition

What is the key to successful community-based collecting? How does a public-focused exhibition successfully build upon such a collection? Are there pitfalls, and if so, what are they? Is the model adaptable?

In my presentation, I will showcase the methods used and the main elements in this exhibition, *Hungarian Bride's*, realization:

- A three-year community-building campaign on Facebook preceding the exhibition.
- Eighteen months of scientific preparatory work, which resulted in the background studies necessary for developing the curatorial narrative.
- An online database, built in four months, designed to be expandable by external users.
- A three-month community collection drive, conducted nine months before the exhibition's opening.
- A six-week children's drawing competition.
- And finally, an 800-square-meter temporary exhibition that ran for eight and a half months.

With this project, we aimed for *Hungarian Bride* to be the most successful in-house exhibition organized by the Hungarian National Museum in recent decades. To achieve this, we strove to reach and involve the largest and broadest possible audience with diverse social backgrounds.

Going beyond the museum's traditional role of preserving, researching, and presenting the past, we sought to engage in dialogue with the public, involving them in collecting, critical thinking, preserving, and exhibiting. Our goal was to collectively become creators, builders, and shapers of culture. A crucial cultural strategic task of the project was to encourage private individuals to research the history of their own families, places of residence, and communities, and to preserve and share our common values, thereby socializing the micro-historical research and dissemination of the Hungarian past.

Our participatory approach was based on the idea that many people can connect to the concept of "bride" through their own or their ancestors' stories and memories. As a significant transitional ritual in a person's life, marriage conveys fundamental, positive values to the community.

Through the unfolding of the topic's temporal, cultural, and spatial dimensions, we presented the relationship of Hungarian society to women and female roles, and their changes, looking back five hundred years.

Jacky Collins

Stirling University, UK

The Ageing Male Moral Spectrum: Dressing José Coronado

Costuming is vital to the construction of cinematic identities, yet to what extent can the way a character is dressed convey the moral principles or beliefs that guide them. Within the topic of costume and dress in fictional works, this paper will focus on a range of characters that sit across a spectrum of morality played by one of Spain's most highly acclaimed film and TV actors in various recent crime dramas that have been available on international streaming platforms. Building on collaborative research carried out over the last five years within the context of the Spanish audiovisual industry, ideas developed for this paper will apply approaches adopted in the analysis of the effect costuming has had on roles played by ageing Spanish male actors e.g. Antonio Banderas and Julio Bardem. Whilst these actors have experienced considerable success with both Spanish and international audiences, work by the iconic José María Coronado García has, until recently, not enjoyed the same global reach or attention outside the Spanish-speaking world.

Primary texts chosen for this paper comprise 4 TV dramas screened on Netflix are *Vivir sin permiso/Unauthorised living* (2018–2020); *El inocente/The Innocent* (2021); *Entrevías/The Wrong Side of the Tracks* (2021–2024); *La chica de nieve/The Snow Girls* (2023–25), where Coronado plays a Galician drug lord, a corrupt undercover Special Crime Unit officer, a vigilante grandfather and a veteran investigative journalist respectively. By analysing the visual clues found in the dressing of these varied identities, focussing on the aspects of body, costume and performance, with particular reference to beards, shirts and suits, I will argue that costuming is imbued with the ability to reflect a fictional character's morality, even when the wardrobe appears to lack variety.

Jo Turney

University of Southampton, UK

Criminal Clothing: Dressing and Disobedience

Against the backdrop of contemporary climates of fear, this paper considers clothing on the margins. It considers the way in which clothing, frequently ordinary, ubiquitous and unremarkable clothing such as sportswear, is, when worn, understood as a sign of criminality. The paper posits this against clothing that is worn in prisons to signify a loss of individuality and liberty, and how such clothing, originally considered a site of shame, has been elevated and articulated as a sign of pride and belonging. Here, we see a mass of contradictions; that the ordinary and ubiquitous, the shameful and the celebrated merge to establish a climate of suspicion, to such an extent that the clothes you wear can isolate and marginalise, and in some cases, can get you killed. Likewise, and in response to the popularity of the clothing worn by the accused murderer of United Healthcare CEO, Brian Thompson, Luigi Mangione, which sold out in stores and online across the US following his arrest in December 2024, highlights the complexity of crime, criminality, heroism, and personal liberty in the contemporary world. This paper considers these issues, questioning not just the relationship between crime and clothing and whether clothing can be criminalized, but also why there is such an investment in cultures of crime, concepts of the outsider and the purpose this serves.

