

Wednesday 13 January 2021

KEYNOTE — Un/masked: Pulling at the ties that b(l)ind
 Professor Therèsa M. Winge, Michigan State University

Dressing for the Covid 19 pandemic. The world has slowed down to a pace where we are being collectively and uniquely seen and seeing each other, which is blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction within the digital screen we are using to view the world. This is evident in the ways we peer into each other's highly curated private spaces during video meetings, dressing for our professional lives from the waist up; the variety of protest dress that has become symbolic uniform representations of political messaging; and the highly debated use of wearing or not wearing a mask. Still, there are respite during these turbulent times in the form of the takeover of Tik Tok with K-Pop performers donning digital filters, Cosplayers costuming for social media (rather than fan conventions); and many of us dressing in comfy knitwear for work (even if from just the waist down), which also highlight the important of dress. During this widespread social isolation and peering that the world through a digital screen, dress is the underlying story of the pandemic, from Handmaids and Black Lives Matter protesters in the streets, to Cosplayers holding costume competitions on social media, to pleas on national news programs for PPEs for health care professionals, to white pant suits paying homage to suffragettes, to the very recognizable MAGA hats versus the handknit pussyhats, to the sale of the first high-end digital garment. Dress scholars, researchers, curators, and enthusiasts around the world must be exclaiming: Dress matters and it is about time we had broad and important discussions about it as a significant part of the social and visual culture in any society with the ability and power to extend or limit the agency of the wearers and viewers as a dynamic form of non-verbal communication. Furthermore, discussions about head coverings and face masks, as well as the bodies wearing or not wearing them, are of paramount significance, when we are all primarily viewing each other as disembodied beings in digital environments. #dressmatters

Therèsa M. Winge [winge@msu.edu] is an Associate Professor in Apparel and Textile Design, in the Art, Art History, and Design department, and affiliate faculty in Asian Studies at Michigan State University. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Fashion Design with an additional emphasis in Graphic Design; Master of Liberal Studies degree with a multidisciplinary emphasis in Quantum Physics, Dress Studies, and Youth Studies; and Doctorate in Philosophy in Dress Studies at the University of Minnesota.

Common throughout her research, Winge focuses on the construction/deconstruction of visual and material cultures, dress, and narratives. Her research examines subcultural dress and popular culture fashions and costumes for their meanings and construction of identity, which informs and inspires her designs. Her research has been presented at international conferences and is published in journals, book chapters, and books. Her first book *Body Style* (2012) is about subcultural body modifications, and her second book *Costuming Cosplay: Dressing the Imagination* (2019) focuses on Cosplayers and their dress. Winge is currently writing a book about Science Fiction films highlighting their costumes, and the ways they inspire dress and fashions beyond to become part of a greater visual culture.

PANEL ONE: FUNCTIONALITY

CHAIR: PROFESSOR FIONA HACKNEY, MMU

1. Face Masks – what makes them fit for purpose?

Professor David Tyler, MMU

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought face masks to the forefront of attention, not least their ability to protect wearers from harm. The past year has seen a surge of research into the efficacy of face masks and how designs affect comfort in wear. Recent research is reviewed to assess design features that are critical for achieving the desired functionality.

Professor David Tyler [D.Tyler@mmu.ac.uk] is Professor in Fashion Technologies at MMU. His current research interests are in new product development, PPE, sustainability issues affecting apparel (notably the EU-funded project Resyntex), mobile e-commerce, wearable technologies and textile digital printing. He was lead academic for a KTP project (Knowledge Transfer Partnership – completed 2010) concerned with protective headwear. This project was the stimulus for more recent research into apparel that protects against impacts. Between June 2015 and November 2018, he was involved in the EU-funded project: Resyntex. This is a Circular Economy initiative to turn the clothing and textiles life cycle from linear to circular. He was leader of WP2 which is concerned mainly with consumer behaviour issues.

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2. Disposable Face Masks: Considerations for Socially and Environmentally Sustainable Use

Doris Domoszalai-Lantner & Sara Emilia Bernat, Co-Founders *Fashion Forward*

Disposable face masks, made of non-woven fabric, have been a standard component of personal protective gear (PPE) in medicine since the 1960s. Although they may offer better protection and filtration than some reusable masks made of woven textiles, they also have various negative social and environmental effects that have been exacerbated by the 2020 Covid19 pandemic. From the use of forced labor in the production process, to price-gouging and shortages on the market, and microplastics pollution of both land and oceanic environments, it has become increasingly evident that the status quo surrounding these masks is untenable in the long run. Utilizing the bevy of information that was generated as a direct result of the pandemic, this paper will call into question the sustainability of disposable face masks, while weighing possible solutions to mitigate the harm they have already caused, and will continue to cause, the planet should production and consumption remain unchecked.

Doris Domoszalai-Lantner [doris.domoszalai@gmail.com] is a New York-based fashion historian and archivist. She holds an MA in Fashion and Textile Studies: History, Theory, Museum Practice from the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), and a B.A. in History and East European Studies from Barnard College, Columbia University. She is a regular author for academic journals and publications, as well as speaker at international conferences, including Oxford University, and the University of Lille, France. Doris has founded and developed several private and corporate fashion archives, and is currently the Archives Manager at one of the world's largest manufacturers of trims and accessories. Doris co-founded Fashion Forward, a New York-based think tank, with Sara Emilia Bernat in 2020.

