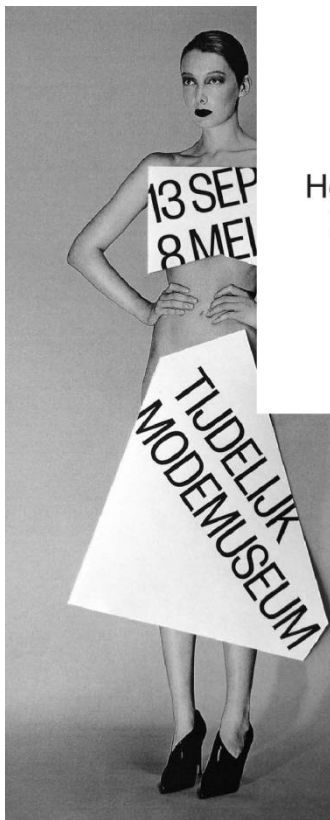


# Fashion on Display

*Exploring dress museology, fashion museology  
and new museology in the exhibitions Temporary  
Fashion Museum and Out of Fashion*



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## Abstract

Fashion in museums has become an omnipresent phenomenon over the last decades. The history of exhibiting costume and fashion in museums for its own sake started around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, fashion exhibitions have gone through several changes. Fashion historian Marie Riegels Melchior distinguishes between three different time periods of fashion in museums. In the first period a dress museology was prevalent; in the second period a fashion museology started to take shape; and in the third period, which comprises our present day, this fashion museology has been fully established, serving as an alternative to a new museology, according to Melchior. Melchior argues that contemporary fashion exhibitions are superficial and traditional in the way they address the topic of fashion. By looking at two recent Dutch fashion exhibitions, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion*, and the ways dress museology, fashion museology and new museology are incorporated and relate to one another in these exhibitions, I am disproving her argument. In the first chapter, the literature review, I give an overview of definitions and characteristics of the three museologies. In the second chapter, I provide a thick description, analysis and interpretation of the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. In the third chapter, I provide a thick description, analysis and interpretation of *Out of Fashion*. In the conclusion, I return to the main research question and provide an answer by giving a summary of the previous two chapters. From these findings, I can conclude that the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* are versatile, intelligent, engaging, inclusive and experimental fashion exhibitions that have much to offer to visitors and do not fail to address societal issues related to the current fashion industry.



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## Introduction

In the last decades, the role of museums in society has profoundly changed in ways that encompass social, political, economic, cultural and ideological aspects. The traditional idea of the museum as a white cube has become outdated and heavily criticised. From being exclusive, powerful and authoritarian institutions, many museums are shifting towards a new identity that presents them as inclusive, accessible and reflexive institutions (Melchior, 2011: 6-7). This change is also expressed through the social role UNESCO assigns to museums in its “Recommendation concerning the protection and promotion of museums and collections, their diversity and their role in society” from 2015. UNESCO stresses the role museums should play in processes of social integration and cohesion and breaking down inequality. Museums should be open to all and should encourage reflection and debate on various historical, social, cultural and scientific issues (UNESCO, 2015).

When subsidies are increasingly difficult to acquire, especially because of governmental budget cuts, museums have to turn to alternatives to remain economically sustainable, like external funding and ticket sales (Melchior, 2011: 6). This has led to a new focus on museological choices to create a more immersive and multisensorial experience for visitors and a sharper distinction between permanent and temporary exhibitions, as a variety of exhibitions has to be offered to maintain the interest and attention of visitors (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 138; Melchior, 2011: 5). Many museums try to involve and engage their audiences in various ways and leave space for them to bring their own view to a visit. The introduction of new themes and the inclusion of everyday objects in museums is another way of increasing visitor numbers (Harrison, 2013: 109). Fashion is such an example. Fashion exhibitions and fashion museums have become more and more commonplace and popular; they attract large audiences, including people who usually would not visit museums. Indeed, fashion is a topic that may easily be perceived as interesting to everyone, since putting on clothes in the morning is one of the most common rituals for humans in society.

