

CHAPTER 26

C26

ON FIRE

When Fashion Meets Cinema

MARKETA UHLIROVA

C26.P1 THE phenomenon of the serpentine dance is now widely recognized as one with great importance for cinema's early development.¹ Devised by the American performer and choreographer Loïe Fuller who also popularized it on the Parisian stage of the 1890s, the dance departed from established traditions such as classical ballet and the skirt dance. Rather than foregrounding the body with its graceful poses and controlled trajectories of movement, it used undulating silk as a means through which to conjure a much more effervescent vision of movement, manifesting itself as a rhythmic flow periodically punctuated by bursts of energy. Indeed, it was the costume—sometimes the only visible element of the dance performance—that became the principal draw in this unique theater, its swirling drapery interacting with electric light, colors, and sometimes magic lantern imagery to create forms in perpetual appearance and dissolution.

C26.P2 Fuller directly informed some of the most popular genres of the first two decades of cinema, from the serpentine dance films and parodies to trick and *féerie* films to later avant-garde productions.² But the impact of the dancer's quintessentially modern imagery goes beyond any rudimentary notion of influence. As has been argued from multiple disciplinary perspectives, her performances both prefigured the cinema and were in themselves intrinsically cinematic.³ Through her fluid shapes, Fuller compellingly demonstrated continuous motion and change while also becoming a moving screen that received and animated projected colors and images. Her spectral costume, an artistic medium in its own right, thus embodied a singular intersection between theatrical spectacle, dance, and technological image on the cusp of cinema's emergence.

C26.P3 Yet, given costume's almost symbolic place in cinema's beginnings, the significance of dress for the cinema has not been adequately articulated. And not only that: dress has commonly been sidelined in theoretical debates on film. Cinema histories have for the most part regarded fashion and costume as essentially foreign and irrelevant—as too superfluous, frivolous, and ephemeral to be worthy of serious investigation. Writing in 1996, Pam Cook argued that this area of study has been systematically ignored, calling

such neglect “scandalous” and “symptomatic” of a complex set of cultural ambivalences toward dress and femininity (echoing a then-familiar lamentation among fashion studies scholars).⁴ David Bordwell noted that critical discourse marginalized costume design among the various filmmaking crafts, regarding it as an inheritance from the theater. According to him, film commentators focused instead on other, more “purely cinematic” aspects of filmic language, such as editing.⁵ Or, to follow Ian Christie, film “vision” has been “routinely attributed to its director, in a tradition that was intensified by the critical revolution of the 1960s that launched ‘auteurism,’” leaving little room for considerations of other forms of creative authorship involved in filmmaking (including art direction and costume design).⁶ It hardly helps the cause that both film and fashion archives generally hold few reliable surviving costumes, and historical records documenting costume and production design are similarly sparse.⁷ As Elizabeth Leese writes in the introduction to her 1976 book *Costume Design in the Movies*, “it is uncommonly difficult to confirm factual information about costume designers and their work.”⁸

C26.P4

But the troubled status of dress in film history goes deeper than its gendered dismissal and its scarce material evidence. For the most part, it has also been relegated to an inferior position within the industry itself, despite frequently playing fundamental roles in filmic *mise en scènes* and narratives. Furthermore, and perhaps even more surprisingly, fashion scholarship has largely shared film history’s indifference (or ambiguity?) toward costume—and indeed fashion—in film. Both modern-day and period costume on the screen have been discounted as unreliable historical evidence, seen as belonging to the realms of fantasy and fiction. Where narrative fiction film has been discussed, it was mostly to acknowledge its power to popularize and disseminate fashions through imitation and exaggeration, to illustrate a handful of couturiers’ forays into cinema, and, more recently, to highlight cinema as a rich source of reference for fashion design and photography.⁹ Most puzzling is the fact that nonfiction film’s immense value for the study of fashion and dress has rarely been recognized, despite the hundreds of fashion films held in public and private archives globally.¹⁰ This may have something to do with the historical difficulties in accessing film archives and their databases. But, more likely, it is because cinema—in contrast to photography, illustration, and printed magazines—was never truly regarded as fashion’s “own” medium. Until the digital era, film had never come to play an integral role in fashion’s day-to-day operations, and its cross-promotions through fashion magazines (as opposed to film periodicals) tended to be sporadic. Unlike photography, film production and distribution had never been fully controlled from within the fashion industry, perhaps with a few exceptions such as the couturier Paul Poiret’s productions in 1910s France, or shoemaker Bata-owned film studios in 1930s Czechoslovakia.¹¹

C26.P5

The neglect of fashion in cinema has been sharply reversed in the past two decades. There is now a thriving interest in exploring various intersections between the two, evident in numerous scholarly publications, conferences, and a dedicated academic journal,¹² as well as public museum exhibitions and fashion film festivals, online magazines, and other digital platforms for fashion moving image content. In the

academy, this development has coincided with wider shifts toward interdisciplinarity: there, fashion in cinema has been explored from within a growing roster of humanities disciplines, including fashion and cinema studies, visual culture, costume design and performance studies, theater and dance history, and literary theory. These studies have explored all kinds of parallels and interactions between the cinema and fashion industries. They have analyzed the relations between costume, stardom, and fashion consumption; the fashioning of characters' identities through costume and styling; and, in recent years, the rise of digital fashion film as a "novel" fashion medium of the twenty-first century, which, in turn, has drawn attention to the twentieth-century fashion newsreel. Yet, if a new field of study has emerged, there lacks a consensus as to what exactly constitutes it.

C26.P6 While elsewhere I have sketched out how such a field may be conceptualized,¹³ in this chapter I want to propose that its biggest stumbling block has been the inability to clearly define its object of study. The unspoken question has been: what exactly is to be examined? Fashion or costume? And, consequently, who makes claims to such examinations: fashion or cinema scholars? These are not merely questions of semantics but ones that go to the heart of the difficulty in theorizing a unified field by a community of researchers and practitioners willing to engage in a dialogue. Fashion and film costume are not the same, but nor are they readily separable. They speak to one another and often overlap in conspicuous ways: costume can also be fashion and vice versa. With that in mind, I believe that a careful, nuanced differentiation between the two concepts can help illuminate just how complex their relationship is. I will then also add a third term to this discussion—"clothes"—in order to emphasize another critical distinction which, though important, tends to be swallowed by the cracks in the fashion–costume divide.

C26.P7 Ultimately, I argue that fashion and dress have been major forces in cinema history whose significance is far greater than the commercial interrelationships in which they are often implicated. My thesis is that fashion and cinema—as two industries, art forms, institutions, and cultures—have been profoundly intertwined (albeit with frictions and contradictions) and, crucially, have at times been mutually transformative. This is true not only in terms of their many converging practices but also in terms of their materialities, technologies, visual effects, and affects. While dress and fashion are of course more crucial to some cinematic genres and modes than to others, I suggest that their study offers a prism through which to reframe our understanding of cinema's workings across its narrative and nonnarrative forms.

C26.S1 MODELING CLOTHING, MODELING CHARACTERS?