Sara Emilia Bernat [sarabernat@gmail.com] is a sociologist brand strategist. She graduated with a B.A. in Communications from the American University of Paris. Subsequently she earned an M.P.S. in Branding from the School of Visual Arts in NYC. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. from the Humboldt Universitat-Berlin in Sociology, studying sustainability in luxury and fashion, while splitting her time between Europe and the United States. In tandem with her research, Sara advises private and public organizations on strategic branding and development. Sara co-founded Fashion Forward, a New York-based think tank, with in 2020.

Fashion Forward is a think tank founded to challenge the conventional discourse around the fashion system. We take macro frameworks of analysis and create multi-level solutions for some of the world's most pressing issues in fashion and fashion-adjacent industries. Through a multidisciplinary lens, we unravel changes and disruptions in fashion, distilling diverse and unexpected data into intelligent insights, and frame them within accessible media such as exhibitions, white papers, public speaking, cultural guides, and consulting services. We help people access critical information, empower thoughtful decision-making, and turn abstract ideas into human-centered solutions. Find out more at www.fashionforward.io.

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3. Medical Masks and 'Flu' Veils: Balancing Safety and Fashion During the 1918 Pandemic Caroline Elenowitz-Hess, Parsons School of Design: The New School

As during the current COVID-19 pandemic, protective clothing, particularly masks, became a center of public attention during the 1918 pandemic and a visual signature of the crisis. Although the medical mask was the most commonly used face covering—and keenly resented by San Francisco's 'Anti-Mask' League—the American fashion industry also attempted to introduce their own hybrid product, the 'flu' veil. As veils were already seen as protective, especially when worn for activities such as driving, the popularity of veils at this moment in time reflected the atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. Simultaneously, the mask and veil's roles as the most visible fashions of the pandemic made them a target for cartoonists, who mocked the public's mixed compliance with public safety measures, while also devaluing the mask by suggesting that it was no more than a passing fashion or fad. As quickly as the fashion industry rushed to create a fashionable alternative to address the epidemic, this treatment of the mask as fleeting as a fashion trend parallels the memory of a world event that has managed to fade from history, lost between narratives of the First World War and the Roaring Twenties.

Caroline Elenowitz-Hess [elenc398@newschool.edu] currently works as a teaching assistant at Parsons, The New School. She graduated with her MA in Fashion Studies from Parsons in May 2020. Previously, she received her BA in English Literature from Yale University and an AAS in Fashion Design from FIT. Caroline has been a curatorial intern at the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and at the Museum at FIT. Her research is focused on fashion and femininity in the twentieth century in France and the United States.

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PANEL TWO: MATERIALITY

CHAIR: DR KATHRYN BROWBRIDGE, MMU [K.Brownbridge@mmu.ac.uk]

1. From the Plague Proboscis to Pandemic PPE: Unmasking the inventive socio-histories of face coverings

Dr Kat Jungnickel & Dr Katja May, Goldsmiths, University of London

Few of us gave much attention to personal protective equipment - PPE - a year ago. Now, in the wake of a pandemic, it's central to global news, political debates and everyday practice. Yet, face coverings are far from new. From 17th century plague masks to today's pandemic PPE, there are a plethora of ways people have protected themselves and others from ever-changing threats. Patent archives provide a surprisingly rich record of inventive individuals taking problems into their own hands (and faces). Yet despite this long and varied global history, not everyone is, or has ever been, equally protected.

This paper explores 200 years of face coverings in the European patent archive in the *Politics of Patents* project. Clothing patents are fascinating data because, in the process of outlining problems and proposing solutions, they reveal how different discourses of risk, identity and belonging have been debated, imagined and materialized onto bodies over time. We map inventions against each other, across time, space and socio-political happenings to ask: Who gets protected? How and why do some bodies get more protection than others? Do these disparities map onto other forms of invisibility, inequality and injustice? Does this produce (or reinforce) different kinds of political subjectivity?

Dr Kat Jungnickel [K.Jungnickel@gold.ac.uk] is Principal Investigator of the ERC funded Politics of Patents project (www.politicsofpatents.org), author of (ed.) *Transmissions: critical tactics for making and communicating research* (MIT Press, 2020) and *Bikes and Bloomers: Victorian women inventors and their extraordinary cycle wear* (Goldsmiths Press, 2018)

Dr Katja May [Katja.May@gold.ac.uk] is a Post-doctoral Fellow at the ERC funded Politics of Patents project. Her research interests are in textiles, feminist activism, protest cultures and the phenomenology of making. She has facilitated multiple craftivism (craft + activism) workshops.

2. Enacting a Sensibility for Sustainable Clothing: the quiet activism of making face masks

Professor Fiona Hackney, MMU, & Katie Jane Hill

The pandemic has triggered frenzied activity in homes and community spaces across the country as groups have got together to sew and distribute PPE, including face masks. Building on the growing interest in craft practices previously demeaned as amateur and domestic, this work represents a form of 'women's wisdom' (Clark, 2013). It demonstrates how textile crafts can enable agencies and build assets in communities to do all kinds of things. The issue of community craft agencies has been the topic of a number of AHRC-funded research projects, the most recent being S4S; Building a Sensibility for Sustainable Clothing (<https://s4sproject-exeter.uk>) which worked with community groups to examine how participatory arts methods (workshops, films, clothing diaries, wardrobe audits etc.) might help us better understand how people can adopt more pro-environmental clothing behaviours in their everyday lives. This paper outlines S4S methods and findings and shows how participant researcher Katie Hill has gone on to apply them making face masks for herself and her family from high quality cotton shirt material and re-purposed clothing. Arguing that such activities constitute a form of quiet activism (Hackney 2013), we consider how they signal wider shifts by embedding caring, sustainability, and ethics within wider society.