Jolán Orbán

University of Pécs, Hungary

(Re)Writing Fashion History: Kati Zoób

Fashion designer Kati Zoób's dreams have come true in the last thirty years: she created her eponymous fashion brand; presented her collections globally (Vienna, Paris, London, Frankfurt, Dubai, Shanghai); collaborated as costume designer in theatre, film and opera productions; designed jewelry for Zsolnay Porcelain and established a fashion museum in Balatonfüred. Her work is a strong statement on the impact of fashion as an art form on contemporary Hungarian intellectual and cultural life. In this presentation, I will focus on four questions raised by her diversified, active career: 1. (re)writing fashion history as an autobiography; 2. fashioning the stage; 3. deconstructing the ergon-parergon opposition; and 4. challenging the fashion industry.

1. *(Re)Writing fashion history as an autobiography.* In 2020, fashion brand Kati Zoób celebrated its 25th anniversary with an exhibition featuring 200 fashion items at the Pesti Vigadó, an iconic building in Hungarian cultural life. The exhibition revealed the fashion history references as well as the autobiographical allusions that permeate her oeuvre.
2. *Fashioning the stage.* Kati Zoób is involved in several theatre, film and opera productions as a costume designer, crossing the boundaries between fashion and the performative arts. Her collaboration with the director János Szikora in theatre productions—Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* adapted by Harold Pinter and Diane Travis (2006), Péter Esterházy's *Rubens és a nemeuklideszi asszonyok* [Rubens and the Non-Euclidean Women] (2008)—, and opera performances—Richard Strauss: *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (2015), Antonín Dvořák: *Rusalka* (2024)—introduced new perspectives and methods in Hungarian costume design and the fashion world.
3. *Deconstructing the opposition.* "What is art?", "The beautiful?", "Representation", "What is the origin of the work of art?" These are the philosophical questions formulated by Kant, Hegel, and Heidegger based on the hierarchy between ergon and parergon. J
4. *Challenging the fashion industry.* The *Kati Zoób Fashion & Museum* in Balatonfüred features thematic exhibitions, such as *Álom – a hálóruha divattörténete* [Dream: The Fashion History of Nightwear] (2024–2025) and *Szerelem* (Love) (2025), which function as a museum showcasing the various crafts behind the fashion world.

Judit Szatmári

Kiscell Museum, Hungary

150 years of fashion, 3 exhibitions + 1 book

In 2023, we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the unification of the Hungarian capital. On this occasion, the exhibition *Fashion and the City* was held at the Kiscell Museum, telling the story of Budapest through clothing and accessories—and, at the same time, the history of fashion. The two are not the same, yet they are closely connected: the characteristics and opportunities of a country or city, its political and power structures, economic and social phenomena, and their constraints—such as during the socialist era—as well as shifts in thinking and lifestyle, are all reflected in the local fashion, in the stories of the garments actually produced and worn there, and in clothing habits.

One hundred fifty years is a long time during which profound changes have taken place not only in Hungary, but all around the world. At the beginning of the period, corsets and bustles were in fashion; by the end, we are facing a climate crisis that challenges the entire fashion industry, along with the broader challenges of sustainability, and in between came world wars and dictatorships. How can a single exhibition represent so many changes while still meeting visitors' expectations of being glamorous, fashionable, and visually striking? If the aim is not to dazzle the audience with the wonders of fashion design but to present clothing as imprints of historical change, then the curator's task becomes quite challenging.

After the closing of the Budapest exhibition, its content was adapted into a book, developed under a different editorial approach. Around the same time, our team received an invitation from the director of the Rezső Haáz Museum in Székelyudvarhely, an ethnically Hungarian town in Transylvania, to curate a related showcase there, using a selection from *Fashion and the City*. But how can—and should—one talk about the history of Budapest in a small Transylvanian town located 800 kilometers away? How can a 600-square-meter exhibition be adapted to a space one-quarter that size? The *Fashion and Dualism* exhibition eventually focused on the common part of our history: the era of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The story of our fashion exhibitions didn't end there. In May 2025, it was presented again at the Csíki Székely Museum in Miercurea Ciuc (Csíkszereda, in present-day Romania), this time placing the continuous transformation of fashion, the world, and the individual at the centre.