C26.P8 What, then, is it that is modeled on the cinema screen? Is it fashionable clothing? Or is it, rather, characters as they emerge through the act of getting into costume? Much

of the debate about film costume pivots around this very distinction.¹⁴ Costume design, it is generally argued, grows out of a different tradition from fashion, based in a distinct industry with its own needs. It also operates on a different ontological register from fashion. Where fashion is thought to respond to, and express, the changing social, cultural, and political contexts *in the real world*, film costume, it is argued, is circumscribed by the *cinematic world* and its own realities. Because of this, it would seem that costume is largely exempt from a fashion-for-fashion's sake mindset with its emphasis on newness, now-ness, and constant transformation. But such an assumption needs unpacking.

C26.P9 The fashion–costume debate emerged during the silent era at a time when it was considered acceptable—and advantageous—for fashion to regularly stand in for costume. For modern-day stories, actors and actresses were typically encouraged to source their own wardrobes, and the emergent star system soon made it clear that glamor and sartorial chic can greatly enhance one's star persona. At the same time, a close alliance between fashions created by the couture houses and “screen fashions” was perpetuated by popular and trade magazines. But as the costume designer solidified their position in both Hollywood and European film studios toward the end of the 1920s, there came attempts to theorize their *métier* by distancing it from fashion.¹⁵ The newly professionalized designer was understandably keen to stress that the thriving medium of cinema warranted a different dressmaking expertise and aesthetic intent. An emergent discourse around film costume began to emphasize its specificity, citing cinema's unique requirements, especially actors' physical attributes and personality, as well as the idiosyncrasies of cinematography (namely, how people and objects photographed, problems of framing and magnifying, and considerations of overall composition of the *mise en scène*). As costume designer Jacques Manuel wrote,

C26.P10 cinematic fashion has . . . to be stylized. [It is] a transposition of fashion. A successful style from a brilliant collection suffers no more painful an ordeal than the ordeal it undergoes under the lens; it is almost always a bitter disappointment for the dress designer to see one of his creations even on the News . . . Its proportions and volumes have gone missing, as have its values and materials.¹⁶

C26.P11 Cinema, it was argued, necessitated an altogether different style. As Coco Chanel, herself a *couturière* engaged by Hollywood in 1931, stressed: “I work hard to try to create a *film style*.”¹⁷ For Chanel and others, it was important to assert that costume need not follow fashion, as was typically assumed, and that the opposite can also occur. The conceptual divorce of costume from fashion, however, was far from straightforward. Certainly, in the case of Chanel, the point was expressly not to dissociate oneself from fashion but rather to produce “special fashion for film, or at least interpret current fashion . . . This way,” she wrote, “you avoid two snags: creating ‘costume,’ which would be too artificial, or seeing clothes go rapidly out of fashion.”¹⁸ Indeed, the issue of looking dated became perhaps *the* most commonly cited problem when it came to comparing costume

with fashion. Due to Hollywood's long production cycle that lasted six months or more, costume design wasn't compatible with the fast pace of fashion's changes. Thus, to fix such misaligned temporalities, studios during the 1920s and 1930s sometimes proclaimed that their designers thought so far ahead as to effectively predict the future of fashion—engaging in a kind of twisted competition for cultural prestige that ultimately only stressed how closely aligned the two were.

C26.P12

With the arrival of sound, costume designers began to regard the “parading” of current fashions in film as ill-advised and incoherent with the totality of the film work and its message. One of them, Claude Autant-Lara (a major contributor to France's avant-garde who then turned into a mainstream filmmaker and—like Chanel—a troublesome political figure), called for greater humility of the entire film team toward the film *sujet*. He asserted that a costume must primarily express a character's inner state: “their personality, habits, tastes, ideas, momentary dispositions, their immediate past and future.”¹⁹ In his conception, costume was above all a “psychological indication” that should speak volumes where a character may remain altogether silent. A key building block without which the entire dramatic edifice could easily collapse, it must preserve the character's authenticity and truthfulness.

C26.P13

Such concerns led to the emergence of a convention according to which costume in fictional narratives is ultimately cast as a subordinate element, an instrument of storytelling and characterization. Unlike fashion, it is not allowed to act independently, to occupy the position of the primary object of spectacle, to become a pure statement. Nowhere is this more forcefully expressed than in Roland Barthes's essay “The Diseases of Costume,” written in 1955 in the context of the theater. Turning his argument into one of ethics (costumes are “good” or “bad”), Barthes argues that when the relation between a theatrical play and costume fails to be that of master-servant, costume becomes “sick”—a “parasite” that saps the lifeblood of an otherwise solid intellectual argument of the play: “[it] must not,” he wrote, “constitute a dense and brilliant visual locus to which the attention may escape, fleeing the essential reality of the spectacle.”²⁰ Similarly, as Jane Gaines notes, classical realist cinema assigned costume a paradoxical role of being simultaneously highly visible and invisible.²¹ The expectation was that, despite its enticing presence, dress should recede into the cinematic illusion, resisting the temptation to distract too much from the all-important plot. This delicate order was, of course, frequently disrupted in practice, something that has often been viewed in terms of transgression and violation, just as Barthes did. It has always been understood that the capacity of clothing and accessories to stimulate the senses is such that if left unchecked, it can quickly begin to overshadow all else.²² In that context, it is somewhat ironic that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has made a tradition of awarding primarily the visually elaborate, often flamboyant, costumes created for historical and fantasy settings—all the more so since the merger of the black and white and color film categories in 1967.²³

C26.P14

The argument for a conceptual separation of costume design from fashion has recently found its most vocal advocate in Deborah Landis, a practicing costume designer

and author of several books and a major exhibition on the subject. While costume in her view is not an autonomous field (because dependent on film production), it is certainly autonomous from fashion.²⁴ To be sure, to isolate specific aspects and processes of costume design from those of fashion design has substantial methodological import. Perhaps most significantly, it carves out room for this much-overlooked field to be studied and appreciated on its own terms. It allows us to see how costume design contributes to the shaping of a film's aesthetic while situating characters and underscoring their evolving mental states. It also sheds light on the thinking, creative processes, motivations, and artistry of the costume designer, for whom photographic aspects of clothed bodies and costume's interaction with other elements in a given production come before problems such as production quality, durability or a wearer's comfort and experience of material texture against the body.

C26.P15 There are, however, issues with any rigorous segregation of costume and fashion, not least because positing a binary threatens to ignore their entangled relations. At its most basic, what gets overlooked is that the category of costume simply does not apply to all types of dress that cinema presents. Film also shows *fashion*. This is most obviously the case with nonfiction film forms such as the newsreel, cinemagazine, industry (process) film, documentary film, and advertising, as well as the contemporary fashion film where fashion houses, designers, and brands have been directly involved as sponsors, co-producers, commissioners, or suppliers. But, alongside these, fashion can also be on display in narrative fiction film, as when current fashion looks, sometimes explicitly linked to the houses and labels that produced them, are paraded. Karl Anton's *The Kidnapping of Banker Fux* (1923) and Norman Krasna's *The Ambassador's Daughter* (1956) are two examples of narrative film, in which a couturier—in this case, Paul Poiret and Christian Dior, respectively—presented his current collection as a fashion show, ostensibly for the benefit of the film's characters.²⁵ Not only did these films showcase fashion in discreet scenes, neatly bracketed within the diegesis, but their marketing campaigns also in each case cleverly deployed references to the rarified world of Parisian couture.