Professor Fiona Hackney [F.Hackney@mmu.ac.uk] is a design historian working on fashion culture, women's magazines, crafting, co-creation, and social design. Recent publications include 'Stitching a Sensibility for Sustainable Clothing: Quiet activism, affect and community agency' (2020) and *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1918-1939: The Interwar Period* (2018). Her monograph *Women's Magazines and the Feminine Imagination: Opening Up a New World for Women in Interwar Britain* is forthcoming with Bloomsbury (2021). She has led and worked on many AHRC-funded projects, most recently, S4S: Designing a Sensibility for Sustainable Clothing Choices, which explores the value of co-creative making for promoting pro-environmental behaviour change.

Katie Jane Hill [katiejhill@gmail.com] is a lecturer in design at Wolverhampton School of Art and a PhD candidate at Northumbria University. She has worked on a number of AHRC funded research projects on themes of sustainability, community engagement and participatory research, developing social design practice. Katie was the research assistant in the Midlands for the S4S Designing a Sensibility for Sustainable Clothing, an AHRC funded project that aimed to engage people in sustainable behaviour change through participatory textiles workshops.

3. HYBRID HEADS: A decoding method to design open narratives and dynamic identities

Daniela Dossi, Independent designer, Italy

Headaddresses and coverings are among the most powerful vehicles of cultural identity, whether of nationality, gender, ethnicity, religion, profession or subculture. With Hybrid Heads, designer Daniela Dossi questions the symbolic, political and social values of contemporary headaddresses, compiling an extensive archive of press photos from around the world. Starting from this, she developed a decoding method and open design system to create dynamic cultural identities.

Cultural identity is continuously evolving. Images, texts and textiles become a vehicle to investigate prevailing dynamics of identity, visual stereotypes and cultural representation. Cultural identity can be used to distinguish or divide people, but may also serve as a constructive instrument that allows us to recognise mutual differences as a common value. New hybrid headaddresses and narratives can thus be designed by remixing images, texts and textiles. What would the headaddress of the first Mexican female President of the United States look like, for example?

Hybrid Heads presents the potential of this decoding method as a design model that aims to provide a timely contribution, a reflective tool to create new relations between identity, visual culture, representation, open design, fashion, craft and textile today.

Hybrid Heads is a publication, an exhibition, an interactive installation, a dynamic textile archive and a design educational programme.

Publication <https://www.nai010.com/en/publicaties/hybrid-heads/245768>

Exhibition <https://www.designmuseumgent.be/en/events/hybrid-heads>

Daniela Dossi [dossidaniela@gmail.com] is an Italian designer and researcher currently based in the Netherlands. She trained as a designer at the Polytechnic University of Milan (IT) and the University of Brighton (UK) before attaining an MA in Social Design from Design Academy Eindhoven (NL). Her research-led and process-driven design practice focuses on critically exploring socio-political issues and cultural contexts through microhistories, ethnographic inquiries and semiotics. Her work aims to form innovative perspectives, thoughtful and dynamic intersections, experimental praxes and methodologies. She creates counter-narratives by juxtaposing and rearticulating social, cultural, visual, material, textual resources/data. Dossi has collaborated with diverse institutions and organisations, including Atelier d'architecture autogérée (FR), Droog Design (NL), Z33 (BE), MAK Vienna (AT), Van Abbemuseum (NL), Het Nieuwe Instituut (NL), Paul Harnden Shoemakers (UK) and OCAT Shenzhen (CN).

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PANEL THREE: GENDER

CHAIR: DR ELIZABETH KEALY-MORRIS, MMU

1. Toxic Masculinities: Men, Masks and Criminality Past and Present

Dr Alison Matthews David & Myriam Couturier, Ryerson University

From the black crape masks donned by the highwaymen of the eighteenth century, to the stockings and balaclavas worn by cat burglars and bank robbers in the twentieth century, masked men have long been associated with criminality. For centuries, covering part or all of the male face while engaged in criminal activities often led to harsher penalties in the judicial systems of the western world, but masking practices and designs changed with the evolution of crime itself. Drawing on evidence from the Old Bailey Online trial transcripts, media coverage, and surviving masks like the ones worn by the Stratton Brothers in 1905 from Scotland Yard's Crime Museum and the Forensic Laboratory of Montréal's collection in the Québec Musée de la civilisation (MCQ), this paper examines the problematics and practicalities of masking the male face as they relate to specific historical crimes. It then shifts the context to the current pandemic and asks the reverse question: how do we deal with the often-powerful men who now refuse to mask their faces? What do historical debates over criminality, responsibility, gender and danger tell us about the literally toxic masculinities that continues to show their multiple faces today?