By the same token, fashion exhibitions have changed over the course of time. In the introduction to her and Birgitta Svensson’s book *Fashion and Museums*, Marie Riegels Melchior distinguishes three periods relating to the practices of fashion exhibitions and collections in museums. The first period started at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when art museums first began to collect and exhibit fashion on its own merit (Melchior, 2014: 6). A “dress museology” predominated, which focused on collecting, documenting, registering and

preserving dress and exhibiting it in a historically accurate and chronological way (Melchior, 2014: 7; Steele, 2008: 10). The second period comprises the 1960s and 1970s, in which a “fashion museology” began to take shape: it focused on creating a spectacular exhibition experience for the visitor to become immersed in, and emphasised the glamour and imagination surrounding fashion (Melchior, 2014: 8). This second period continues in the third period that comprises our current time, in which, according to Melchior, fashion museology has been fully established. It aims to attract large audiences and gives museums an up-to-date image, as opposed to an antiquated one, usually associated with dress museology (ibidem: 9). Melchior also addresses the concept of “new museology” that arose in the 1970s and 1980s, which focuses on turning museums into reflexive and inclusive institutions, making them into democratic platforms by involving and engaging visitors through new themes and new exhibition practices (Melchior, 2011: 6-7). She argues that fashion museology is currently used as an alternative to new museology, as both tend to be inclusive and attract new audiences by giving museums a lively image. However, she also argues that most contemporary fashion exhibitions remain rather superficial and traditional, not addressing any issues related to the fashion industry, which would be addressed by a new museological approach to fashion exhibitions (ibidem: 7-8). By analysing and interpreting two fashion exhibitions that both carry new museological aspects in them, I disprove this argument by Melchior, and argue that contemporary fashion exhibitions are neither superficial nor traditional in their approach to fashion. Currently, new museology plays an important role in fashion exhibitions, as the exhibitions the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* demonstrate.

For this thesis, I would like to delve deeper into the concepts of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology, as discussed in Fashion Studies. I will analyse how these museologies relate to one another, by comparing two Dutch fashion exhibitions. The first one is called *Tijdelijk Modemuseum* (hereafter the “*Temporary Fashion Museum*”), exhibited at Het Nieuwe Instituut (hereafter “HNI”) in Rotterdam, between 13<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The second one is called *Uit de Mode: de inloopkast van het museum* (hereafter “*Out of Fashion*”), exhibited at the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, between 8<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017.

There were both practical and relevance reasons to choose these two exhibitions: first, as they were both located in The Netherlands, they were easily accessible to me and I managed to get in touch with the creators of both exhibitions, who showed interest in my topic: two project managers at HNI, Floor van Ast and Linde Dorenbosch, and the costume



and fashion conservator at the Centraal Museum, Ninke Bloemberg. Second, these two exhibitions made for interesting case studies to explore how the three museologies relate to one another: indeed, the two exhibitions are very different in both content and form and are neither traditional nor superficial in their approach to the theme of fashion. Additionally, they incorporate various themes and exhibition practices that could be seen as characteristic of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology.

Consequently, the main research question guiding this thesis is the following:

*How do the concepts of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology relate to each other in the fashion exhibitions Temporary Fashion Museum and Out of Fashion?*

This main question will be divided into two parts; one addressing the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and the other addressing *Out of Fashion*. The thick description, analysis and interpretation of both exhibitions will take place in two separate chapters, in which I will answer the main question for both exhibitions.