C26.P16 Though such blatant self-promotions are rare in fiction film, there have been numerous other ways in which the two industries have been closely interwoven, often with consequences for what is seen onscreen. These affiliations include silent-era actors and actresses frequenting couture salons, dressmakers, or tailors in search of costumes; fashion designers creating costumes or supplying off-the-rack clothing for film (sometimes credited as “gowns” to distinguish them from “mere” costumes); costume designers transitioning to fashion design, and vice versa; stars being groomed by designers and stylists both on and offscreen; underground filmmakers experimenting with makeup and secondhand fashions; fashion houses and brands being featured in shopping sequences; and, most commonly, the practices of product placement, star endorsement and all kinds of other commercial tie-ins that go back to the 1910s.²⁶ Last, but not least, there is also the telling fact that the majority of Hollywood's early moguls (Adolph Zukor, Lewis Selznick, Samuel Goldwyn, Carl

Laemmle, Jesse Lasky, and Louis B. Mayer) came into the movies from the garment and jewelry trades.²⁷

C26.P17

With cinema's transition to feature-length narrative film in the 1910s came the convention, adopted from the theatrical "fashion play," of actresses displaying contemporary dresses as a form of a dramatized fashion show.²⁸ Throughout the entire history of cinema, fashion has also been frequently fictionalized. The spotlight has primarily been on the inner workings of the couture salon and the photographer's studio—as in Howard Hawks's *Fig Leaves* (1926), Alfred E. Green's *Irene* (1926), or Dorothy Arzner's *Fashions for Women* (1927) of the silent era, or in William A. Seiter's *Roberta* (1935), Stanley Donen's *Funny Face* (1957), and Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow Up* (1966) of the ensuing decades. In the 1920s and 1930s, such films were sometimes accompanied by fashion shows staged before or after screenings, various accompanying department store window displays, and stories in the film press that emulated the style of fashion editorials. It was not uncommon for film producers and the affiliated media to make claims to being at the very cutting edge of fashion, or even its harbingers. Just before the release of George Cukor's *The Women* in 1939, for example, *Photoplay* had Adrian comment on the coming trends as displayed in the film.²⁹ These practices are of course still alive and well. In the phenomenally successful HBO TV series *Sex and the City*, the wardrobe designer/stylist Patricia Field created enticing looks by skillfully mixing designer, high street, and vintage fashions, some of which were explicitly referenced within the dialogues. And a similar logic is followed in arthouse films such as Olivier Assayas's *Personal Shopper* and Nicolas Winding Refn's *The Neon Demon* (both 2016),³⁰ proving that a costume's status as fashion can work in tandem with its "normal" role to construct a character, serve the plot, and enhance *mise-en-scène*.

C26.P18

Indeed, it is at the level of meaning that the fashion-costume divide commonly collapses. Fashionable or not, any garment has its place in the internal "fashion system" of a film story—one that it is rarely possible to sever from fashion sensibilities of the real world. From the early days of film magazines, discourses of "film fashions" inherently operated on the basis that costume and fashion enjoyed an intertextual relation. As has been demonstrated in the case of both prewar and postwar cinema, especially Hollywood, great attention was paid to the *fashionability* of film costumes, seen to be as central to a star's image as wearing fashion was offscreen.³¹ Particularly in films targeted at women, female characters' frequent costume changes became a desirable attribute, less a marking of temporal or narrative progression than pure display that would perpetuate the audience's desire for vicarious consumption. As Anne Hollander observes with reference to early twentieth-century fashion-plays, "people went . . . to see clothes, not costumes."³² It was enough for costumes to give a convincing impression of being *en vogue* or make a bold style statement; their lack of authenticity or historical accuracy did little to stop them from being admired and imitated by contemporary audiences. Tellingly, in a 1939 diatribe against pervasive

inaccuracies in period drama costuming, dress historian James Laver bemoaned how voguishness routinely creeps up on history:

C26.P19 No actress will willingly wear an unbecoming dress, and by becoming dress she means one which, in however subtle way, has some hint of contemporary fashion. Last-minute adjustments are capable of transforming an accurate historical dress in the most astonishing fashion with the result that in a few years' time the flavor of the year in which it was worn is just as obvious as the flavor of the year it was supposed to represent.³³

C26.P20 Without saying so explicitly, Laver recognized that in staging historical returns within a contemporary context, film—and especially period drama—costuming is essentially not too different from fashion design. Among the films now seen as iconic for their impact on fashion, many reworked, and made current, references to past fashions, military uniforms, subcultural styles, or art movements—think David Lean's *Doctor Zhivago* (1965), Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), Liliana Cavani's *The Night Porter* (1974), or Slava Tsukerman's *Liquid Sky* (1982). Going beyond merely imitating or disseminating fashion's *dernier cri*, cinema has established itself a parallel system that has at times professed to be fashion's fully fledged rival.³⁴ Its repositories of styles and symbolic systems have always, inevitably, been in dialogue with fashion and have provided a creative resource that fashion could mine in return.

CLOTHES AS PROPS, CLOTHES AS ACTORS

C26.P21 Besides the categories of costume and fashion, there is another distinct realm of dress in film, which I will call simply *clothes*. In fashion studies and cultural anthropology, the term “clothes” (clothing, *vêtements*, *Kleidung*, *abito*) is used differently than “fashion” (*mode*, *Moda*). “Fashion” is generally understood to denote the phenomenon of periodically changing dress styles and consumer desires that come to encapsulate a *zeitgeist*, whereas “clothes” is a broader term that refers to any garment made to dress the body that may be free of fashion's temporal limitations.³⁵ In the cultural studies tradition, the distinction between clothes and fashion has served yet another purpose—namely, to redress a traditional hierarchy between high-brow and low-brow culture by shifting scholarly focus away from what is produced by the fashion industry to that which is generated, reassembled, or repurposed within popular culture (especially subcultures). While both of these uses are relevant to the study of dress in film, my use of the term “clothes” here is more specific: it is to establish a conceptual distinction from *fashionability* and *characterization* as the hallmark qualities of fashion and costume, in order to

highlight instances where clothes are foregrounded more simply as *objects*—either as props that variously seduce, testify, identify, inform, or confuse, or as “actors” that spontaneously play and play up, or somehow perform themselves as material things. It is not that fashionability and characterization necessarily disappear here (they are often very much present), but they become secondary aspects to other, more defining roles clothes embody.