Dr Alison Matthews David [am david@ryerson.ca] is an Associate Professor in the School of Fashion, Ryerson University. She has a PhD from Stanford University, has published on nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century dress and material culture, and launched the open access journal *Fashion Studies* with Dr. Ben Barry in 2018. Her current project, *The Fabric of Crime: A Forensic History of Fashion*, investigates the theme of crime and clothing as weapon, evidence, and disguise. *Exhibit A*, the exhibition she is co-curating with Elizabeth Semmelhack at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto on footwear and crime, will open in November 2022.

Myriam Couturier [mcouturi@ryerson.ca] Myriam Couturier is a PhD candidate in the joint Communication and Culture program at Ryerson and York Universities in Toronto, and holds an MA in Fashion from Ryerson. Her research interests are fashion history, gender, material, and visual culture, with a specific focus on everyday fashion and historical dress collections. Her doctoral dissertation examines the corporate archive as a fashion text, exploring how fashion was communicated, promoted, and collected by a major Canadian department store between 1900 and 1965. She is currently working as a research assistant for Dr. Alison Matthews David's project *The Fabric of Crime: A Forensic History of Fashion*.

2. Masking Masculinity – An overview of the mask in menswear before and after Covid-19 Professor Andrew Groves & Dr Danielle Sprecher, University of Westminster

The simple cloth mask, a seemingly non-gendered and unsophisticated object, has rapidly become a symbolic, gendered, and contested artefact through its adoption in response to Covid-19. In particular, the design, marketing, and use of these masks underline long-standing narratives within menswear that are concerned with ideas of protection, armour, and masculinity.

Since April 2020, the Westminster Menswear Archive (WMA) has been documenting the U.K.s rapidly evolving reaction to the pandemic through the acquisition of masks and PPE to add to the archive's permanent collection. From the fashion industry's initial response producing free masks for healthcare workers to the emergence of designer iterations from companies including Burberry, J.W. Anderson, and Turnbull & Asser, the masks produced in response to Covid-19 have both surprising and revealing.

While the pandemic has made the wearing of masks mandatory, over the last 20 years, masks have increasingly been adopted as a motif of modern menswear. Designers, including Vexed Generation, C.P. Company, A-COLD-WALL* and Off-White, have all deliberately referenced masks within their collection. Using historical examples from the WMA, this presentation will explore the reasons why masks originally designed for industrial, military, or functional usage have become such a critical component of contemporary menswear.

Professor Andrew Groves [A.Groves@westminster.ac.uk] is the Director of the Westminster Menswear Archive, which he founded in 2016. It is the world's only publicly accessible menswear archive, used by industry, researchers, and students. It contains over 2000 examples of some of the most important menswear garments covering the last 120 years.

Dr Danielle Sprecher [D.Sprecher@westminster.ac.uk] is the curator of the Westminster Menswear Archive and co-curated the exhibition Invisible Men. She is a historian whose research focuses on the history of British menswear and men's fashion, exploring the industry from design to production and final consumption. As a curator, she has worked with several historical dress collections across the UK.

3. Mask or Masque? Contemporary Interpretations of Aesthetic Protective Statements

Nathaniel Dafydd Beard, Coventry University London

In a recent interview fashion critic Robin Givhan (2020) asserted that the contemporary face mask has become the most politicised statement. This is also reflected through history (Ross Crumrine and Halpin 1983) and is seemingly now returned. Yet who is wearing the mask and what purpose does the mask serve? Up until recently, in Western society the idea of the mask and mask wearing has (outside of certain professional scenarios) often been related more to concealment than to protection. The balaclava, the hoodie, baseball cap and kerchief have all been forms of concealment for burglars, hooligans and outcasts. Yet many other groups of people have now sought to adopt and make use of face coverings or masks whether formal or informal to pursue a different purpose; often with the intent of asserting some type of aesthetic or politicised statement, a form of creativity that is difficult to decipher (Thomson and Jacque 2017). Are these masks of protection or masques of concealment? Who are they trying to convince in their aesthetic protective statements? What does this mean for the fashionable purveyors of masks? Who is the audience such masques are being played to? Or this a situated aesthetic practice (Mattick 2003) that has more substance than at first revealed?

Nathaniel Dafydd Beard [Nathaniel.Beard@coventry.ac.uk] Nathaniel Dafydd Beard is a Senior Lecturer and Course Director of MSc International Fashion Marketing at Coventry University London. He is the Co-Founder of the Fashion Research Network, established in 2013 to support the promotion of fashion and dress research, collaborating with Courtauld Institute of Art, ICA, RCA, Somerset House, V&A Museum, Museum at FIT New York and the University of Hong Kong, amongst others. He has published on fashion culture in Italy, Germany, USA and the UK including in *Address*, *BIAS*, *Fashion Theory*, and *Sexymachinery* as well as presenting conference papers at the universities of Bologna, Brighton, Helsinki, Oxford, Sheffield, Warwick, and the Chicago Fashion Lyceum.

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PANEL FOUR: PERFORMATIVITY

CHAIR: DR SOPHIE WOOD, REGENTS UNIVERSITY [SOPHIE.WOOD@stu.mmu.ac.uk]

1. Fill in the Blank: Masking at Maison Martin Margiela

Colleen Hill, Museum at FIT

During his time at his namesake label (1989-2008) Martin Margiela was rarely seen, refused to give interviews, and declined to explain the concepts behind his idiosyncratic collections. His emphasis on obscurity was echoed by an early styling choice: to shroud his models' faces in fabric. Margiela's reasoning for this decision was threefold: he could not afford to hire well-known models, he felt that masks allowed for greater focus on the clothing, and the veiling offered a "blank screen" onto which clients could project themselves. Margiela's masking expanded in later collections, taking the forms of face paint, wigs, and "incognito" sunglasses.