The main method I will be using to analyse these exhibitions is thick description, as discussed by cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz. He argues that “analysis (...) is sorting out the structures of signification (...) and determining their social ground and import” (Geertz, 1973: 9). It is not possible to analyse without a well-defined object of signification, in this case the exhibitions. Apart from a few exceptions, the majority of people that will read my thesis may not have visited the exhibitions or even heard or read anything about them. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to describe them in great detail in order to provide full context information. Indeed, visiting an exhibition is often a multisensorial experience: my aim is to allow the reader to imagine or even feel what was there to see, to hear, to touch and perhaps even to smell. I must add that unfortunately I have not visited the *Temporary Fashion Museum* myself, but I did manage to write a detailed and extensive thick description of it by consulting various data, like the website, reviews, and additional documents, including photos and videos of the exhibition. However, this still forms a potential limit to this research, as my direct experience of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* is absent. Unfortunately, it was already over by the time I began working on this thesis. In order to make up for this shortcoming, I interviewed two project managers who were directly involved in the production of the exhibition. It is thanks to these contacts that I was able to gather a great amount of data I needed to write a thick description. On the contrary, I did have access to the exhibition *Out of*

*Fashion*, which I visited more than once. This allowed me to take photos and reflect on the evolution of the exhibition between my various visits.

My thesis is divided into four sections: in the first chapter, I will start off with a literature review, discussing and defining the concepts of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology from the perspectives of various theorists. In the second chapter, I will present the thick description and the analysis and interpretation of the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, in which the first part of the main question of this thesis will be answered. In the third chapter, the thick description and analysis and interpretation of *Out of Fashion* will follow, which will allow me to answer the second part of the main question. Additionally, the second and third chapter will be supported by quotes and information gathered from the interviews with the project managers at HNI and the conservator at the Centraal Museum. The second chapter will also be supported by quotes and information gathered from reviews of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* to make up for the fact that I have not visited the exhibition. These reviews offer an insight into the experience of the exhibition. In my conclusion, I will answer the main research question by evaluating both exhibitions in terms of the themes and practices employed and relating them to the three aforementioned museologies.

## Chapter 1: Literature review

In this chapter I will give an overview of definitions and characteristics of the concepts dress museology, fashion museology and new museology, as argued and explained by various theorists. This will allow me to point out, analyse and interpret the elements of these museologies represented in the exhibitions the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion*.

### The First Period: Dress Museology

Marie Riegels Melchior argues that in the few years before the Second World War art museums in the Western world became particularly interested in the collection of costumes and dress on its own merit (Melchior, 2014: 6). However, there are cases in which this interest emerged earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for instance with the start of the first costume conservator at the Centraal Museum Utrecht in 1917, Lady Caroline Henriette de Jonge, who played an indispensable role in the expansion of the costume collection of the museum, as I have learned from the exhibition *Out of Fashion*. Before the rise of this particular interest in costumes and dress among art museums, costume and dress collections did exist, but mainly in museums of cultural and national history, where an ethnographic approach to clothing was dominant (ibidem: 7). The collected ethnographical dress was seen as “representative of the cultural artefacts of the Noble Savage and the exotic ‘Other’” (Taylor, 1998: 345). According to Lou Taylor and Valerie Steele, fashionable dress thus played a minor role in museums at first, not in the least because male staff saw it as something particularly feminine and vulgarly commercial (Taylor, 1998: 341; Steele, 2008: 8-9). Moreover, fashion was, and still is, associated with the physical, sexual and biodegradable, as it “is worn *on the body*” (Steele, 2013: 14). The textile industry was considered to be of more value, hence many costumes were solely collected for their outstanding textiles, fabrics and technical crafting details (Melchior, 2014: 7). Some forms of *pre-industrial* dress were also collected and displayed, for instance clothing belonging to famous historical individuals or non-Western royal costumes (Steele, 2008: 9).