C26.P22

Especially in the crime, horror, and comedy genres, garments and accessories frequently figure as strategic narrative signposts. Importantly, this is where the male wardrobe is foregrounded as often as the female one. In Albert Capellani’s *A Pair of White Gloves* (1908), for example, the titular white gloves are lost and found, and then planted at a crime scene in order to wrongly incriminate a demi-mondain thief of a murder he did not commit. In a cruel twist of irony, a seemingly insignificant detail of a quick repair job performed on the gloves by a shop assistant turns into a kind of forensic evidence that points to the supposed perpetrator and establishes his guilt. Similarly, in Max Linder’s *The Gentleman’s Thief* (1909), Henri d’Ursel’s *La Perle* (1929), Elio Petri’s *The Tenth Victim* (1965), Gérard Oury’s *The Umbrella Coup* (1980), and Cindy Sherman’s *Office Killer* (1997), sartorial objects such as scarves, shoes, pearl necklaces, bras, coats, umbrellas, and handbags act as important clues and red herrings, forms of disguise, warning signs, and, of course, murder weapons.³⁶ And it is also through clothes—or, to be more precise, their meaningful details and modalities, such as holes and tears, dirt smears, and blood or sweat stains—that cinema frequently signals the repressed and the unspoken, be it erotic interest or various troubling excesses, abnormalities, and dysfunctions, from mental illness, to corruption, infidelity, and destruction.³⁷ Then there are film fairy tales, in which garments and accessories both mundane and precious are imbued with supernatural powers. From J. Farrell MacDonald’s *The Magic Cloak* (1914) to Lotte Reiniger’s *The Three Wishes* (1954), Powell and Pressburger’s *The Red Shoes* (1948), and the popular Czech children’s television serials *Pan Tau* (1969–1978) and *Arabela* (1979–1981), hats, cloaks, shoes, umbrellas, and rings transport and make invisible, grant wishes, cause things to appear or disappear, and make their wearers happy or miserable. In all these stories, garments and accessories either drive the plot or cause it to take unexpected turns and detours.

C26.P23

Clothes have also found themselves at the center of early and experimental cinemas, in poetic explorations of cinematic language. In the final segment of Man Ray’s cinempoem *Emak Bakia* (1926), the surrealist poet Jacques Rigaut arrives in a flat with a suitcase filled with men’s shirt collars. He tears them apart and then tears off his own collar too, whereupon the pieces rise, liberated, and perform a wondrous abstract ballet gyrating in distortions and double exposures. In other films by avant-garde artists, such as Hans Richter’s *Ghosts before Breakfast* (1928) and Kenneth Anger’s *Puce Moment* (1949), but also early filmmakers, such as Georges Méliès’s *Going to Bed under Difficulties* (1900) and Lewin Fitzhamon and Cecil Hepworth’s *Invisibility* (1909), and animators, like Jiří Barta’s *The Extinct World of Gloves* (1982), garments exercise their own will, sometimes to an unsettling effect. Separated from their wearers and



FIGURE 26.1 *Ghosts before Breakfast*. Dir. Hans Richter. Germany, 1928. © Marion von Hofacker.

thus released of their dependence on them, these objects assume a life of their own, animated as they are by means of cinematic wizardry (fittingly, the word “animate” means “breathe life into,” deriving from the Latin *animare*): bowler hats escape from heads, a shirt collar circles around a neck, a suit walks on its own, gloves indulge in Bacchic debauchery . . . Arguably, such cinematic tensions between the living and the inanimate have a particularly uncanny resonance in the case of clothing, which, as Walter Benjamin noted in his *Arcades Project*, brings life and death into close proximity as it perpetually coalesces with the living body.³⁸ When divorced from this body, clothes become its shadows, ghostly shells that remain bound to the living form even in its absence.³⁹ Rather than being worn or carried, garments in these films are transformed into protagonists that themselves carry the scene. As they are dissociated from functions and meanings habitually assigned to them—and thus *defamiliarized*—clothes in these films turn into objects of wonder that acquire an intense transgressive power. Like magical fetishes (understood in anthropological terms as forms of charm), they have the capacity to act on their owners, though more often than not with a distinctly subversive twist.

C26.P24

When it comes to clothes shown in advertising and fashion films, such a notion of a material object as fetish begins to mesh with the Marxist notion of the commodity fetish.⁴⁰ In Robert A. Gibney’s *Warner Corset Advertisement* (1917),

the French fashion films *Sacs modernes* (1924) and *Chaussures Sirius: Une Etoile m'a dit* (1950) or the British newsreel *Tough Stockings* (1960), clothes and accessories (again, largely divorced from their wearers) are openly put on display. They usurp all else, demanding to be savored and revered—their physical presence is fully foregrounded while the human body (the mannequin, actor, laborer) plays the part of an assistant and recedes into the background. The things of fashion here possess an intense materiality, presented as they are up close, in a range of angles that best showcase their distinct surfaces, colors, textures, and details. As William Pietz noted about the fetish, one of its key features is its “irreducible materiality”: it is “‘matter,’ or the material object [that] is viewed as the locus of religious activity or psychic investment.”⁴¹ Crucially though, the garments in these films here are not only displayed in their readymade (ideal) state but in processes through which they are yet to acquire form, or ones through which they are tested and temporarily deformed—the making, manufacturing, and product handling (stroking, rubbing, bending, stretching, scratching, folding, and unfolding)—all of which accentuate characteristics such as durability, flexibility, and quality, alongside their other haptic and aesthetic properties.

MATERIAL COLLUSIONS: SCREENS, SHIMMERING SURFACES, FLAMES

As I have sketched out here, despite having a prominent presence in cinema, fashion has been represented by it rather ambivalently. Within filmic narratives, it has been frequently ironized, parodied, and otherwise disparaged for being foolish and inherently immoral. And yet, in terms of a visual and affective experience, it has been consistently upheld for its powerful capacity to hold the gaze and enchant. This contradiction between what a film is *telling* about fashion and what it is *showing* is exemplified by Howard Hawks's silent comedy *Fig Leaves* (1926), a quasi-cautionary tale about the New Woman's pursuit of unbridled consumerism. This modern-day narrative is from the beginning playfully framed as the Biblical story of Adam (George O'Brien) and Eve (Olive Borden), in which fashion is marked as the Devil, soon to be personified by Eve's unscrupulous friend Alice (Phyllis Haver). Though parodic at heart, the film's sumptuously designed fashion salon, with its mannequins, dazzling dresses, and shows, as well as the effervescent figure of the couturier-artiste, nevertheless reassert fashion as a wonderland promising beauty, reverie, and fairytale-like transformation. Similarly, William Klein's biting satire *Who Are You, Polly Maggoo?* (1966), made forty years later, displays great ambivalence toward fashion. On the face of it, *Polly Maggoo* is an unmasking of the excesses and absurdities that

(supposedly) accompany the fashion industry, a gibe directed primarily at the media hype that surrounds the emerging cult of the supermodel.⁴² And although fashion is ostensibly caricatured, it is simultaneously flaunted as a liberating realm of creative expression—because it is spontaneous, daring, and potentially unhinged. It is shown to readily break new aesthetic grounds and effect radical change, be it by championing new ideals of femininity, or by absorbing into its language the seemingly incongruous influences of avant-garde sculpture.