Judith Brachem

Carl von Ossietzky University
of Oldenburg, Germany

Moved by Fashion: Affective Becomings of Dress and Body

A model steps into a golden dress that already suggests a body—though no one is yet wearing it. Seemingly without her intervention, the dress begins to glide across the room. After it comes to a halt, the model steps out of the dress and, using a remote control, activates its pollen-like appliqués, which begin to fly through the space. Hussein Chalayan's iconic Floating Dress defies the expectation that fashion only moves when the body does. Instead, it introduces a choreography in which the garment initiates motion. This paper investigates garments that move seemingly autonomously through kinetic, mechanical, or digital means. While garments are typically seen as being moved by the wearer, these examples demonstrate how the wearer is moved by dress. This refers not only to physical movement, but also to the affective potential of the garments. Drawing on the concept of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari) and a neo-materialist perspective on fashion and dress (Anneke Smelik, Giuliana Bruno), this paper argues that body and garment participate in a shared process of becoming-with. While every item of clothing can shape and move us, forming a Modekörper (Gertrud Lehnert) together with the wearer, these particular examples highlight the agency inherent in the garments themselves. This will be shown by examining case studies that in addition to Chalayan's work also include Iris van Herpen and emerging digital fashion designers. Ultimately, the paper proposes that the movement initiated through and with these garments is not only physical, but also effective because, as Giuliana Bruno writes, "clothes come alive in (e)motion."

Kata Zsófia Prém

University of Miskolc, Hungary

Wearing the Past: Copyright Challenges in Folklore-Inspired Fashion

The intersection of folklore and contemporary fashion gives rise to a number of intriguing legal and ethical questions, particularly with regard to intellectual property rights. According to UNESCO, folklore embodies the cultural identity of a given community and encompasses a wide variety of expressions, including embroidery, folk dance, folk tales, folk songs and traditional costumes. However, the appropriation of these elements by global fashion brands has given rise to a debate surrounding the protection of intellectual property. In recent years, a number of prominent cases have brought to light the intricate nature of this issue. For instance, Tory Burch's 2018 collection, inspired by Romanian folk costumes, and Mango's recent interpretation of Kalotaszeg embroidery, have been criticised for not adequately acknowledging their traditional origins. Furthermore, Louis Vuitton has been the subject of criticism for pieces accused of appropriating Transylvanian costumes. Under copyright law, traditional cultural expressions are not usually protected. Nevertheless, designers can still obtain legal protection for their folklore-inspired works. This engenders a paradoxical situation, whereby the cultural expressions of a community lack legal protection while adaptations made by external designers can gain legal protection. Therefore, my presentation will focus on the necessity and possibilities of copyright protection for folklore. Traditional cultural expressions often cannot be linked to a single creator or precise time of creation, contrary to the individualistic basis of copyright. Moreover, the temporal limitations of copyright do not align with the timeless nature of folklore. This can result in cultural heritage becoming unprotected public property, exposing it to cultural appropriation and devaluation. The presentation focuses on potential solutions that consider the preservation of cultural heritage with the protection of intellectual property rights. The aim is to explore the complex intersection between cultural heritage, copyright, and globalised fashion. It underscores the necessity for a nuanced approach that honours the heritage of traditional cultures while enabling their respectful and innovative integration into the modern fashion world.

Krisztina Maróy

Moholy-Nagy University
of Art and Design, Hungary

Becoming Visible: Women, Ageing and the Paradigm Shift in Magazine Culture

For decades, women's magazine culture constructed its visual and editorial narratives around the ideal of youth, consistently portraying ageing as a form of loss, decline or deficiency. As early as the 1970s, Susan Sontag called attention to the fact that female ageing is represented in ways that differ radically from the cultural treatment of male ageing—an imbalance that continues to require critical reflection. With over thirty years of experience in magazine editing, including two decades as editor-in-chief of the Hungarian edition of *GLAMOUR*, I have observed first-hand how representations of ageing women are changing within the mainstream media. In this presentation, I examine how women's magazine culture has begun to revise its earlier, limiting approaches to age: how women over forty, fifty or sixty have become not only visible but also fashion-oriented, self-identified and inspirational figures. This shift can be observed in editorial practices, cover choices and visual languages, as well as in reader responses and the evolving discourses of social media. The democratising influence of digital platforms, the growing presence of age-positive movements, and global examples such as *Vogue's* "no retouching" campaigns or *Glamour UK's* cover series centred on middle-aged women have all contributed to this changing perspective. Editorial work at *GLAMOUR* Hungary increasingly prioritises the authentic and deliberate representation of age diversity. I argue that this shift represents more than just a trend; it signals a deeper transformation in the role of women's magazines. For perhaps the first time in their history, these publications are not only transmitting norms but also beginning to reflect women's life trajectories in a more realistic and inclusive manner—offering visibility, resonance and relevance across a broader spectrum of age and identity.