Some saw Margiela's masks as a means of asserting individuality in fashion, while others viewed them as a misogynistic extinguishing of women's identities. This talk will discuss both arguments and will also make brief connections to less literal concepts of masking—and unmasking—in Margiela's work. He masked clothing and accessories with paint; historical references in his designs were masked by the unusual ways in which the clothes were worn; and processes of (re)creation were unmasked through his conspicuous repurposing of old clothing. Through all of these techniques, Margiela staged a metaphorical unmasking of the fashion industry's fascination with celebrity, newness, and commercialism.

Colleen Hill [colleen_hill@fitnyc.edu] is curator of costume and accessories at The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (MFIT). She holds an MA in Fashion and Textile Studies: History, Theory, Museum Practice from FIT and is currently a PhD student at London College of Fashion. Since joining MFIT in 2006, Colleen has curated or co-curated more than a dozen exhibitions. She has also authored or co-authored six books on fashion and contributed to numerous other publications.

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2. Cracked Enamel: the materiality of nineteenth-century make-up

Ksenia Gusarova, Russian State University for the Humanities

While nowadays we may not think of make-up as a kind of mask, in the 19th century such reading of both stage make-up and women's beauty techniques was predominant. In the context of performing arts, a reference to the mask evoked ancient Greek theatrical tradition, which modern European theatre allegedly continued. With regard to women's make-up, however, the mask metaphor had a distinct negative meaning pertaining to the treacherous falsity of those who chose to alter and disguise their faces in this way. Descriptions of make-up as mask, thus, were primarily ideologically motivated and to a large extent rooted in physiognomic ideas of the era, which postulated the transparency of one's 'natural' appearance — hence the artificial cosmetic face's efficacy as well as its danger. At the same time, references to the mask point to the materiality of 19th-century make-up, which often involved an opaque layer of white as its foundation. This coating was variously compared to plaster, enamel, china or wax, and in the proposed paper I will try to unpack the implications of these comparisons, which reflected not only the heightened misogyny of the era when women became increasingly visible in urban public spaces, but also discursive marginalization of handcrafts and performing traditions with non-European or lower-class connotations.

Ksenia Gusarova [kgusarova@gmail.com] is a Research Fellow at the Institute for the Advanced Studies in the Humanities of the Russian State University for the Humanities, where she leads interdisciplinary research seminar *The Texts of Fashion*, and an Associate Professor at the Department of Cultural Studies and Social Communication of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Political Administration. She also teaches on MA programme *Fashion Industry: Theory and Practice* at the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences. Her research interests comprise various techniques of appearance management, from make-up to posing for a photograph, their historical development and manifold meanings.

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3. Hiding in Plain Sight: Women, Play and Empowerment: Some ludic aspects of masks and head covering

Dr Sian Bonnell, MMU

In this paper I propose the aesthetic of Wilful Amateurism. As I have formulated it, Wilful Amateurism is a form of serious play derived from the chance and play of Cage and Duchamp reworked as a feminine/ist 21st century deviation of dada, surrealism and conceptualism. Wilful Amateurism functions within a paradoxical space between sculpture, performance and photography. It is made manifest through lived experience and is fuelled by the following characteristics: play, imagination, dysfunction, irreverence, absurdity, chance and fiction.

Some examples include the surrealist photographs of Claude Cahun of the 1930's and Lee Miller's Wartime images for *Vogue* in the 1940's. In my own practice I have requisitioned a number of disparate household articles as forms of attire, masking and disguise. These range from cardboard boxes, colanders and baking tins as head coverings to plastic picnic plates as halos.

My paper will explore ideas of agency with regard to the ways that found objects are transformed when utilised as agents for hiding. How does the hiding and transforming one's head cause a sense of empowerment through the very act of disappearing? One has only to think of the fashion for students to keep their cameras turned off in a video call.

Dr Sian Bonnell [S.Bonnell@mmu.ac.uk] is a UK-based artist, curator and publisher. TRACE, her curation and publishing project was established in 1999. Artist books published under the imprint TRACE Editions include *Wild Track* the first book of poetry by Mark Haworth-Booth, *Imagine Finding Me* by Chino Otsuka and *Villa Mona* by Marjolaine Ryley. Since 2014 she has curated an annual exhibition of UK graduate photography, featuring over 250 images selected from 16 Universities for the Pingyao International Photography Festival held every September in China.

Research is divided into many strands concerning photography and its relations with performance/performing for the camera; sculpture/the object and the camera; the dissemination of the photograph, with regard to curation, publishing and the book and its relations with other disciplines such as medicine.

Her work is held in many public and corporate collections notably, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, the Ransom Center, Texas and the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

Face Off: The Provocation and Possibilities of Face Masks and Head Coverings
 Online symposium, 13-14 January 2021

MANCHESTER
 FASHION
 INSTITUTE

Thursday 14 January 2021

KEYNOTE — Facing the Abyss

Dr Barbara Brownie, University of Hertfordshire

The images that are reflected in the visor of a space-helmet present a god's eye view of the world and everyone who inhabits it. In this way, the helmet is a reminder of the insignificance of the individual human wearer in contrast to the vastness of space. As a life-sustaining cocoon, the helmet is a reminder of human vulnerability – the astronaut is both posthuman and all-too-human. This presentation will introduce the helmet as a sign of Man's conquest over our environment that also deflects attention away from Man and onto his environment. I will then travel through the visor and into the helmet to consider the phenomenology of helmet-wearing, contrasting the vast visual landscape of space with the close and compact aural landscape that is contained within. These experiences are adjacent to, but distinguishable from, the post-gravity experience of spacewear. I will consider how the helmet disorients and relocates the senses, and blurs the boundaries between the interior and exterior of the wearer's body.