C26.P26 Clearly, fashion captivates cinema not only through its flagrant insistence on sharpness, style, and formal innovation but also (and perhaps more importantly) because it evinces an ungraspable sense of allure and vitality. Fashion is sensuous; it creates a sensory experience that cinema is, in turn, very adept at showcasing and magnifying. Discussing 1930s cinema, Hollander suggests that fashion and film produced something of a joint effect when certain fabrics, jewelry, and hairstyles became the norm in the portrayal of the “new cool, self-sufficient female image.”⁴³ According to Hollander, the formula for white gold and platinum, lamé, satin, sequins, black lace, and marabou in dress was “built on the newly powerful sensuality of colorless texture in motion in which American dreams were . . . being acted out.”⁴⁴ Such a conception of fashion-as-cinematic effect was hardly specific to the first decade of sound film though, and even less so to black and white film. The “photogenic” quality of surfaces that glow, glimmer, morph, and metamorphose was already heavily exploited during the silent era, often with the addition of vibrant applied colors that could intensify the experience. It was also at this time, especially during the 1920s, that films often established a strong visual continuity between costumes and sets in carefully composed shots. In certain instances the two seem to blend into one another, enveloping the body in the raiment of the totality of décor. It is this capacity of costume and textiles to alternately sculpt the body and depart from it in order to fashion flattened decorative tableaux that has continued to captivate avant-garde, experimental, and underground filmmakers, as well as, lately, the makers of digital fashion films.⁴⁵

C26.P27 Giuliana Bruno and Esther Leslie have made important contributions to articulating some of the convergences between dress fabric and film.⁴⁶ They have shown that not only can film heighten fashion’s materiality, but, conversely, fashion, textiles, and jewelry can enhance a sense of film’s objecthood.⁴⁷ Certainly, twentieth-century fashion newsreels and industry-sponsored process films about fabrics and garment production, such as Werner Dressler’s *Parures/Vom Spinnen und Weben* (1939), Frederick Wilson’s *The Dancing Fleece* (1951), or E. Milton Stoney’s *It All Began with Velvet* (1955), and, to a degree, early twenty-first-century documentary exposés of labor and environmental abuses in textile manufacture like Rahul Jain’s *Machines* (2016), emphasize that the material of cloth coincides with the “material” of the film. In these genres, fabrics and magnified details of garments are directly mapped onto the screen, which then turns into ornament. This is a reversal of sorts of an earlier practice common within the

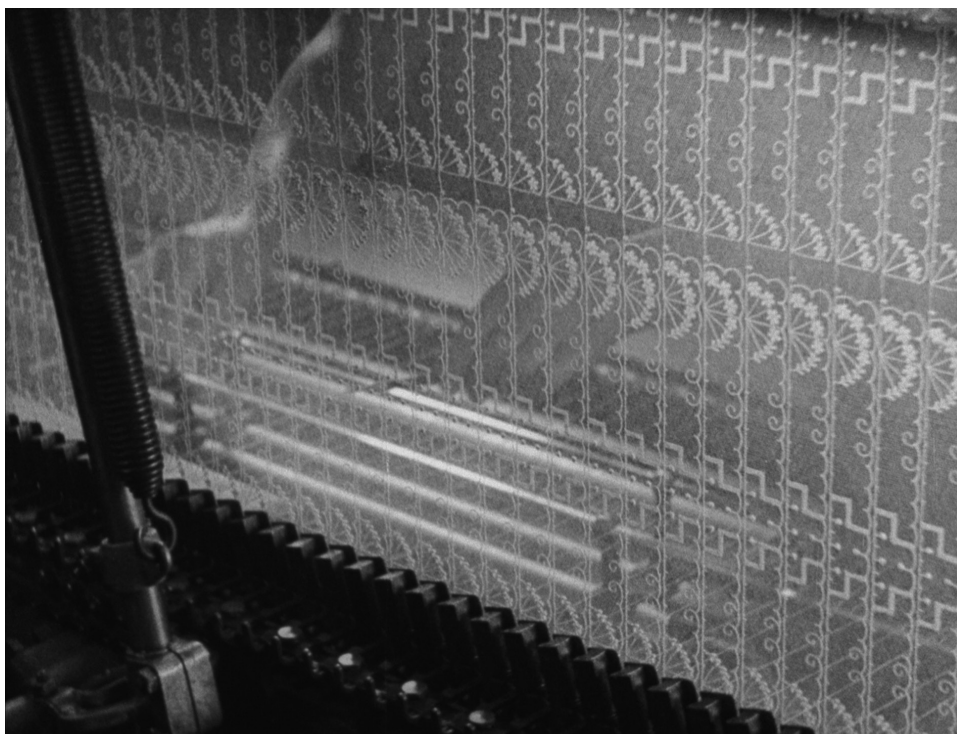


FIGURE 26.2 (a)(b) *Parures/Vom Spinnen und Weben* (Of Spinning and Weaving). Dir. Werner Dressler. Switzerland, 1939. Collection Cinémathèque suisse. All rights reserved.

cinema of attractions, in which an enlarged costume silhouette or accessory (such as an open cape or fan) would double up as a blank “living screen,” à la Fuller, for the display of changing decorative designs or moving pictures.⁴⁸

C26.P28

As Eirik Hanssen has shown, film color can also be seen as a kind of textile when it is applied to black and white film using silent-era techniques such as hand-coloring, stenciling, tinting, and toning.⁴⁹ The semimechanized process of stencil coloring produces an especially curious effect: the translucent color stains superimposed over faces, bodies, garments, and other objects do not always accurately fit within their contours. This misalignment imbues the layer of color with a distinct shimmering effect, giving it, as Tom Gunning puts it, a sense of “subtle independence” from the object.⁵⁰ This gains particular significance in the context of the many colored fashion newsreels and cinemagazines produced in the 1910s and 1920s by companies such as Pathé Frères and Gaumont—if clothing is the body’s second skin, then these compelling color coatings, incidentally animated as they were, become its third. It seems highly pertinent that the coloring technologies used in silent cinema’s processes of tinting and toning were derived from those of dyeing textiles.⁵¹ Similarly, the technique of stenciling—coloring *au pochoir*—was derived from a method prominently used in art nouveau prints and illustrations, textile design, and luxury fashion magazines (themselves taking an inspiration from a traditional Japanese craft).

C26.P29

Indeed, the production technologies of fashion and film have intersected in fascinating ways. Recently, Wanda Strauven has performed a media-archaeological excavation of the various technologies involved in garment production (sewing, knitting, weaving) that predate or coincide with technologies crucial to the cinema, including those of digital computing and coding. One of the compelling examples Strauven cites is a close relation between the sewing machine and the cinema (as a system of both producing and projecting moving images), which also extends further into the realm of industrial labor, where the human interacts with the machine.⁵² Such a connection was brilliantly enacted in the British artist Annabel Nicolson’s 1973 performance *Reel Time*, which joined a loop of film strip to a film projector and a sewing machine, creating a single interconnected unit. As Nicolson projected light through the strip, she simultaneously stitched through it in “reel time,” at once wrecking and repairing it until the point of complete destruction.⁵³

C26.P30

These material and labor links between textiles, color, and cinema ultimately highlight the degree to which film itself is analogous to fabric, a fact persistently erased by cinema’s illusionistic regime. For the most part, the “fabric” of film only really becomes apparent when a film exhibits precisely that which is generally thought undesirable: the grain, dust particles, physical and chemical damage, or, in the case of electronic image, rasterization or pixelation. Such “blemishes” have been celebrated by found footage artists. Seeking lyrical beauty in the effects of deteriorating archival film, Peter Delpout’s and Bill Morrison’s films show faces, bodies, and objects hauntingly distorted and overlaid with disorderly aggregates of crusts and stains, or dramatically consumed, as if by licking flames. But the film strip has also been deliberately manipulated in all manner of artistic interventions throughout the history of avant-garde and experimental cinema: consider the scratchings,

paintings, punched holes, and collages onto film made by artists as diverse as Len Lye, Norman McLaren, Stan Brakhage, Bruce Conner, or Carolee Schneemann. And, in a similar vein, artists working with the electronic image have developed their own medium-specific forms of kinetic abstraction, from video raster manipulations to the digital glitch and datamoshing, as in the work of Steina and Woody Vasulka, Gary Hill, or Takeshi Murata.⁵⁴ In all these instances, the (invisible, immaterial) substance of film/video/digital image reasserts itself as an arresting, highly tactile surface, an event in itself.