The first initiatives of collecting fashionable dress for its own sake were characterized by an object-based approach, focusing on the “style, cut and material of dresses – the aesthetic value as well as the design – more than on the social and cultural meaning inscribed in the objects” (Melchior, 2014: 7). Steele emphasises the importance of an object-based approach,

as it “provides unique insights into the historic and aesthetic development of fashion” (Steele, 1998: 327). Objects can serve as active evidence instead of passive illustration in the knowledge creation and interpretation of fashion and its history, which makes a material culture methodology an indispensable tool for research in the field of fashion and museums (ibidem: 327-328, 334). As Aileen Ribeiro argues, the (image of the) object is “no longer just an illustration to a text, but the text itself” (Ribeiro, 1998: 323). Taylor agrees, arguing that the study of the details of dress is necessary to be able to give meaning to and interpret the context, in which it was produced, distributed and consumed (Taylor, 1998: 348). She continues by discussing what she calls the “Great Divide”; the object-based approach of museum dress curators and collectors, who were and still are mainly women, opposed the socio-economic history and cultural theory approaches of the universities that were male-dominated (ibidem: 338). The academia criticized the object-based approach for its specific focus on the description and details of dress and its neglect of contextual meanings inscribed in it (ibidem: 348). Within universities, a general view of dress as a women’s affair persisted and, according to Taylor, still can be found today. In turn, museum curators and collectors criticized the academia for its neglect of object-based research, in particular “the significance of issues of fashion, style and seasonal change” (ibidem: 346). On a more positive note, Taylor discusses some examples of new multi-disciplinary research, in which an object-based approach is combined with cultural and socio-economic approaches, merging the best of both worlds in trying to neutralise the “Great Divide” (ibidem: 352). Ribeiro also advocates an approach to dress history in which a balance exists between describing and documenting the object and its contextual and theoretical interpretation, since these aspects complement each other (Ribeiro, 1998: 316-317, 320).

During the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s when dress became of interest to art museums, professional women curators were being appointed and some women made a great effort to establish museums of costume and fashion out of private collections, for instance Doris Langley Moore (*The Museum of Costume* in Bath), Madeleine Delpierre (*Musée de la Mode et du Costume de la Ville de Paris* in Paris), Yvonne Deslandres (*Musée de la Mode et du Textile* in Paris), and Irene and Alice Lewisohn, Aline Bernstein and Polaire Weissman (*The Costume Institute* at the *Metropolitan Museum of Art* in New York) (Taylor, 1998: 342-344). More frequently though, costume departments were established in existing museums, adopting private costume collections (Steele, 2008: 9). During this period, historical accuracy was of major importance to the exhibition of clothing, using an antiquarian and chronological approach towards their display (Melchior, 2014: 7; Steele, 2008: 10). As Caroline Henriette

de Jonge argued, curators had to deal with technical problems concerning the preservation of displayed clothing, which still are an issue today, for instance the handling of garments when cleaning them, the lighting used, as it should not radiate heat, and the ventilation of the showcases. Moreover, aesthetic problems also had and still have to be dealt with, like the choice of using mannequins without heads to avoid distraction from the clothes (Jonge, 1955: 180). As Melchior and Steele argue, around this time these kind of historical fashion exhibitions did not receive much press coverage, even though they were quite popular among museum visitors (Melchior, 2014: 7; Steele, 2008: 10).

Another characteristic of this period was that fashion designers themselves made use of the collections for their own designs, hence the fashion industry itself was also indirectly influenced by the collections (Melchior, 2014: 7). Scholarly work that was done in collaboration with the museums focused on description, documentation, registration and conservation of single objects, like pieces of clothing or accessories (Melchior, 2014: 7; Melchior, 2011: 4). The object-based approach to dress became known under the name of “dress history” or “dress studies” and helped in establishing the ICOM Costume Committees Guidelines of Costume, the international guidelines on how to handle dress and costumes in museums (Melchior, 2014: 8). In short, Melchior defines dress museology as a focus on “the actual material and practice of collecting dress” (Melchior, 2014: 11).