Lauren Bell

Fashion Institute of Technology,
(New York) USA

Femme Fatale: The Exploitation of Sex and Race in Halle Berry's Catwoman

The 2004 film *Catwoman*, directed by Jean-Christophe "Pitof" Comar and starring Halle Berry, is about a "shy woman, endowed with the speed, reflexes, and senses of a cat, [who] walks a thin line between criminal and hero, even as a detective doggedly pursues her, fascinated by both of her personas," according to IMDb. This paper examines how sexuality, race, and gender are exploited in constructing Catwoman's superhero identity, beginning with a brief analysis of the history of Catwoman, including Eartha Kitt's performance in the 1967 Batman television series. The 2004 film's costume, designed by Angus Strathie, exemplifies the hypersexualization of female superheroes, particularly as they gain their powers. By analyzing Catwoman's attire, this study explores the contrast between innocence and perceived "corruption," emphasizing how sexualized costumes heighten this dichotomy. Additionally, the paper will address the broader implications of sexualizing a Black woman in the superhero genre, examining the intersection of race and gender in costume design. A superhero's costume is central to their identity, symbolizing their strength, purpose, and ideals. For women superheroes, however, costume design often prioritizes sexuality as a defining characteristic, shaping how they are perceived and understood.

Inés Corujo Martín

City University New York, USA

Translating Tradition: Rosalía's Fashion as Transcultural Performance and Visual Narrative

This paper explores the fashion and visual performance of Spanish singer Rosalía as a compelling case study of fashion as cultural translation in the global media landscape. Blending flamenco tradition with trap, reggaeton, and avant-garde pop, Rosalía's fashion choices articulate a layered narrative of identity, gender, and nationhood that resonates across cultures and platforms. Her costumes, both on stage and in music videos, function not only as stylistic expression but as deliberate acts of cultural negotiation and self-fashioning.

Focusing on key visual works—such as the Motomami tour and music videos like Malamente and Di mi nombre—this research analyzes how Rosalía reinterprets elements of traditional Spanish dress (including the mantilla, bata de cola, Manila shawl, and polka dots) through contemporary silhouettes, global streetwear, and high fashion collaborations (e.g., with Jean Paul Gaultier or Nike). These garments and their visual presentation construct a hybrid aesthetic that is both rooted in Iberian visual culture and designed for transnational consumption.

Rosalía's costuming simultaneously invokes cultural memory and reconfigures it, navigating questions of authenticity, appropriation, and innovation. Her fashion becomes a site where femininity, class, and regional heritage are reimagined within a digital and performative framework. Drawing from visual culture studies, fashion theory, and performance analysis, I consider how her aesthetic strategy exemplifies fashion as both a medium of self-expression and a tool of cultural storytelling. Ultimately, I argue that Rosalía's fashion operates as a transcultural costume language, translating the codes of Spanish visual heritage into a new grammar of global pop identity. In doing so, the artist expands the boundaries of how dress can function as performance, archive, and narrative within the contemporary cultural imagination.

Livia Szélpál

University of Szeged, Hungary

Contemporary Representation of Women's Fashion in Neo-Victorian British Historical Novels

My presentation focuses on the issues of fashion as cultural tradition, the historical aspects of dress, fashioning the self, costume and dress in fictional works. The primary aim of the presentation is to highlight the contemporary representation of women's fashion through the Neo-Victorian English historical novel genre. John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969) and Zadie Smith's *The Fraud* (2023) are referential points in my analysis. The presentation aims to scrutinize the fashion codes operating in literary texts by interpreting the social significance of fashion and dress as a form of agency in self-expression and a tool for cultural perception and metaphors in interdisciplinary discourse. I primarily research the representational forms of the modern "New Woman" in the examined representative novels. William Henry Perkin's 1857 discovery of the first synthetic dyes (Perkin's mauve) had a revolutionary impact on Victorian fashion. This color repeatedly appears in the novels depicting Perkin's mauve-coloured women's dresses, which also bear the name Britannia Violet as a reference to the *Pax Britannica Era*. As a complement to my presentation, my interpretation addresses one enigmatic scene from the film adaptation of Fowles's novel of the same name (dir. Karel Reisz, 1981). In this iconic scene, Ernestina wears a choker necklace, a symbol of female strength, wealth and equality. At the same time, Sarah's neck is uncovered, showing a striking comparison between the two women. Mrs. Poulteney's disapproving statement accompanies the scene: "In today's chaotic world, one must preserve the purity of one's soul." The difference is barely noticeable - the choker necklace is not emphasized in the novel - but it becomes visible in the film adaptation, expressing the underlying importance of the choker necklace and the relationship between fashion and historical memory, which I will also address in my presentation. A recurring motif of contemporary English historical novels is the evocation of the Victorian era in their theme and style, as well as through the depiction of fashion. These novels consciously reflect on the phenomenon of reinterpretation and, by constructing a contemporary interpretation of history, also reveal a socio-critical dimension that I highlight.

