

# We Are Never Naked. — Insulation as a Performing Surface

Workshop 4  
Saturday  
January 30

If «a snowy landscape may be rendered fit by means of a ski-suit, gloves, boots and a balaclava» (Banham 1960) and the erection of solid walls is no longer a prerequisite for architecture, then the analogies between dwelling and dress are brought to the fore. Covered in layers of down feathers, waterproof yet breathable textiles and fluorescent polyesters, the body carries its own portable dwelling, so as to accommodate to the climate of the great outdoors. Complementing a long-time enthusiasm for the cross between architecture and dress, this workshop revisits the threshold between interior and exterior realms: the element of insulation as a performing surface. Through theoretical, hands-on and combined research, it focuses on the role of insulation, as a feature of division, definition and regulation, but also as an element that corresponds to diverse terrains – disciplinary or contextual.

At a time when the well-established building and bodily exteriors stand on thin ice, due to the rising technological advances, the workshop participants will be provided with insights into different manifestations of insulating space or the body. Equipped with the conceptual and material tools, they will probe the liminal surface that surrounds the body in temperatures below zero, whilst taking part in a social, multidisciplinary and creative performance. Exploring the hypothesis that «we are never outside without having recreated another more artificial, more fragile, more engineered envelope» (Latour 2011), they will be called to re-

flect on notions of envelopment and nakedness, of comfort and discomfort, of impermeability and porosity, of surface and volume and so on. They will hence gain knowledge of the multi-disciplinary discourse on bodily envelopment from within the terrains of spatial, dress and textile design. The better we understand the visible and invisible layers that accommodate us in different temperatures, the more diversely we will address the design of future environments; winter gear is just the tip of the iceberg.

Matina Kousidi, Politecnico di Milano, I,  
Eva Sopeoglou, University of Hertfordshire, UK,  
Joanna Pierce, Central Saint Martins College of Art and  
Design, UK

## Matina Kousidi

is an architect and architectural theorist (\*1982 in Athens, Greece), based at the Politecnico di Milano as a Research Fellow. Her work combines historical and theoretical tools, so as to apprehend the entangled interrelation between architecture, dress and the body. Currently, she develops her individual postdoctoral project on the genealogies of membrane architecture in the long twentieth century, which was sparked during her previous Fellowship at the gta Institute of ETH-Zürich. Matina was conferred her PhD, entitled Architettura su Misura. Habitat, Abito, Habitus, at Sapienza University of Rome after research stays at the IDK Institute of FHNW Basel, ENSA Paris – La Villette and the University of the Arts in London. Her work has been published in sundry journals on spatial and textile design, as well as on the history of art, architecture and design, such as the RIHA, Architectural Review and Surface Design.

## Eva Sopeoglou

(Sopéoglou, \*1973 in Thessaloniki, Greece) is a London-based architect, researcher and tutor.

She is a Lecturer of Architecture and Interior Architecture and Design at the University of Hertfordshire, UK. She is a practicing architect whose work has been published and exhibited internationally (2016 Surface Design Awards finalist, UK), and has practiced architecture in New York (with Gruzen Samton Architects and with Bernard Tschumi Architects). Eva is currently completing a PhD in Architectural Design at the UCL Bartlett School of Architecture in London, exploring the concepts of the envelope and thermal comfort in the built environment through a multi-disciplinary approach, studying the overlaps between architecture, textile-design and fashion. She has many years of teaching experience in Greece and in the UK (at Central StMartins and at the Architectural Association).

## Joanna Pierce

Jo Pierce has 20 years experience as designer, educator, researcher and artist. Currently in role as Senior Lecturer, Print Pathway Leader on the BA (Hons) Textile Design Course at Central Saint Martins since 2007 and a member of the Textiles Future Research Centre at Central Saint Martins.  
[www.tfrc.org](http://www.tfrc.org)

Jo's work has been exhibited and is included in the V&A Prints collection and has featured in publications and journals. She has worked to commission, delivered workshops and run seminars.