As mentioned earlier, in The Netherlands Lady Caroline Henriette de Jonge was appointed costume conservator at the Centraal Museum in Utrecht in 1917. De Jonge was a former student of Professor Willem Vogelsang who paved the way for dress historical research in the Netherlands, as well as for collecting and exhibiting practices of dress within museums (for example the work of De Jonge) (Roodenburg, 1975: 602, 604). As De Jonge argued, until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Dutch dress history research was mainly focused on the general appeal of clothes and not on the used materials and techniques (Jonge, 1955: 171, 174). With the transition from costume history to costume science around 1900, the focus came to lie on the detailed examination and analysis of costumes, mainly as a result of Vogelsang’s efforts to put costume research on the Dutch academic and museological map (ibidem: 176). He provided academic research with sketches and drawings of the described garments and applied a specific method to the study of costume, in which he compared various garments and aspects, like indigenous and foreign costumes, everyday clothes and more flamboyant garments, the use of materials and tools, the influence of social status, church and guild regulations, and the aesthetic aspects of clothes (Roodenburg, 1975: 605). This bears witness to a dress museological object-based research approach to costumes, which De Jonge put into

practice in her work at the Centraal Museum, both by expanding the collection and exhibiting it. Moreover, De Jonge emphasised the importance of (inter)national collaboration when it comes to costume related research, as dress and fashion in different countries relate to one another in various ways and huge quantities of costumes and accompanying knowledge had been lost over the previous centuries (Jonge, 1955: 179). The expression of this collaboration today are digital costume platforms like Modemuze (on a national level) and Europeana Fashion (on an international level), which I will address in the thick description and analysis of *Uit De Mode*.

### The Second Period: Fashion Museology Taking Shape

As José Teunissen argues, in the 1960s fashion was democratized and made accessible to mass markets, which made it necessary for museums and scholars to move away from an object-based approach to focus on the societal and political context of fashion, and to study fashion as a cultural phenomenon (Teunissen, 2014: 35-36). Fashion itself became more conceptual and thematic and so did fashion exhibitions, sometimes mixing historical costumes with contemporary fashion (ibidem: 35-37). This was the time when a “fashion museology” started to develop, and about a decade later the concept of new museology would gain ground.

In the 1960s and 1970s a shift from a focus on “the single, tangible object to the dream of fashion” became noticeable (Melchior, 2014: 8). Popular fashion exhibitions displaying the work of one (living) designer developed into a trend within art museums. These exhibitions started to look more and more like fashion boutiques themselves, which was emphasised by the use of particular extras like spraying designer perfumes in the exhibition space. Historical accuracy ceased to be a priority, making room for the representation of the creativity of contemporary fashion designers and the imagination surrounding fashion itself (ibidem). Designers were increasingly seen as artists and fashion in museums was approached as a form of art (Kim, 1998: 52, 57). Melchior makes a distinction between a front-stage and back-stage perception in relation to fashion in museums during this period. Back-stage, dress museology was still prevalent, in which the ICOM guidelines were wielded in handling dress. The front-stage where fashion was displayed, focused on the feelings and experiences that fashion evokes, relying heavily on visual spectacle and creating a narrative. This is what Melchior calls fashion museology (Melchior, 2014: 9). Fashion museology, as Cheryl Buckley and Hazel Clark argue, articulates fashion “as the output of highly creative individuals who approach fashion as an artistic practice, or that it is produced by designers who are sharply attuned to the contemporary world, or that it is the product of elusive fashion houses that are

part of multinational companies locked into the global economy”, addressing fashion in terms of its artistic value, its cultural significance and its economic importance (Buckley & Clark, 2016: 28).