Llew Delacroix

University of Aix-Marseille, France

Haute Couture as a Translation of Speculative Fiction

This project aims to demonstrate the translation of feminist speculative thought to “Fashion Tech” haute couture in the speculative fiction of the 70s, focusing more particularly on the work of Ursula K. Le Guin. Indeed, when studying science-fiction haute-couture, we can identify two movements: Space Age and Fashion Tech. The Space Age, heavily influenced by the Space Race, in a context of sexual revolution, emphasizes bodily autonomy values. While Fashion Tech is oriented towards ecological values, focusing not only on clothing, but also on redesigning the entire chain of the clothing industry, as well as social values, raising the question of surveillance and individual freedom. We can add to these two movements the considerable contribution of cinema and television: many designers have worked on science-fiction costumes, and we cannot ignore these audiovisual works that have nurtured the imaginary of science-fiction. The interconnection between these three artistic productions and literature will enable us to identify exactly how speculative literature affects today’s haute couture. Speculative fiction allows us to highlight possible alternatives to the world of haute-couture and to investigate more sustainable approaches, while making the body the site of artistic performance and alternative reality. This question of the body is as all the more relevant because it allows us to bring in Donna Haraway’s Cyborg feminism, born of the study of speculative fiction. Fashion Tech takes its cues from the feminist science-fiction of the 70s and 90s through a phenomenon of cultural translation. Haute couture draws on feminist movements and speculative literature as both creative and ethical sources. The aim is to show how the speculative fiction model establishes itself as a space of dissemination that drives renewal.

Madeline Taylor

Aalto University, Finland

Digitising the Costume Workshop: Moving Between Paper and Pixels in the Domestication of Industry 4.0 Technologies

Industry 4.0 technologies can offer significant benefits for costume production, as their emphasis on mass customisation and relocalised manufacturing is particularly suited to the bespoke nature of costume work. Despite this natural alignment, adoption is as yet limited in the profession. This paper presents findings from the EU-funded Technological Innovations in Costume Practice research project, offering a theoretical model that maps the integration of these globally available technologies within local live performance costume workshops. Drawing on qualitative data from practitioner interviews and digital ethnography, this research explores how, why (or why not) costume professionals internationally are engaging with two key technologies: virtual patternmaking software and 3D printing. The study’s significance lies in its field-first cross-disciplinary application of socio-technological domestication theory to costume practice, examining both symbolic meaning-making and practical workflow changes as practitioners incorporate new technologies. This framework reveals how costume professionals move through phases of appropriation, objectification, incorporation, and conversion when adopting digital tools. The model identifies crucial junctures where adoption barriers emerge, including professional identity conflicts, institutional structures and resourcing, and gendered assumptions about technological competence. The research demonstrates that successful technology adoption often depends on practitioners’ ability to reframe these tools as extensions of traditional craft knowledge rather than replacements for embodied expertise. This perspective preserves professional identity while allowing for innovation. Other crucial factors include access to supportive communities of practice, adaptation of the technology to suit the specific local context, time to learn and experiment, and sufficient knowledge to imagine creative applications for the technology. Beyond its theoretical contributions, the model offers practical value for costume departments seeking to integrate new technologies. By acknowledging the specific socio-cultural context of costume practice, this research challenges prevailing narratives that position costume as technologically static. Instead, it reveals a dynamic field negotiating relationships with digital innovation while maintaining its core values within the unique operational structures of live performance production.