If celluloid or acetate film has a fabric-like materiality, it should not be too surprising it has occasionally been made into clothing. The impressive scaled costume of the male protagonist in Vladimir Chebotaryov's 1961 fantasy film *Amphibian Man*, for example, was carefully crafted from film stock, with each scale hand-cut and painted with mother-of-pearl.⁵⁵ Or, in the realm of couture, the French designer Jean-Paul Gaultier's Autumn/Winter 2009 collection included several corsets and accessories stitched together from film strips. But celluloid fashion hasn't always been conceived as a tribute to the cinema. Even before the invention of the film reel, celluloid was already widely used in the fabrication of clothing and accessories.⁵⁶ A cheap imitation of materials such as tortoiseshell, ivory, and amber, this first commercial chemical plastic was used for various personal accouterments such as rust-free corset clasps, buckles, cuffs, hairpins, combs, spectacle frames, collars, and collar stiffeners. And once the film industry had amassed volumes of old film stock, recycling methods were developed through which to turn unwanted celluloid back into new products—belts, bangles, ladies' handbags, wallets, shoe shine, and other objects of everyday use.⁵⁷ A 1941 Czech newsreel *Aktualita* shows a poignant vision of a couple of movie stars melt away with the film emulsion on which they are registered,



FIGURE 26.3 (a) (b) *Aktualita*. Dir. Unknown. Czechia, 1941. Collection Národní filmový archiv, Prague.



FIGURE 26.3 Continued

only to be efficiently transmogrified into nail varnish and shoe polish. The uncanny sense that accompanies the idea of old films turned into garb for the body is captured in an earlier British poem suggestively titled “A Fallen Star”:

C26.P32 But now when I go glittering down the street
 C26.P33 I’m filled with sorrow, having gained an inkling
 C26.P34 That I possess a “star” upon my feet
 C26.P35 To cause the wondrous “twinkling”⁵⁸

C26.P36 and by the French writer and cinema historian Maurice Bessy:

C26.P37 Your nail varnish, Miss, which allows you to show off your pretty little hands with
 nails in pink, red, mother of pearl or other colors. Perhaps Ramon Novarro is still
 lurking in there?⁵⁹

C26.P38 Celluloid, though extremely versatile and popular, was a notoriously volatile material in its earlier developmental stages when cellulose nitrate was the main ingredient. The fact that it is not only extremely flammable but also spontaneously combustible is frequently bemoaned among film historians (for good reasons) but is rarely mentioned by historians of fashion. Yet, as Clyde Jeavons shows, personal adornments such as combs and hairpins were very common causes of domestic fires—more so than film. Jeavons even mentions an incident from the interwar era in which a lighted match started a fire in an Edinburgh cinema not by coming into contact with film but, which seems ironic,

with a woman's shoe.⁶⁰ It is not by accident that I conclude by invoking the notion of film worn, with all the melancholy, transience, and even danger this entails. There is something explosive about the union of dress and cinema. It goes beyond customary frameworks of representation and signification, pointing toward more radical concepts of mutual fashioning, of shaping and reshaping, metamorphosis, and even rebirth. When the kinetic and affective powers of the moving image (and sound) marry with those of fashion, this doubling can create powerful sensory and emotional worlds. This explosiveness suggests that the relation between fashion and cinema refuses to be easily contained or tamed (let alone smothered) by any one approach or theory. Instead, it keeps on giving.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

C26.S4

C26.P39

I thank Kyle Stevens and Caroline Evans for their perceptive comments and helpful suggestions.

NOTES

1. Here I apply the term "serpentine dance" generically to a whole range of dances in which moving costume, light, and projections were used to sculpt fleeting forms and natural phenomena such as butterflies, serpents, orchids, lilies, fire, or clouds.
2. For a comprehensive filmography, see Giovanni Lista, *Loïe Fuller, danseuse de la Belle Époque* (Paris: Hermann, 2007). First published 1994.
3. As well as cinema studies, these include dance and art history, and visual culture. See, for example, Sally Sommer, "Loïe Fuller," *The Drama Review* 19, no. 1 (March 1975); Lista, *Loïe Fuller*; Tom Gunning, "Loïe Fuller and the Art of Motion," in *Camera Obscura, Camera Lucida: Essays in Honor of Annette Michelson*, ed. Richard Allen and Malcolm Turvey (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 75–90; Tom Gunning, "Light, Motion, Cinema!: The Heritage of Loïe Fuller and Germaine Dulac," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 46, no. 1 (2005); Rhonda K. Garelick, *Electric Salome: Loïe Fuller's Performance of Modernism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 210–11; Erin Brannigan, *Dancefilm: Choreography and the Moving Image* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35; Jody Sperling, "Cosmic Voyages in Advance of Cinema: La Loïe Skirts the Universe," in *Birds of Paradise: Costume as Cinematic Spectacle*, ed. Marketa Uhlirova (London: Koenig Books, 2013), 79–88.
4. Pam Cook, *Fashioning the Nation: Costume & Identity in British Cinema* (London: BFI, 1996), 8, 41–63.
5. David Bordwell, *Figures Traced in Light: On Cinematic Staging* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 8.
6. Ian Christie, "Out of the Shadows: Milan Nejedlý and the Challenge of Understanding Czech Production Design," in *Czech Cinema Revisited: Politics, Aesthetics, Genres and Techniques*, ed. Lucie Česálková (Prague: National Film Archive, 2017), 408.

