



# *DEFINING FASHION*

*What is  
Fashion?*

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# What is Fashion?

What is Fashion? How can it be defined when every country, culture, or person has a different perception of what fashion is or what is fashionable? Fashion is an ever-changing industry extensively incorporated into society and that society's culture. What is acceptable or popular in one culture isn't in another. That is because there are different standards for what is considered beautiful or acceptable in different countries/cultures. For example, in American culture, people predominantly dress more casually in their everyday life while in European culture people tend to dress more sophisticated. Wearing sweatpants in Europe is not as culturally accepted as in America. Europeans don't only dress up for business-like events, but they dress up on an everyday basis, and not doing so is usually looked down upon. In the Middle East people especially women predominantly dress in modest clothing that shows little to no skin. Much of this "fashion" or style of clothing is because many people in the Middle East follow the religion of Islam which values modesty and chastity.

Furthermore in India, the traditional clothing worn is vibrant and handmade, but in a lot of regions of India Western clothes are also popular. When we dress we are making decisions based on our personalities/interests and societal standards that are all built around the culture we live in. Fashion allows people to express themselves creatively. Furthermore, culture and diversity are what make fashion styles so unique and exciting, but not everyone thinks this way. People ridicule others for having different styles or styles that don't fit the fashion standard instead of embracing the differences. Embracing our differences and how we choose to express ourselves should

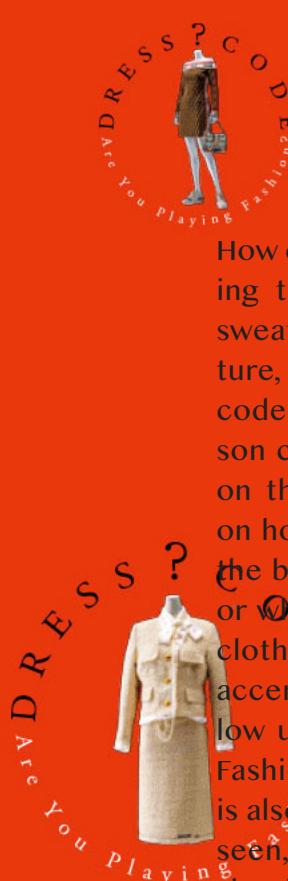


Collection of the Kyoto Costume Institute Photo by Takashi Hatakeyama

Defining Fashion

# DRESS CODE: Are You Playing Fashion?

Bundeskunsthalle



How did you choose the clothes you are wearing today? Designer dress or jeans, suit or sweatpants, pullover or uniform—every culture, era and social group has its own dress codes. They set the framework, but each person comes up with their own individual take on the rules. Sometimes, we choose based on how we feel. Or we make our decision on the basis of the occasion for which we dress or whom we are going to meet. We want our clothing style to express our personality and accentuate our individuality. Our clothes allow us to assume a wide range of personas. Fashion is not just an act of wearing clothes—it is also a performative act of seeing and being seen, which finds particularly clear expression in social media. Now coming to Europe, Dress Code, the hugely successful exhibition from Japan, presents fashion as a game that underscores the daily transformation as an instrument for the articulation of our personality. On show are fashion classics as well as the imaginative takes on them that fuel the cur-

Survey of contemporary fashion by seminal designers set into an insightful dialogue with contemporary art. It examines different and opposing attitudes to fashion—those of participants and spectators, individualists and conformists. Our choice of clothing is presented as a communicative game that can lead us to a new understanding of our approach to fashion, how we use it and what it means to us.



# Voices of Fashion

## Centraal Museum

A major new fashion exhibition entitled *Voices of Fashion: Black Couture, Beauty and Styles*, is set to open at the Centraal Museum. The show will be the first ever staged by an art museum in the Netherlands to query the white gaze as the default vantage point from which to present, wear and collect fashion. Underpinning the exhibition are years of research by black, brown and white people that show that the fashion world and our relationship with it continue to be shaped by the legacies of European colonialism. *Voices of Fashion* takes you on a little told story of fashion, with a stunning exhibition design by Afaina de Jong of AFARAI. *Voices of Fashion* is designed to inspire a more inclusive conception of collective memory by means of iconic designs. Fashion curator Ninke Bloomberg and co-curator and Diversity Rules founder Janice Deul show how black designers have influenced the fashion world and how much of what is considered fashionable today is based on these designers' sense of style. Deul has been a longtime advocate for exclusivity in fashion, drawing critical attention to the issue through her platform,

In the media. Janice Deul: "Black people are often said to be the Curators of Cool, but this isn't always recognized or acknowledged where it matters. This lack of recognition has all to do with power and history. And that's why I'm so excited about this show. It's a celebration of black beauty, talent and culture that we hope will provide food for thought and give models and designers the credit they deserve."



View of The Vulgar: Fashion Redefined, Winterpalais, Vienna, 2017.  
Photo: Christian Wind.

