

B

CRISTÓBAL BALENCIAGA MUSEOA

First International
Cristóbal Balenciaga Conference

Book of Abstracts

This publication contains the abstracts of the papers which will be presented at the First International Cristóbal Balenciaga Conference, to take place online on 1 and 2 October 2020.

These papers represent a selection of sixteen proposals, from among the forty received, made by a Scientific Committee of recognized experts in the field according to the double blind method. The objective was to guarantee the presentation of rigorous, quality papers and to place the study of Cristóbal Balenciaga in the field of academic research.

Given the importance of Balenciaga, the selected proposals come not only from the field of fashion history, but also from other fields of study such as, for example, economy, communications, and the arts considered in their widest sense.

Exploding Fashion: Cutting, Constructing and Thinking Through Things

The presentation reports on the findings of the UK Arts & Humanities Research Council funded research project Exploding Fashion (2018-2020) based at Central Saint Martins (University of the Arts London). The project is led by Professor Caroline Evans as Principal Investigator, with O'Neill as Co-Investigator.

The project brings historians, curators and practitioners together in the archive to explore a previously opaque part of the fashion design process, pattern-cutting.

It pulls focus on the pattern cutter, an essential maker and technician in the fashion design process whose role is essentially unacknowledged in design histories and unfamiliar to consumers.

Like an exploded-view drawing, the project offers a visually-led exploration of the fashion design process. Together the researchers 'explode' dress in the archive, reverse-engineering it by making 2D patterns, 3D toiles and 4D digital moving images of historical garments by Madeleine Vionnet, Charles James, Cristóbal Balenciaga, Halston and Comme des Garçons, to understand how they were made and once moved on the body.

The project thus combines 'thinking through making' with conventional archival research methods to offer new narratives and different ways of writing fashion history, beyond the traditional parameters of the field. Exhibition curation is central to its methods, enabling a spatial and motile display of the objects and processes under investigation. It therefore offers new ways to understand the importance of the making-process to fashion design, and shows how fashion innovation is produced out of the alchemical, conceptual and technical transformation from the flat into the round. It brings traditional ways of making into dialogue

with new ways of visualising, illuminating haute couture and prêt-a-porter methods for a visually-driven, digital age. The findings of the project will result in a forthcoming exhibition and publication.

The presentation will focus on a Balenciaga dress design from 1958 selected at Palais Galliera, Paris. The black crêpe de soir cocktail dress owned by Madame Weil was acquired in 1998 along with three other dresses. The finished dress design raised a number of questions relating to its conception and design, due to the lack of contextual resources it could be connected to such as sketch, pattern, toile or spec sheet. It led to a similar but later dress design, labelled "Nina, février 1966" including corresponding black toiles from the Balenciaga Archives, Paris. The reverse engineering of the dress design and its digital visualisation reveal the back of the dress as a focal point when worn.

Aldamar Parkea 6
20808 Getaria - Gipuzkoa - España
T 943 008 840
congress@fbalenciaga.com
www.cristobalbalenciagamuseoa.com

Trustees



Collaborator