Marissa Scharlau

Parsons School of Design (New York), USA

Fashioning Feminine Cool in Film: The Evolution of an Archetype

My previous research has examined the enduring role of “coolness” as a signifier of resistance in self-fashioning within subcultural communities, particularly as it emerged from jazz culture and the Beat movement in the 1950s and ‘60s. I remain interested in how this powerful, if elusive, form of cultural capital is communicated through fashion, dress, and cinematic style. This project expands that research to consider the impact of costume design in film on the articulation and dissemination of “cool” as a visual and gendered concept. While figures like Marlon Brando and James Dean helped shape a blueprint for masculine cool in *The Wild One* (1953) and *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), the notion of the “cool woman” has remained a more ambiguous and subversive identity. This research explores the evolution of that archetype by examining two landmark films: *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *Thelma & Louise* (1991). I consider how each film reinterprets the outlaw road movie genre and how their costume design contributed to defining a distinct version of feminine cool. Bonnie’s Depression-era styling—berets, midi skirts, and bias cuts—sparked fashion trends in the late 1960s and glamorized criminal chic. In contrast, the rugged denim, tank tops, and workwear styles of *Thelma & Louise* project a more pragmatic, utilitarian, and post-feminist aesthetic. By analyzing how these costumes signify rebellion, mobility, and autonomy on the female body, I explore how each film both reflects and challenges dominant visual codes of coolness. These stylized images of female defiance not only shaped fashion trends domestically, but also resonated with international audiences, circulating through global media and influencing fashion far beyond the films’ original cultural contexts. Ultimately, this work asks how cinematic costume contributes to broader transcultural narratives of style, translating localized visual aesthetics into global narratives.

Nico Frederick

Fashion Institute of Technology,
(New York) USA

The Sapphic Bloodsucker: Costuming the Lesbian Vampire in Film, 1936–1983

J. Sheridan Le Fanu’s novella *Carmilla* from 1871 tells the story of young, innocent girls who are preyed upon by an immortal, supernatural figure; the female vampire Carmilla. An earlier folkloric tale of the real life serial killer Countess Elizabeth Báthory claimed that the noblewoman killed hundreds of young girls and bathed in their blood to grant herself eternal life. The archetype of the lesbian vampire predates even Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. This paper will analyze the development of the lesbian vampire in film and the costuming techniques used across the figures long presence in cinema history starting with the Universal horror film *Dracula’s Daughter* from 1936 and ending with the goth cult classic *The Hunger* from 1983. Using contemporary film and gender theory, this paper will explore and critique the characterization of queer women as antagonistic monsters. In tracing the development of the archetype, this paper will analyze the proliferation of lesbian vampire films in 1970s exploitation cinema. Films like *Daughters of Darkness* from 1971 continued on the trend of the aristocratic and villainous queer female vampire initially started in the 1930s Universal horror sequel. Culminating in Catherine Deneuve’s representation of an immortal vamp dressed in head-to-toe Yves Saint Laurent, *The Hunger* is emblematic of a monstrous lesbian camp and an endurance of the sapphic bloodsucker in the popular imagination.

Orsolya Zay

Hungarian Academy of Arts, Research
Institute of Art Theory and Methodology, Hungary

“There’s not a single bite of bread, but the clothing is still chic”: Social identity in the light of Early Modern clothing

In the case of historical costumes before the 20th century, we can view clothing as a “code” that someone in the given social environment could decipher at first glance, using its code language. It is a problem for us, 21st century researchers, to decipher this language and understand the elements of 16th–17th century clothing known from archaeological and historical sources, and the underlying content that emerged from them. What information did contemporary costume hide for the micro-region and the larger community? Within the layers of identity, we can follow the age-related changes in social roles, women and men, and the closely related changes in family status, but we also receive information about gender, ethnicity and denominational relations. In addition to the placement of the individual in the fabric of society, the question arises whether costume could be a means of self-expression in the era? Did this kind of distinction, this individual perspective arise in the people of the era, or were they completely absorbed into the system based on public agreement and customary law? What did the individual reveal about himself, and what did he want to express with the complete attire that symbolised his identity, or with its incomplete appearance? From archaeological finds in the Carpathian Basin, comparing them with historical written and pictorial sources, and using ethnographic and sociological research and the opportunities offered by experimental archaeology, this presentation will explore the identity-signifying role and representational spaces of early modern clothing with an interdisciplinary overview.

Pauline Smith

University of the Arts London, UK

The Collective Mediterranean: Dressing as Identity-Defining

The Mediterranean is rarely brought together under the banner of a common identity, with a shared way of life and heritage. This essay will essentially seek to understand what makes the Mediterranean people Mediterranean, using clothing as a tool to claim for collectivity in the region. As a fashion curation student, I have found that clothing can offer much insight into the lives and story of the people that wear them. Clothings hold biographies and stories, uncovering the wearer’s or maker’s past through interactions with the fabric. As such, they can offer an unprecedented perspective into the meanings of being a Mediterranean today. An area subjected to much change and instability, the Basin has been the birthplace of rich civilisations and cultures, which legacies still impact our lives today. Exploring the role of clothing in defining Mediterranean identity, will allow us to uncover the vast mosaic of the Mediterranean, weaving our way through the complex tapestry of the cradle of civilisations. In an increasingly politically divided region, the Mediterranean’s people stand as a living testament to the myriad of influences that have shaped its past and continue to shape its future. The paper will address and develop two main questions: “What does it mean to be a Mediterranean today? And how is that reflected in the clothes we wear?”