Dr Barbara Brownie [b.k.1.brownie@herts.ac.uk] is a Principal Lecturer in Visual Communication at the University of Hertfordshire. Her research investigates the relationship between clothes and the body, and most recently, how the clothed body is affected by weightlessness. Her most recent book is *Spacewear: Weightlessness and the Final Frontier of Fashion* (Bloomsbury, 2019). Barbara invites opportunities for collaborations of any kind.

PANEL ONE: COSTUME

CHAIR: DR BENJAMIN WILD, MMU [B.Wild@mmu.ac.uk]

1. Material experience through masks

Sabrina Recoules Quang, Royal College of Art

As face and head coverings become normalized, we discover through the materiality of the masks, new ways of engaging with our surroundings. Whether we cover our face with wool, silicon, organic matter, or soft electronic components will elicit specific responses to and from the environment.

From a puppetry perspective, masks like puppets are extensions of the body of their performers. The mask on the body acts as a mediator, a catalyst, a mirror and a frame. Embedded with sensorial and animated qualities, face and head coverings might have the potential to generate new narratives from the environment and bring forth uncanny, although likeable characters.

Behind the masks, our bodies interact with the materiality of the "mask-object" set on our faces. On the other side, the viewers shift their focus from one reality to another: from the human head to the "mask-body" ensemble. In summary, while concealing a part of our humanity, face and head coverings might reveal non-human perspectives and open new communication channels.

In that context, I propose to discuss why mask-wearing could be an opportunity to explore new materialities for designers and why it could bring forth new forms of communication between human and non-human agencies.

Sabrina Recoules Quang [s.r.quang@network.rca.ac.uk] After achieving a MFA in Computational Art at Goldsmiths University, Sabrina is currently pursuing a PhD at the Royal College of Art. Through her practice as a puppet maker and puppeteer she explores the process of embodiment of animated and sensorial qualities through materials.

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2. Head Coverings in Ballet: Concealing the Real Person

Linda Kvitkina, Independent academic, Russia

Head coverings in ballet are used less often than tightly fit headpieces, and two main uses can be distinguished. First, it serves to link the story to display of an ethereal woman, for example in *Giselle* they are used to introduce the nature of the Willis, spirits of girls that never married. It creates an impression of a dancer floating effortlessly, not affected by gravity.

Another use of head coverings can be seen when they are designed to conceal a dancer as a human, in this case they are made for characters that are either inanimate (for example, dolls in the *Nutcracker*), or animals (for instance, in the apotheosis of the *Sleeping Beauty*). Sometimes, depending on the production, they can be substituted with masks (and fake hair) to ensure the association that a viewer would have.

All in all, despite difficulties for dancing with head coverings or masks, it can be assumed that those pieces are used in ballet to either conceal the human nature of a dancer, or the bodily presence of a character that ballet would rather present as less of a body, and more of a spirit.

Linda Kvitkina [kvitk.linda@gmail.com] Linda Kvitkina is an independent researcher based in Saint-Petersburg. She received her MA from the Higher School of Economics in 2019, and has been working on dance history and dance anthropology projects. In her studies she focuses on corporeality and personal experiences of dancers and dance practitioners. She regularly practices in the field of contemporary dance, including research through practice.

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3. Hats off to you: altering social positions through the use of masks and head coverings

Dr Jonathan Spangler, MMU

In seventeenth-century France, the face was a point of contact for honour or dishonour. Masks were used to erase one's identity or to present alternatives. For men in particular, hats were a crucial means for displaying rank and deference. This talk will bring together these two forms of modifying appearance in a variety of contexts to see how etiquette, enhancement and effacement formed a line of continuity in social relations in early modern culture. Masks were used to project allegorical identities in court ballets or masquerade balls, as seen for example, in the portrait of Queen Marie-Thérèse in Polish costume, or the masks of Apollo worn by Louis XIV. Real identities were measured by removing or refusing to remove a hat following (or breeching) strict rules of etiquette at court. The wearing of masks or hats could also signify scandal or protest, as in the masked aristocrats participating in Black Masses during the Affair of the Poisons, or hatted judges asserting their social equality before the high nobility in the Affair of the Bonnet. The Abbé de Choisy writes about using a mask to help in his cross-dressing transformation and that of his friend, Philippe d'Orléans, brother of the King. Finally, in the most famous example from this period, I will look at the stories surrounding the Man in the Iron Mask, from the mundane process of transferring a politically sensitive prisoner from one place to another, to the more fantastical stories that were later generated of an elaborate means of hiding a secret twin brother of the King. Many of the names suggested for the identity of the man in the Iron Mask, from Voltaire to the present day, point to an idea of who or what needed to be hidden, notably illegitimacy and sexual otherness.