One curator in particular could perhaps be seen as the one who laid the groundworks for fashion museology: Diana Vreeland. Steele explains how Vreeland incorporated theatre, drama, glamour and spectacle into her exhibitions for the Costume Institute in New York, often focusing on just one (living) designer’s work and neglecting any sense of historical accuracy. For the latter, and the commercial interests of fashion houses involved in her exhibitions, she was heavily criticized (Steele, 2008: 10-11). However, she did manage to attract many and new visitors to her exhibitions and made them interested in fashion. Celebrity was a crucial aspect of many of Vreeland’s exhibitions as well, as she thought that only the intriguing personalities who created or wore the designs, made those designs interesting (ibidem: 13-14). Many other museums followed her lead and collaborated with designers and fashion houses for the production of spectacular fashion exhibitions (ibidem: 12).

### The Third Period: Fashion Museology Established

In the third period, which is the contemporary phase, the concept of fashion museology has settled down, according to Melchior. Fashion exhibitions have become omnipresent and museums are using them as a strategy to attract many and new visitors. The focus on fashion from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century and its designers has the aim of giving museums a fresh and lively image, compared to the exhibition of ‘antiquated’ historical costumes. As Melchior argues, this strategy is therefore often employed at the expense of the museum collection, which becomes of secondary importance to the special fashion exhibitions (Melchior, 2014: 9). This shift from historical dress towards contemporary dress resulted in a dismissal of the tradition of dress history, according to Marco Pecorari (Pecorari, 2014: 46-47). Some museums do not even make use of their own collections anymore, or discard them entirely, as the storage and maintenance of such collections is very expensive. Melchior argues that the alternative option for museums is to rely on pieces of clothing from private collections and/or fashion houses, which do not have to meet the ICOM display standards (Melchior, 2014: 9; Melchior, 2011: 5).

Besides borrowing pieces from fashion houses, museums often collaborate with the designers themselves of those fashion houses, sometimes even involving the designer in the making of the exhibition (Melchior, 2014: 10). According to Melchior, an advantage of

collaborating with fashion houses is the access that museums get to fashion archives that are normally private. Two disadvantages, according to Melchior, are that the critical point of view and integrity of the museum curator are not represented in the exhibition and that the exhibition is reduced to a marketing initiative for a particular brand which satisfies its commercial interests (ibidem). This is the same kind of criticism Diana Vreeland received for her collaborations with contemporary designers. However, as Steele argues, finding commercial sponsors is crucial for financing a fashion exhibition. The biggest risk is that the sponsor wants to have a say in the production and content of the exhibition, which threatens curatorial independence and integrity (Steele, 2008: 11, 17). Steele argues that the academic world criticizes museums for giving in to these entertainment practices to attract as much money and visitors as possible (ibidem: 25). She emphasises that “the commercialization of designer fashion exhibitions and the resulting public criticism are problems that need to be addressed – not avoided”, but the fashion spectacle aspect of these kind of exhibitions should not be entirely rejected either, as it perhaps aids in the communication of the fashion experience towards visitors (ibidem: 12).

As Pecorari argues, another problem concerning designer curators is that installing the personal voice of the designer through a spectacular exhibition design “can be at odds with the crucial role played by the materiality of the objects”, and therefore “the attempt to “curate with the designer” must be implemented by a “curation of the designer” as a critical action to explain his/her role in our contemporary visual culture” (Pecorari, 2014: 52-53). Teunissen would agree with Pecorari, arguing that when a fashion designer curates his or her own exhibition, he or she focuses more on explaining “the object and installation in the context of his or her own conceptual work”, while when a curator curates the exhibition, he or she incorporates the cultural context of the objects as well (Teunissen, 2014: 43).

According to Melchior, the rise of fashion museology has also established new curatorial practices for fashion exhibitions, in which the relations between the fashion theorist, the conservator and the curator have changed: the theorist provides an analysis, the conservator looks after the collection, and the curator sets up the exhibition (Melchior, 2014: 10). These new practices mark “an intellectual shift toward theory rather than history”, which fits fashion exhibitions’ shift from historical accuracy towards concepts and themes (Buckley & Clark, 2016: 31).

In conclusion, Melchior defines fashion museology as follows: it “emphasizes the visibility of the museum through the staging of spectacular shows, primarily creating unique visitor experiences and only secondarily raising collecting possibilities” (Melchior, 2014: 11).



