



# Costume & Fashion in context & practice

symposium  
& exhibition

5th – 6th December 2016  
University of Huddersfield

**PAPERS**  
PERFORMANCES

**Dr. Sofia Pantouvaki**

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## Keynote | Thinking Costume: Perspectives of a Contemporary Discourse

Costume design is multi-faceted and lies within socio-cultural practice as an essential and integral part of the performing and screen arts. As such, it has developed as a concrete artistic discipline over thousands of years and through a diversity of live performance genres (text-based theatre, devised, physical or non-verbal theatre, dance, opera, musical theatre, circus and most recently, performance art) as well as in mediated storytelling (film, television and digital media). Therefore costume design, for both live and screen/other media-based performance, has long existed as a well-defined field of artistic practice, addressing multiple layers of interpretation for which analytical tools are needed, as well as a frame for the development of new thinking. This presentation provides an overview of the contemporary, ongoing international discourse around thinking about and through costume. Bringing together approaches to the study, production, display, sharing and research of costume, the presentation introduces projects and events that have contributed to the development of critical perspectives for the understanding of costume in recent years.

**Dr. Sofia Pantouvaki** is a scenographer (PhD) and Professor of Costume Design at Aalto University, Finland. Her background includes over 80 designs for theatre, film, opera and dance productions in Europe, as well as numerous curatorial and exhibition design projects. Co-author, *History of Dress - The Western World and Greece* (2010); editor, *Yannis Metisis - Athens Experimental Ballet* (2011); co-editor, *Presence and Absence: The Performing Body* (2014). She is Vice-Head for Research, OISTAT Costume Design Group and Co-Editor, *Studies in Costume and Performance* (Intellect, 2016). Project Leader of *Performance: Visual Aspects of Performance Practice*; Costume Curator for *World Stage Design 2013*; Associate Curator, *Costume in Action* (WSD 2013). In 2013, Sofia founded *Costume in Focus*, the first research group on performance costume, currently based at Aalto University and leads a 1.2M€ Academy of Finland research project on *Costume Methodologies*. Sofia has taught, lectured and published internationally.

**Kate Lane**

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## It's alive! Design as a visual dramaturgy in a collaborative practice

This is a comparative study into two recent collaborations and how the design-led practice worked within them, looking at how scenography can be used as a directorial tool. Both of the studies examined how design can be used as visual dramaturgy with the role of the body as a signifier for the mechanics of the production and moving beyond costume as characterisation.

I will be examining my collective's work (*Brave New Worlds*) and in particular our production *Trinity* in which design initiates the devising process, with aesthetics replacing traditional playwriting, and how collaboration works in conjunction to this; in particular the use of costume influencing the sound design. This will be examined in comparison with my work on a research and development residency with *Opera Up Close* where we explored how to stage *Bela Bartok's Bluebeard's Castle*. Specifically, we considered how the operatic score can lead the design process and develop an interplay between the use of a dancer's body and physical space in opposition to the libretto and singers' characters. I will be exploring how costume can be the driver in shaping and directing other scenographic elements such as set and sound. How it can be the stimulus for choreography and how this can work in a collaborative practice?

**Kate Lane** is a Scenographer specialising in design-led performance with a particular focus on costume. She is a founding member of performance collective *Brave New Worlds*. Kate graduated from MA Costume Design for Performance (Distinction) at LCF where she won the MA Centenary Award for Costume. She has a BA (Hons) in Sculpture from Camberwell College of Arts. She's been an Associate Lecturer at CSM & LCF and is currently Lecturer in Scenography at Middlesex University. Her design work has been shown nationally (UK) and internationally, including *Lilian Baylis Studio*: Sadlers Wells, Southbank Centre, V&A and International at Faverna Festival, Italy, *Musique Cordiale*, France and *Cork Festival*, Ireland. With her performance collective (*Brave New Worlds*) she has held residencies at the Barbican as part of their *Open Lab Programme*, *The Point*, *Eastleigh* (UK), *Plateau Gallery*, Berlin and *Arts Printing House*, Lithuania. Her work with them was selected as part of the UK Exhibit for *Prague Quadrennial*, *Make:Believe Exhibition* at the V&A, 2015 and "Costume at the Turn of the Century 1990-2015" at the A.A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum, Moscow in July 2015.