Petra Egri

University of Pécs, Hungary,
Hungarian Academy of Arts, Research Institute
of Art Theory and Methodology, Hungary

Fashion, Beauty, Ageism: Contextualising Palmers Advertising in Glamour Hungary

Several changes have taken place in the world of media and fashion since Sarah Jessica Parker responded to critics of her age. "BREAKING! A woman in her fifties posing in a pair of panties and a bra" – writes a fashion journalist from *Glamour Hungary* about the Palmers 'End of Sorry' advertising campaign. The giant underwear advertisement was displayed on a tall building in Vienna, a total of 5 floors high. Despite the sensationalist title, the fashion journalist wanted to draw people's attention to the fact that we need to do away with stereotypes associated with ageing and that today the fashion industry is opening up to older generations. Julia Twigg has researched the media representation of fashion and ageing in *Vogue UK* and argues that fashion inhabits a world of youthful beauty. Its discourses are glamorous and youthful. Age by contrast is perceived as a time of grayness. It is associated with a toned-down, self-effacing presentation. Many people today still assume that fashion is a phenomenon linked solely to the concepts of youth and beauty. However, the fact that the baby boomer generation (who rebelled by wearing miniskirts) has now reached retirement age also suggests that the fashion industry needs to increasingly target older consumers, who have a strong demand for fashionable clothing. The fashion industry has for a long time contributed to the myth of eternal youth and the fashion media has helped to create negative ageist prejudices by presenting largely young and thin female bodies. In my paper, I will give examples of when fashion media today can work in a different way that Twigg envisioned. In my case study, I will present an Eastern European example, analyzing *Glamour Hungary's* articles about the 'End of Sorry' advertising campaign by Palmers, examining how comments on social media responded to this very positive advertising campaign.

Petra Krpan

University of Zagreb, Croatia

From Workwear to Heritage: the Cultural History of Croatian Maritime Dress

This paper examines the striped sailor shirt as a key element of Croatian maritime dress, emphasizing its role within the cultural tradition and historical evolution of regional clothing practices. Focusing on communities along the Dalmatian coast, the study situates the garment within a broader Mediterranean context, where dress served both functional and symbolic purposes. Originating as utilitarian workwear for sailors and fishermen, striped shirts not only enhanced visibility at sea but also became powerful communicators of identity, status, and belonging.

Drawing from historical sources, ethnographic fieldwork, and visual archives, this research traces how the sailor shirt evolved from a pragmatic garment into a potent emblem of Croatian maritime heritage. This research explores the interplay between local textile production, Mediterranean trade, and cross-cultural exchange in shaping the aesthetic and material character of striped garments. In particular, it investigates how these shirts were integrated into expressions of regional and national identity during the 19th and 20th centuries, coinciding with wider European movements of folkloric revival and cultural self-assertion. Finally, the paper addresses the modern afterlife of the sailor shirt in fashion, analyzing its global diffusion and enduring resonance as a style icon. By framing fashion as a dynamic cultural tradition, the study positions Croatian maritime dress as a vital thread in both regional history and the wider narrative of sartorial heritage.

Sarah Gilligan

Northumbria University, UK

**“Where does my mother end and I begin?”
Tilda Swinton, doubling, duality and dislocation
on and beyond the screen**

Working across film, photography, advertising and performance art, the Anglo-Scots performer Tilda Swinton is represented in fashion media and journalistic discourses as a transnational creative collaborator with an artistic vision, rather than yet another manufactured celebrity-influencer whose *raison d'être* resides in their image. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach drawing upon film, fashion, media and cultural studies, this paper will critically examine two examples of Swinton's cross-media representation: her costuming for her dual performance as Julie and Rosalind in Joanna Hogg's film *The Eternal Daughter* (2022), and her styling for the 'Personal History' shoot by Tim Walker for American fashion publication *W Magazine* in October 2023.

I will argue that within her transmedia representation, past and present, myth and reality intersect. Heirloom garments, luxury fashion, and costume design combine to create fantastical visual narratives in which the ghosts of Swinton's ancestors haunt the explorations of ageing gendered identities. Through costume, fashion, the body and performance, Swinton is enmeshed in a material connection with her mother on and beyond the screen. Through the cross-media visual narratives of doubling and duality, wearing heirloom garments offers a particular resonance to the structures of feeling that pervade the film and the editorial shoot. Bodies and intergenerational identities become symbiotic as the haptic engagement with clothing offers a balm for the dislocation that pervades loss and grief. Whilst Swinton's privilege places her in a unique position personally and professionally in terms of her access to and consumption of garments and accessories, such representations raise pertinent questions about the items that signify our connections in a context of loss; of what is kept, worn and treasured, versus what is discarded.