Dr Jonathan Spangler [J.Spangler@mmu.ac.uk] is senior lecturer in History at MMU, with a specialist research focus on France and the court of Versailles and social relations between aristocratic elites in the early modern period. He has published a monograph and several articles about a family of courtiers, the Lorraine-Guise, and is currently completing a book on the role of the Second Son in the French Monarchy. Spangler is the Senior Editor of *The Court Historian* and a member of the research committee for the Château de Versailles.

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PANEL TWO: CULTURAL MEMORY

CHAIR: DR JONATHAN SPANGLER, MMU

Who is the Sick One Here? Mask refusal and ambivalent social identity in COVID America

Dr Elizabeth Kealy-Morris, MMU

This paper will consider the mask as both an accessory and a protective barrier utilising embodied dress theory (Entwistle, 2000; Goffman, 1990; Miller & Woodward, 2012; Davis, 1992). The face mask is now a symbol of what Davis (1992) terms 'ambivalent social identity', and centrally the anxiety of who the mask is protecting – who is the 'sick one' here? This anxiety has turned to powerful backlash against this small but key piece of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kit (Elan, 2020; Madowo, 2020) and against legislation making it unlawful to not wear it in public settings deemed hazardous by public health officials during the height of spikes in the pandemic (Caparo & Barcelo, in press).

This paper will explore the current mask-refusal movement in America to unpick the roots of this backlash and will suggest that its origins come from an active social myth of personal freedom and physical fortitude which runs like a seam through the fault lines of American collective consciousness. This paper suggests that with the reaction to the face mask we see the material culture of dress invigorating collective cultural memory (Halbawchs, 1992) and further evidence that dressing oneself is an everyday embodied material and cultural practice.

Dr Elizabeth Kealy-Morris [E.Kealy-Morris@mmu.ac.uk] Dr Elizabeth Kealy-Morris, originally from the States, is Senior Lecturer in Fashion Communication at Manchester Fashion Institute, Manchester Metropolitan University, in Manchester, UK. She lectures in critical theory and visual communication practice within fashion communication subjects. Her practice-based doctorate, *The Artist's Book: Making as embodied knowledge of practice and the self*, considered the role of creativity in the development of identity via working through personal and cultural memory with visual practice. Her artist's books have been exhibited in the UK, Ireland, Germany, and the United States and she is the author of a range of conference papers and journal articles. For more information please visit <http://www.ekealymorris.com>.

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2. The Masks of Alessandro de' Medici: Conflict, Race and Fancy Dress in Early Modern Italy

Professor Catherine Fletcher, MMU

After the assassination of Alessandro de' Medici, duke of Florence, in 1537, the keeper of the ducal wardrobe, was called to account for the large number of items that had been removed from the wardrobe in the days following the duke's death. The list he supplied noted that the duke had owned plenty of masquerading costumes. One box of masks, recorded in the wardrobe accounts for spring 1533 when Alessandro was spending time in the company of his future father-in-law, the Emperor Charles V, suggests courtiers were disguising themselves as peasants, women, Moors, a Turk, a bearded hermit and Charles' celebrated adversary, the Ottoman admiral Barbarossa (Khair ad-Dīn). Other masquerading costumes in the wardrobe included outfits for pilgrims, monks and gypsies. This paper will consider the dynamics of these costumes in light both of contemporary conflict between Christian and Muslim powers, and of the allegations that Alessandro himself (who was illegitimate) was the son of a woman variously described as 'a slave', 'mulatto' and 'half-Negro'. Alessandro's masquerading became a feature of his enemies' tales of his wickedness, but by reconstructing the political contexts for these costume choices it is possible to create a more nuanced interpretation of his masks' meaning.

Professor Catherine Fletcher [Catherine.Fletcher@mmu.ac.uk] is Professor of History at Manchester Metropolitan University and the author of several books on Renaissance and early modern history including *The Beauty and the Terror: An Alternative History of the Italian Renaissance* (2020) and *The Black Prince of Florence* (2016). Prior to taking up her post at MMU in 2020 she taught at Durham, Sheffield and Swansea Universities and held fellowships at the Institute for Historical Research, British School at Rome and European University Institute. She was selected as an AHRC/BBC New Generation Thinker in 2015 and regularly appears on radio and TV.

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3. Hiding Under the Tapada Limeña

Dr Luisina Silva Blanc, Independent academic, USA

Colonial Latin American society was a highly controlled environment organized according to class, lineage, and *calidad*. Dress was employed to show commonality, individuality, and agency but also to emulate or to deceive. My presentation will introduce the role of clothing as a dynamic tool that had different layers of value, uses, and power. I will focus my argument on the character of the *tapada limeña* as one of the best examples of clothing as a concealing and deceiving tool in colonial Spanish America.

In a diverse and complex society such as the one in the colonies, it was mandatory to distinguish each individual by their appearance. If one could modify the way it was perceived, it could mean gaining access to a better job, a government position, or an exception from paying tributes. Laws and regulations such as Pragmatics, *ordenes reales*, *cédulas*, and *provisiones* were the centers of a surveillance network developed to ensure accurate distinction and guarantee proper consumption of clothing. However, individuals craved restricted textiles and garbs. The clothing of the *tapada* included a *saya* (long skirt) and *manto* (shawl) that covered their heads and faced revealing only one eye. Not knowing who was under the *manto* created constant tension between the viewer, the *tapada*, and the authorities who wanted to control the female bodies. The *tapada* was a rebellious woman that concealed their identities to navigate the public life of colonial Lima more freely.