Defining Fashion

# *The Vulgar Belvedere*

**T**he Vulgar: Fashion Redefined explores the controversial yet compelling topic of taste in fashion. From March 3 to June 25, 2017, creations by leading designers, on show at Prince Eugene's Winterpalais, seek to stimulate discussion about the definition of "the vulgar" in an exhibition spanning a period from the Renaissance through to today. Drawing on quotes from famous figures such as Coco Chanel and Jonathan Swift, the underlying theory is that vulgarity and "good taste" are ultimately a matter of perspective. The word "vulgar" was originally used to characterize a social class and to describe anything that was commonly prevalent. Over time, this neutral description morphed into an insult. Vulgarity became associated with pretension and ambition, with aspirations to special privileges. And it still conjures up negative connotations—words like "pretentious," "provocative," "over the top," and "common" spring to mind. "The word 'vulgar' is used to police the boundaries of taste. Fashion is where good taste and bad taste mix and match," says psychoanalyst Adam Phillips on how the term relates to fashion. The exhibition draws on literary sources to conjure new interpretations as well as look at the origins of the vulgar. It questions whether the mean-

a dialogue that accompanies the visitor through the exhibition. Clark's selection of diverse exhibits is a response to Phillips' analysis and illustrates the various aspects of the vulgar in fashion. Creations by Walter Van Beirendonck, Manolo Blahnik, Christian Dior, Karl Lagerfeld for Chloe, Prada, Vivienne Westwood, and many others are showcased in the exhibition. Displays range from the mantua dresses with their extremely wide skirts and dramatic silhouettes, which were worn at the English court in the mid-18th century, to contemporary works by the designer Pam Hogg, whose creations often play with the extremes of revealing and concealing and allude to the hedonism of the club. Judith Clark believes "the vulgar and the Baroque have always been inextricable." Stella Rollig, Director General of the Belvedere emphasizes this, stating: "The Baroque Winterpalais is the ideal venue for the presentation of opulent fashion creations through the centuries. In an interdisciplinary discourse between psychoanalysis and fashion, the exhibition-makers invite visitors to question the concept of the vulgar. This thrilling combination makes this project a unique experience." "Adapting the subject to the cultural imprint of Austrian society certainly presented us with some challenges. Here the

# TEXTE ZUR KUNST

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25 Jahre  
TEXTE ZUR KUNST

Defining Fashion

## "Mode / Fashion"

TEXTE ZUR KUNST

**A**rt and fashion have always been interrelated. And it's due to fashion's ability to quickly capture social shifts that the art world has repeatedly turned to it. With issue 102, Texte zur Kunst again takes "Fashion" as theme—this time examining how the late '00s promise of online network "democratization," street style, and more relatable models has only reinforced the industry's power structure, engendering hyper-accelerated production cycles, significant creative turnover in fashion's top tier, and a climate wherein designations of "luxury," "discount," and "underground," have been all but destabilized as designers, unconvinced of these designations, increasingly apply them in jest. And while fashion has indeed opened to "real"-er bodies, each, it would seem, now comes with an exceptional hyper-individualized identity, each a "nodel" or a particular "othered" body—as if to be better differentiated from the stream. But then how is the system itself responding? And what strategies are the more contested protagonists in the field taking up? Some answers can perhaps be found

In fashion's correspondence with art, as canonical art conceptual practices (e.g., parasitism, collective authorship, détournement, and forms of institutional critique) are putting new pressure on fashion's markets. Though even as these potentially revolutionary forms, darker styles, and '90s-style anti-branding have gained new traction, the metabolic rate of branding itself is, no doubt, only speeding up.

# Hussein Chalayan: Archipelago *Power Station of Art*



Hussein Chalayan is an internationally recognized cutting-edge fashion designer, who moves between the fashion industry and art creation. He uses bodies and runways as a stage to discuss urban and cultural issues such as migration, identity, and borders through installations, videos, sounds, and various machineries. In comparison to his contemporaries, fashion critics find it difficult to define and categorize his works, which encompass highly sophisticated craftsmanship, cross-cultural thinking, dissection of the ideology behind clothes, as well as radical and even shocking runway shows. Hussein Chalayan liberates garments from their restraints in terms of function, trends, and the fashion industry, allowing them to express themselves more freely and profusely. This premiere of Hussein Chalayan's work in China brings together more than 130 of his masterpieces, in parts coming from the collections of major museums and design institutions around the world. It forms an archipelago of nine islands, representing nine chapters of his creations for Chalayan,

Born in 1970 in Nicosia, Cyprus, Chalayan spent his childhood moving around with his family due to the conflict between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots on the island. At the age of 11, his mother sent him to study in the United Kingdom by himself, only to come back to Cyprus at the age of 16, and later return to England to attend University. His graduation project at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London revealed a very distinct interpretation of clothing compared to his contemporaries and he quickly became an "anomaly" of sorts within the European fashion scene. Through his designs, people can get a strong feeling for his thinking and criticism on the dichotomies of globalization and localisms, the individual and the grand world theatre, and mechanistic views and the spiritual world. Clothing as body cover is another kind of escape, a detachment of emotions, and a site of contradictions. He

## DRESS CODE: Are You Playing Fashion?



**Director:** Eva Kraus  
**Photographer:**  
Eva Karl

**Curators:** Chinatsu Makiguchi (National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto), Makoto Ishizeki and Michimasa Ogata (The Kyoto Costume Institute), Eva Kraus and Susanne Kleine (Bundeskunsthalle)

**Fashion Lab:** Katja Andreae

**Press Officer:** Sven Bergmann, kommunikation [at] bundeskunsthalle.de

## Voices of Fashion

**Participants:**  
Tabita Rezaire  
Ninke Bloomberg  
Janice Deul



Tabita Rezaire  
**Photographer:**  
Eva Karl



Ninke Bloomberg  
**Photographer:**  
Central Museum



Janice Deul  
**Photographer:**  
Central Museum

## The Vulgar



**Curator:**  
Judith Clark.  
**Organized by:**  
Barbican, London

## "Mode / Fashion"

**Fashion profiles by:** Rob Kulisek  
David Lieske

**Texts by:** Harry Burke, Tess Edmonson, Jack Gross, and Bianca Heuser

## Hussein Chalayan: Archipelago



**Curator:** Gong Yan

**Organized by:** Power Station of Art.

**Co-organized by:** Shanghai Institute of Visual Arts.  
**Supported by:** BLUE SKY LAB.



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