Victoria Haddock

South West Heritage Trust, UK

**“I came from the people, they need to adore me,
So Christian Dior me from my head to my toes”:
Fashion and Politics in the Museo Evita**

This paper will examine how the Museo Evita in Buenos Aires, Argentina, uses the large dress and textile collection of former First Lady Eva Perón (1919–1952) to tell her life story and the history of Peronism as a political ideology. Uniting the methodologies of dress history and politics, it will explore how Evita used dress to create a 'Cinderella' image that was promoted around the world and how the museum now displays and interprets Perón's clothing to shape the cultural narrative around one of the most controversial figures in 20th century history.

Central to this paper is how the dress collection came into being after the *Revolución Libertadora* that overthrew President Juan Perón, and how it eventually found itself forming a major part of the Museo Evita's attraction to the public. After the coup, many items of dress were lost, damaged or stolen and the museum has since undertaken research to piece ensembles back together with the assistance of photographs and Eva's surviving family. I propose to explore how the collection and Eva Perón's links to fashion are still culturally relevant and how the Museo Evita have been able to research and use the collection to navigate interpreting the politically challenging story of a woman whose name draws both devotion and hostility seventy years after her death.

Wiktoria Gawor

Parsons School of Design (New York), USA

Message in a Sneaker: A Semiotic Analysis of the A'ja Wilson Nike Advertisement

At the beginning of the 2025 WNBA season, Nike debuted a signature sneaker titled, "Nike A'One, "Pink A'ura" as part of the A'ja Wilson collaboration collection. Wilson, is a professional basketball player for the Las Vegas Aces, and a star player in the WNBA. She is a WNBA champion, a three-time WNBA MVP, and a two-time WNBA Defensive Player of the Year. Additionally, she's a two-time Olympic gold medalist and a FIBA Women's World Cup MVP. Over the years, the player has earned great respect from basketball fans in the United States, and has contributed to the growth of women's sports and its increased attention in the media. Thanks to her popularity and dedicated fandom, the Nike collaboration collection has seen great success - visible both virtually, through social media, and in real life, during basketball games. One of the most successful parts about the collection are the Nike ads directed by Malia Obama and Jenn Nkiru, which showcased the collection along with touches of Wilson's childhood memories and a celebration of Black girlhood and community. One viewer shared, "Listen, this was not just a shoe commercial. This was a Black American cultural display through and through! From the hand cheers, to jumping rope and church scenes. They all took me back to the 80's." Using Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding theory, this paper and presentation explore the semiotics embedded in the advertisement and analyze audience responses as part of the decoding process. It examines how the ad mediates the relationship between performance, style, and identity.

Zara Korutz

Massey University, School of Design,
New Zealand

The "Virgil Abloh Effect"

Virgil Abloh (1980-2021) was a contemporary design phenomenon who challenged conventional fashion structures in the early 21st century using streetstyle to expand Black cultural legitimacy. Abloh mobilized culture and identity, serving as a praxis that translates theoretical discourse into a tangible form of contemporary Black Aesthetics — defined by Paul C. Taylor (2010) as 'the expressive object and practices in creating and maintaining Black life-worlds'. For Abloh (2020), fashion is a creative transdisciplinary visual language of codes, canons, and values that he calls "art". By centering his body of work within the context of an art movement, Abloh semiotically deconstructs the binary between "high" European White culture and "low" [sic] American Black culture (Givhan, 2025), positioning cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1994) as a site of innovation. Through his multihyphenate work, Abloh was able to transcend design boundaries, or in other considerations, cross disciplines that are structurally and historically siloed. Despite Abloh's profound impact, Baniandres Gomez et. Al (2021) argues intellectual scholarship on his work remains sparse. Therefore, this paper is an academic call and response, coining the "Virgil Abloh Effect" — a method by which transmedia communication and transcreative practices coalesce to establish new mainstream aesthetic norms at the nexus of fashion, art, and culture. Central to this new theory is the authorship of the artist's subjective worldview as a critical determinant of the final aesthetic outcome and subsequent cultural meaning along with a collective intelligence called 'scenius'. As such, Virgil Abloh is a prototype of a new art centered fashion designer. Advancing the "Is fashion art?" debate, this paper expands concepts of aesthetics (subjective and objective perception), quality/taste (judgement), hierarchy (power), and commerce (money).