7. Michelle Tolini Finamore, *Hollywood before Glamour: Fashion in American Silent Film* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 110–11; Deborah Nadoolman Landis, *Dressed: A Century of Hollywood Costume Design* (New York: Collins Design, 2007), xvi.
8. Elizabeth Leese, *Costume Design in the Movies* (New York: Benbridge, 1990), 6. First published 1976.
9. For some examples, see Amy de la Haye, *Chanel: The Couturiere at Work* (London: V&A Publications, 1994); James Laver, *Modesty in Dress* (London: William Heinemann, 1969); Anne Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) (first published 1975); Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003) (first published 1985); Christopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion: A New History of Fashionable Dress* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995). For analyses of cinema as a source of imagery mined by fashion, see Rebecca Arnold, *Fashion, Desire and Anxiety: Image and Morality in the Twentieth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001); and, more recently, also Alistair O'Neill, "The Shining and Chic," in *Alexander McQueen*, ed. Claire Wilcox (London: V&A Publishing, 2015), 261–80; and Amber Jane Butchart, *The Fashion of Film: How Cinema Has Inspired Fashion* (London: Octopus Books, 2016).
10. Nonfiction fashion films were first discussed in film and costume studies; see, for example, Leese's introduction to *Costume Design in the Movies*, which includes a brief discussion of nonfiction fashion shorts; Jenny Hammerton, *For Ladies Only? Eve's Film Review: Pathé Cinemagazine, 1921–33* (Hastings, UK: The Projection Box, 2001), a book focusing on fashion as one of the major themes in the British Pathé cinemagazine *Eve's Film Review*; and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen's "Symptoms of Desire: Colour, Costume, and Commodities in Fashion Newsreels of the 1910s and 1920s," *Film History: An International Journal* 21, no. 2 (2009): 107–21, a study of color in fashion newsreels during the silent era. Only in the last decade have fashion scholars begun to turn their attention to newsreels, weaving them into broader intermedial accounts of fashion and surrounding visual culture. See Tolini Finamore, *Hollywood before Glamour*; Caroline Evans, "The Walkies: Early Fashion Shows and Silent Cinema," in *Fashion in Film: Essays in Honor of E. Ann Kaplan*, ed. Adrienne Munich (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 110–34; Caroline Evans, *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900–1929* (London: Yale University Press, 2013); Marketa Uhlirova, "100 Years of the Fashion Film: Frameworks and Histories," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture* 17, no. 2 (2013): 137–57. See also "Screen Search Fashion," an archival research project led by Rebecca Arnold, available at <http://screenarchive.brighton.ac.uk/portfolio/screen-search-fashion/about-screen-search-fashion/>.
11. For more on Poiret's films, see Caroline Evans, "The Walkies." For more on Baťa and film see Petr Szczepanik, "Modernism, Industry, Film: A Network of Media in the Baťa Corporation and the Town of Zlín in the 1930s," in *Films that Work. Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 349–76. See also a section on Baťa's "fashion films" in Marketa Uhlirova, "Fashion and Czechoslovak Cinema of the Interwar Period," in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: Volume 9: "East Europe, Russia, and the Caucasus,"* ed. Djudja Bartlett and J. B. Eicher (London: Berg, 2010), 137–40.
12. *Film, Fashion & Consumption*, edited by Pamela Church Gibson and published by Intellect.

13. Marketa Uhlirova, "Fashion in Cinema: Reframing the Field," in *Routledge Companion to Fashion Studies*, ed. Eugenia Paulicelli, Veronica Manlow, and Elizabeth Wissinger (London: Routledge, 2021).
14. See, for example, Jane Gaines and Charlotte Herzog, "'Puffed Sleeves before Tea-Time': Joan Crawford, Adrian and Women Audiences," *Wide Angle* 6, no. 4 (1985): 24–33; Drake Stutesman, "Costume Design, or, What Is Fashion in Film?," in Munich, *Fashion in Film*, 17–39; Jane Gaines, "Wanting to Wear Seeing: Gilbert Adrian at MGM," in Munich, *Fashion in Film*, 135–59; Landis, *Dressed*.
15. See, for example, Gilbert Adrian, "Clothes," in *Behind the Screen: How Films Are Made*, ed. Stephen Watts (New York: Dodge, 1938); or Jacques Manuel, "Esquisse d'une histoire du costume de cinéma," *La Revue du cinéma* 19–20 (Autumn 1949): 3–63.
16. Manuel, "Esquisse d'une histoire du costume de cinéma."
17. Coco Chanel cited in Emma Cabire, "Le cinéma et la mode," *La Revue du cinéma* 26 (September 1931), Article 26 (emphasis added).
18. Ibid.
19. Claude Autant-Lara, "Le costumier de cinéma doit habiller des caractères," *La Revue du cinéma* 19–20 (Autumn 1949): 65.
20. Roland Barthes, "The Diseases of Costume," in *Theatre and Performance Design: A Reader in Scenography*, ed. Jane Collins and Andrew Nisbet (London: Routledge, 2010), 204–10.
21. Jane Gaines, "Costume and Narrative: How Dress Tells the Woman's Story," in *Fabrications: Costume and the Female Body*, ed. Jane Gaines and Charlotte Herzog (London: Routledge, 1990), 193. Also see Sybil DelGaudio, *Dressing the Part: Sternberg, Dietrich, and Costume* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1993), 14; and Stella Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema: Clothing and Identity in the Movies* (London: Routledge, 1997), xv, for a useful critique of the limited perceptions of costume's role in film.
22. It is impossible not to evoke here Mulvey's essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," which alludes to this in her discussion of the female spectacle, especially in Josef von Sternberg's films: a beautiful woman on the screen, fetishized through costume and close-ups, threatens to become herself the content of a film, bypassing the order of the male gaze. In *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, ed. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 833–44.
23. Deborah Nadoolman Landis, *Costume Design* (Amsterdam: Focal, 2012), 72.
24. Landis, *Dressed*, xvi; and Landis, *Costume Design*, 8.
25. Marketa Uhlirova, "Scandal, Satire and Vampirism in The Kidnapping of Fux the Banker," in *If Looks Could Kill: Cinema's Images of Fashion, Crime and Violence*, ed. Marketa Uhlirova (London: Koenig Books, 2008), 108–17; Madeleine Delpierre, Marianne de Fleury, and Dominique Lebrun, *French Elegance in the Cinema* (Paris: Musée de la mode et du costume, 1988), 119–21.
26. Many of these have been well documented: see, respectively, David Chierichetti, *Hollywood Costume Design* (New York: Crown, 1976); Gaines, "Costume and Narrative"; Leese, *Costume Design*; Sue Harper, "Gainsborough: What's in a Costume," *Monthly Film Bulletin* 52 (1985): 324–27; Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema*; Alexandra Farah, *Filme/Fashion—festival catalogue* (São Paulo, Brazil: Filme/Fashion, 2003); Tolini Finamore, *Hollywood before Glamour*; Christopher Lavery, *Fashion in Film* (London: Laurence King, 2016); Ronald Gregg, "Fashion, Thrift Stores and the Space of Pleasure in the 1960s Queer Underground Film," in Uhlirova, *Birds of Paradise*, 293–304; Juan A. Suárez, "Kenneth