Dr Luisina Silva Blanc [luisinasilvablanc@gmail.com] Luisina Silva Blanc is an independent scholar based in New York, with expertise in fashion studies and material culture. She earned a Ph.D. in Humanities at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, with a dissertation titled ‘Colonial Threads. Clothing and Identity in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century Lima and Mexico City,’ in 2019. Her interdisciplinary research focused on how individuals from colonial Latin-American consumed and built their identities through appearance. Luisina holds a MA with concentrations in Fashion Studies and Digital Humanities from The Graduate Center, CUNY, a BA in Visual Arts from the SUNY at Old Westbury, and a BS in Communications from Universidad Católica del Uruguay. She received curatorial training at the Antonio Ratti Textile Center at the Metropolitan Museum of New York and has been involved in several research projects at Columbia University and Universitat Pompeu Fabra. She is currently working on revising her doctoral thesis into a full-length academic monograph. Dr. Silva’s Twitter handle is @LuisinaSilvaB

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PANEL THREE: VIRTUALITY

CHAIR: DR PADDY LONERGAN, MMU [P.Lonerган@mmu.ac.uk]

1. The Legacy of the Kavacki's Headscarf Revisited in the Age of Social Media

Professor Elif Kavacki, University of Arizona

French linguist and semiotician, Roland Barthes has argued that the way a garment is represented and the way it is perceived depends on a plethora of factors that come together to form a complex system which he refers to as the “fashion system”. Barthes’s idea of a complex system intersects with a parallel argument made by cultural theorist and media philosopher Matthew Fuller. Fuller has argued that a “standard object”, like an article of clothing, or the image of an article of clothing, can take on a more valuable meaning based on its media ecology. This paper attempts to decode a “represented garment” (Barthes) and its transmission from a “standard object” (Fuller) to a dynamic process by applying Barthesian and Fullerian perspectives respectively. More interestingly, this paper serves as a case study of my own personal attempt at designing a highly coded headscarf and using social media for viral activism and social change. The paper further examines how and why the specific Instagram photograph of the headscarf went viral and ended up on local breaking news, and ultimately in global news.

Professor Elif Kavacki [kavacki@arizona.edu] is an Assistant Professor of Fashion Studies at The University of Arizona. She is a fashion designer who designs modest wear. Majority of her clients are Turkish women in politics (diplomats, MPs). She is also passionate about designing innovative functional hijabs. She has a number of unique patented hijab designs targeted towards professional Muslim women working in different sectors, such as policewomen, surgeons, athletes, etc. Her research interests include digital culture, fashion media, and modest fashion. She is the author of “Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies: The Online Identity Construction of Hijabi Social Media Personalities” published in *Media, Culture & Society* (2016).

2. Masks during the pandemic in Poland

Dr Aleksandra Jatzak-Repec, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw

I would love to present a topic: How did Poles react to the obligation of wearing masks? Did we choose sustainable, fashionable or practical ones. How did designers react? How did the market react? How did Poles react? In the presentation there will be a strong aspect of charitable movement concerning production of masks to support doctors and medics but also I would like to show to others how did Polish sustainable brands answer to that question as well as how Poles used masks as not only fashionable accessories but meaningful political signs (LGBTQ right, women rights, etc)!

I did and still do interviews with people from the industry (not only designers - here especially I want to show great practices from sustainable companies, stylists, for big producers I have data from business magazines, I try to interview them as well). I cover what was/is in media (national not so much, more local, and social media, fashion press obviously and lifestyle as well) and I do my own observation as I leave in city centre of Warsaw where you could also see how political mask could be.

Dr Aleksandra Jatzak-Repec [aleksandrajatzak@gmail.com] defended her PhD about post war fashion at Warsaw University in July 2010. For ten years she has tun lectures about fashion history and its market at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw.

3. From Digital to Physical Protection: hiding the true face with facial mask

Dr Maria Skivko, Samara National Research University, Russia

In 2019, virtual masks in Instagram became a tool to attract attention, to beautify the user, and to add emotions to the visual image. AR-filters, developed mostly for entertainment and promoted mainly by celebrities and bloggers, simplify the way of self-expression in the digital space. At the same time, virtual masks regulate the range of facial expressions by adding digital features or transforming visual look by various effects.

In 2020, physical facial masks turned into an instrument not only to distance physically from others and to protect oneself but also to disguise emotions by covering the face. With no use of digital help and as an obligatory accessory for everyone, physical facial masks became a way to hide the true face from others.

This contribution opens the discussion concerning the future of interpersonal communication. Will facial masks, virtual or physical, change the way how people interact and express emotions? Will masks simplify complicated interpersonal conversations? Will individuals tend to use facial protection after the obligatory period for controlling facial expression and hiding true emotions? In this changing time, there are some possibilities to investigate it.

Dr Maria Skivko [maria.skivko@googlemail.com] is an Associate Professor at the Department of Social Systems and Law at the Samara University (Samara, Russia). In her doctoral thesis completed at the Bauhaus-University Weimar (Germany) she investigated fashion and urban representations performed through the media discourse in the fashion magazines. As a sociologist and trend researcher, she specializes in fashion and cultural studies, trend-searching and trend-analysis, sustainable ideas and practices as well as ideas of digital minimalism and digital culture.

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