Its value lies in the questions that are addressed: how can museums be relevant to society?; how can museums attract new visitors?; through what ways can museums generate new income when governmental budget cuts for cultural institutions are becoming more common? (Melchior, 2011: 6). These are all valid questions that need to be addressed by the current museum sector.

### The Third Period: New Museology

Melchior compares the fashion museology from our current third period to “new museology”, which came into being during the 1970s and 1980s out of a critical museum studies’ critique of the museum’s image as an “exclusive, powerful and socially divisive” institution (Melchior, 2011: 6). The academics involved in these debates aimed to transform museums into reflexive institutions, which would be accessible to everyone and would actively involve (potential) visitors in dialogue and discussion, making the museums into democratic platforms for (social) change (ibidem: 6-7). As Max Ross argues, since the 1970s “museums, it seems, have become altogether more accessible – the old atmosphere of exclusiveness and intellectual asceticism has largely given way to a more democratic climate (Ross, 2004: 85). Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett notices a shift here from a museum’s focus on objects towards a focus on visitors and their experience, making exhibitions an indispensable part of museum practice, often “at the expense of curatorial research based on museum collections” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 138). According to Ross, this shift in attention from collections towards visitors were a direct result of economic and political pressures (Ross, 2004: 84). Vicki McCall and Clive Gray define new museology as “a discourse around the social and political roles of museums, encouraging new communication and new styles of expression in contrast to classic, collections-centred museum models” (McCall & Gray, 2014: 4). Taking these characteristics into consideration, new museology then seems similar to fashion museology, as the latter also emphasises the importance of the visitor’s experience and also received criticism for its neglect of museum collections. However, the two museologies do differ significantly, which will be made clear in the following section.

One of the key works on new museology is *The New Museology* (1989) edited by Peter Vergo, which mainly focuses on the British museum sector. Vergo defines new museology “as a state of widespread dissatisfaction with the ‘old’ museology, both within and outside the museum profession; (...) what is wrong with the ‘old’ museology is that it is too much about museum *methods*, and too little about the purposes of museums” (Vergo, 1989: 3). According to McCall & Gray, museums operating within this traditional museology have

been too occupied with their collections-based function and with civilizing the masses “to fit their position within society” (McCall & Gray, 2014: 4). Moreover, Vergo argues that the creation and consumption of exhibitions function insufficiently as reflexive activities; questions about how and why an exhibition was created are often not addressed (Vergo, 1989: 43). His criticism of the lack of reflexivity in the museum sector and its exhibitions is made explicit in the following quote:

Our own political or intellectual or social attitudes may well exert a significant influence on the kinds of exhibitions we make, and indeed determine to some extent the reactions of the public, the consumers of the product. But just like our educative or didactic purposes in exhibition-making, such underlying attitudes and presuppositions remain unspoken, unarticulated, not least because we have probably thought little about them, relying on ‘performance indicators’ such as the numbers of visitors, the box-office take, and the extent of commercial sponsorship to gauge the success of exhibitions (ibidem: 57).

This last part could also be interpreted as a critique of fashion museology, in which attracting many visitors and commercial sponsors and making large amounts of money are among its most important aims (some might argue, its only aim). It emerges that new museology is both reflexive of the museum practice itself and of wider social, political, cultural, economic and ideological issues in society, which from a new museological perspective should be addressed and discussed through museum exhibitions.

Rodney Harrison argues that there are two sides in the debates surrounding new museology:

On the one side were those who felt that the museum’s role was being eroded by its increasing consumption as ‘entertainment’; on the other side were those who felt the museum should cater to broader (less ‘elite’) audiences by introducing new modes of exhibition, and address itself to alternative themes, allowing space for visitors to bring their own perspective to their visit (Harrison, 2013: 109).

