Replicated dresses in cotton toile and new designs exhibited at the Röhsska design museum.

Röhsska design museum in Gothenburg. The students were draping replicas of the exhibited dresses in cotton toile and created exact replications of the museum objects to be tried on and moved from taking place inside the school facilities into the cocktail-dress exhibition at the Röhsska design museum in Gothenburg. The students were draping replicas of the exhibited dresses in cotton toile and created exact replications of the museum objects to be tried on and worn. These replicated dresses were examined during fitting sessions with all the students gathered and the dresses where rigorously observed in movement on a live model. The general question was; what makes this dress interesting? On a formal level, taken out of the contexts of time, fabric and society, what makes this a good dress. What does it do to the body wearing it and which aspect of the dress is the most interesting one?

During the 19th and 20th century the Moulage (modelling on a dress-stand) has, of practical reasons, often replaced the method of working directly on a living body. It is still a sculptural activity in 3-D but there is a risk of creating static garment not designed for a moving body.

Block manipulation, deriving from drafting systems, the most commonly used and taught system of today where the basic pattern blocks can be seen as a representation of the body, turns the pattern into a tool instead of being a notation of form. This takes focus away from the body and towards the technicalities of the pattern, attention of the body tends to be lost while working.

Copying is needed for developing creativity, repeating the past is one of the corner stones within fashion design. If I would need to put forward one formula for making a successful fashion collection I would say that the collection should be perceived as totally new and groundbreaking while at the same time being familiar and recognizable to the viewer. One first needs to get every individual step right, then our performance might improve.

The foundational course in draping for the fashion design program students was last year moved from taking place inside the school facilities into the cocktail-dress exhibition at the Röhsska design museum in Gothenburg. The students were draping replicas of the exhibited dresses in cotton toile and created exact replications of the museum objects to be tried on and worn. These replicated dresses were examined during fitting sessions with all the students gathered and the dresses where rigorously observed in movement on a live model. The general question was; what makes this dress interesting? On a formal level, taken out of the contexts of time, fabric and society, what makes this a good dress. What does it do to the body wearing it and which aspect of the dress is the most interesting one?

The students where instructed to focus on one this aspect of interest and develop this in relation to the living body into a new design. These new design were later exhibited together with the replicas. By working this way; technical skills, judging skills and creativity were trained simultaneously.

- Instruction technique - Playing covers

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- Key points for training creativity: Imitation - Innovation - Insight

Abstract

"We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants", John of Salisbury’s famous quote, later made even more famous by Newton, is often used to explain how researchers, artists, or whoever, uses previous knowledge to build upon when exploring the new. Those impressive giants of fashion, Poiret, Vionnet, Balenciaga, Yamamoto, just to mention a few, how do we get up on their shoulders and how can we be able to see what they saw and possibly even further? This paper will highlight that educating designers only differs slightly from training athletes. When teaching new techniques the area of training is broken down to graspable components and focus is on one muscle or move at a time. One first needs to get every individual step right, then our performance might improve.

Copying is needed for developing creativity, repeating the past is one of the corner stones within fashion design. If I would need to put forward one formula for making a successful fashion collection I would say that the collection should be perceived as totally new and groundbreaking while at the same time being familiar and recognizable to the viewer. To achieving this one will need to bring in aspects already familiar to the audience but we need to bring copying further than that. I will show that imitation is not only a fundamental activity in learning practical skills but also has an essential part in teaching creativity.

Keyword: education, art, creativity and fashion

Student design work, “cover” of Steinunn Siguradottir

Student design work, “cover” of Elsa Schiaparelli

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