- Anger: Clothing, Queerness, Magic,” in Uhlirova, *Birds of Paradise*, 277–92; Tamar Jeffers McDonald, *Hollywood Catwalk: Exploring Costume and Transformation in American Film* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010); Pamela Church Gibson, *Fashion and Celebrity Culture* (London: Berg, 2012); Charles Eckert, “Carole Lombard in Macy’s Window,” *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 3, no. 1 (1978): 1–23; or Jean Thomas Allen, “The Film Viewer as Consumer,” *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 5, no. 4 (1980): 481–99.
27. Andrew F. Rolle, *California: A History* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969), 568. Also see Peter Wollen, “Strike a Pose,” *Sight and Sound* 5, no. 3 (1995): 14; Berry, *Screen Style*; and Tolini Finamore, *Hollywood before Glamour*.
 28. See, for example, “The Exploits of Pathe,” *The Bioscope* (28 September 1916): 18. For links between the world of couture and theater at the turn of the twentieth century, see Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
 29. Gwen Walters, “Fashion Letter: What You Will Wear This Fall . . .,” *Photoplay* 52, no. 9 (1939): 70, 79.
 30. See Nick Rees-Roberts, *Fashion Film: Art and Advertising in the Digital Age* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), for more on a direct involvement of certain narrative fiction films in luxury fashion brands’ complex strategies of branding and metacommentary.
 31. See, for example, Sumiko Higashi, *Cecil B. DeMille and American Culture: The Silent Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Berry, *Screen Style*; Tolini Finamore, *Hollywood before Glamour*; or Rachel Moseley, *Growing Up with Audrey Hepburn: Text, Audience, Resonance* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002).
 32. Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 345.
 33. James Laver, “Dates and Dresses,” *Sight and Sound* 8, no. 30 (Summer 1939): 50.
 34. Eckert, “Carole Lombard”; Gaines and Herzog, “Puffed Sleeves before Tea-Time”; Stutesman, “Costume Design.”
 35. On fashion as change, see Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, 3–5; for more on the distinction between fashion and clothes, see Ingrid Loschek, “When Is Fashion?,” in *When Clothes Become Fashion: Design and Innovation Systems* (Oxford: Berg, 2009), 133–34.
 36. For an exploration of these themes, see various essays in Uhlirova, *If Looks Could Kill*.
 37. Kitty Hauser, “Stained Clothing, Guilty Hearts,” in Uhlirova, *If Looks Could Kill*, 68–75; Jonathan Faiers, *Dressing Dangerously: Dysfunctional Fashion in Film* (London: Yale University Press, 2013). See also Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema*.
 38. Walter Benjamin, “Fashion,” in *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 69, 79.
 39. Elizabeth Wilson, “Magic Fashion,” *Fashion Theory* 8, no. 4 (2004): 375–85.
 40. For a historical discussion of the term “fetish,” including its use within ethnography and Marxism, see William Pietz, “The Problem of the Fetish I,” *Res* 9 (Spring 1985): 5–17; see also Lorraine Gamman and Merja Makinen, *Female Fetishism* (New York: New York University Press, 1994) 14–50.
 41. Pietz, “The Problem of the Fetish II,” *Res* 13 (Spring 1987): 23.
 42. At the time, Klein was employed by American *Vogue*, edited by the larger-than-life Diana Vreeland.
 43. Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 343–44.
 44. *Ibid.*
 45. For more on this, see Uhlirova, *Birds of Paradise*.

46. Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (New York: Verso, 2002); Giuliana Bruno, "Surface, Fabric, Weave: The Fashioned World of Wong Kar Wai," in Munich, *Fashion in Film*, 83–105; Giuliana Bruno, *Surface: Matters of Aesthetics, Materiality, and Media* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); and Esther Leslie, "Dreams for Sale," in Uhlirova, *Birds of Paradise*, 29–40.
47. Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, 324.
48. Marketa Uhlirova, "Costume in Early 'Marvellous' Cinema: The Aesthetic of Opulence and the Teasing Image," in Uhlirova, *Birds of Paradise*, 101–27. For more on the practice of mobile costumes as "screens" in the context of vaudeville dance, see Jody Sperling, "Cosmic Voyages in Advance of Cinema: La Loie Skirts the Universe," in Uhlirova, *Birds of Paradise*, 84. For complex links between the umbrella, the screen, and early cinema more generally, see also Wanda Strauven, "Text, Texture, Textile: A Media-Archaeological Mapping of Fashion and Film," a paper given at *Archaeology of Fashion Film Conference*, organized by Caroline Evans and Jussi Parikka, London, July 6, 2018. The paper was published in an amended form as Wanda Strauven, "Sewing Machines and Weaving Looms: A Media Archaeological Encounter between Fashion and Film," in "Archaeologies of Fashion Film," ed. Caroline Evans and Jussi Parikka, special issue, *Journal of Visual Culture* 19, no. 3 (December 2020).
49. Hanssen, "Symptoms of Desire," 108.
50. Tom Gunning, "Applying Color: Creating Fantasy of Cinema," in *Fantasia of Color in Early Cinema*, ed. Tom Gunning, Joshua Yumibe, Giovanna Fossati, and Jonathon Rosen (Amsterdam: Eye Filmmuseum/Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 22.
51. Paul Read and Mark-Paul Meyer, *Restoration of Motion Picture Film* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2000), 180; Joshua Yumibe, *Moving Color: Early Film, Mass Culture, Modernism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 25–26; Hanssen, "Symptoms of Desire," 108.
52. Strauven notes that an analogy between the labors of sewing and editing was already made in Dziga Vertov, *Man with the Movie Camera* (1929); see Vertov, "Text, Texture, Textile." Also, as Giuliana Bruno shows, the early film industry's practice of employing women to perform extremely laborious and repetitive tasks of film assemblage and coloring resembles that of clothes sweatshops: Giuliana Bruno, *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map: Cultural Theory and the City Films of Elvira Notari* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 106, 108.
53. O'Neill, "The Shining and Chic."
54. It is worth mentioning that the relations between digital distortions, moving images, and textiles have also been explored by several conceptual fashion designers and image-makers in the early 2000s. See especially Viktor and Rolf's Autumn/Winter 2002 fashion show, which rendered blue clothing as blue screens; Hamish Morrow's Spring/Summer 2004 show, in which imagery of walking fashion models were distorted through a digital code and projected in real time onto a large screen; or Jens Laugesen and Nick Knight's collaborative film *Ground Zero.03* (2003), which exploits the aesthetic of the digital glitch.
55. I am grateful to Alexandra Ovtchinnikova for bringing this to my attention. See E. A. Rozovsky, "Nam bii vsiem na dno," *Podvodnoie obozrenie* (Подводное обозрение) no. 2 (2002), 4–7.
56. P. K. Nair, "'Not So Dangerous': Some Recollections," in *This Film Is Dangerous: A Celebration of Nitrate Film*, ed. Roger Smither and Catherine A. Surowiec (Brussels, Belgium: FIAF, 2002), 245. Also see Leslie, "Dreams for Sale."

57. Stephen Bottomore cites trade press reports from as early as 1911 mentioning the manufacture of shoe polish. “‘A Fallen Star’: Problems and Practices in Early Film Preservation,” in Smither and Surowiec, *This Film Is Dangerous*, 188, 190.
58. “A Fallen Star,” *London Opinion* (September 23, 1914): 454. From a longer excerpt reprinted in Bottomore, “A Fallen Star,” 188.
59. Maurice Bessy, “Mort du Film,” *Cinéma* (May 25, 1933), Article 240. This is from a longer excerpt reprinted in “Mort du Film” in Smither and Surowiec, *This Film Is Dangerous*, 364.
60. Jeavons, “Playing with Fire,” in Smither and Surowiec, *This Film Is Dangerous*, 237. On nitrogen content in film versus household objects see Heather Heckman, “Burn after Viewing, or, Fire in the Vaults: Nitrate Decomposition and Combustibility,” *The American Archivist* 73, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2010): 487.