Hence, some new museology advocates seem hesitant about incorporating entertainment elements into exhibitions for the sake of visitor’s experience, while others see it as an opportunity to attract people who were less likely to visit a museum, providing new and

engaging themes (like fashion). For instance, new museology advocate Philip Wright, emphasises that curators of art museums should prioritize both catering to the needs and wishes of visitors who are not specialized in art and to the development of new audiences, in this way fulfilling their 'public service function' instead of their own needs (Wright, 1989: 120). He argues that this could be achieved if curators would take research on the effectiveness of displays and their improvement more seriously, and if class and educational differences between visitors are explicitly recognised (ibidem: 146-147).

It can at least be concluded that new museology has visitors at the centre of its concern, although there is some discussion on how to balance and mix the entertaining and engaging aspects of exhibitions with their educational and reflexive aspects. Furthermore, in the debates on new museology, the expertise of the individual curator is questioned, as aesthetic value is seen more and more as something relative and subjective (Harrison, 2013: 109). Ross notices a shift in the role of the museum professional, who is becoming more of an interpreter instead of a legislator of cultural meaning (Ross, 2004: 84). According to Ross, "this move involves shifts in priorities, including a heightened awareness of diverse audiences and publics; a commitment to facilitating wider access and dismantling cultural barriers, and to the mediation of social difference (...)" (ibidem: 90). Ross argues that the museum sector has become aware of the fact that true knowledge and art cannot be defined according to one standard and that cultures and belief systems cannot be evaluated in relation to one another (ibidem: 92). The traditional role of the museum as an authoritarian and paternalistic institution in the field of knowledge transfer is becoming scrutinised.

Vergo describes exhibitions as having two different purposes. Firstly, objects take up a new meaning within the exhibition's context, becoming part of a narrative that is told through the exhibition. Secondly, an exhibition *addresses* visitors and "we also tend to believe that the people who go to exhibitions 'get something out of them', even if we are hard put to define what that 'something' is" (Vergo, 1989: 46). Part of the latter is also that it is usually expected that some measure of interpretation of the objects is provided by the creators of an exhibition. Vergo rejects the concept of an 'aesthetic' exhibition, in which objects are left to speak for themselves and visitors should simply 'experience' them. However, he rejects the concept of a 'contextual' exhibition as well, in which objects are provided with a large amount of contextual information that results in the neglect of the intrinsic significance of the object itself (ibidem: 46, 48-52). Vergo argues that these two types of exhibitions usually result from three general problems.

First of all, creators of exhibitions tend to focus too much on the content and presentation, instead of getting to know their target audience. For instance, sometimes they overestimate or underestimate the amount of general knowledge their visitors possess. I would like to add that this goes for public opinion as well: according to Peter McNeil, museums often discount public opinion while visitors could, for instance, be put off by a sense of exclusivity that some (fashion) exhibitions possess (McNeil, 2008: 77). As Jeff Horsley argues, this can be avoided by adding autobiographic reference to an exhibition, as this “can relocate a garment distanced from the viewer by vitrine or display case, from an object of spectacle to an item understood in relation to their own experiences of consumption and wear” (Horsley, 2014: 192). As Rosemary Harden argues, acquiring wardrobe collections “enable[s] the museum to document systematically one person’s approach to dressing, which in turn leads to possibilities of presentation and exploration of the consumption of fashion, focusing on personal stories and individual taste”, which fits the practice of adding autobiographic reference (Harden, 2014: 131). According to Harden, another way to let visitors identify more strongly with what is displayed, is through the presentation of everyday dress (ibidem: 135). As Buckley and Clark argue, museums have “underrepresented the importance of fashion in everyday lives”, and instead tend to focus solely on designers and the rich and famous (Buckley & Clark, 2016: 26). The focus on generating knowledge of everyday dress, results in the idea of fashion as a palimpsest, “created from a composite of garments and accessories that are new, with those that are reworn, altered, and generally ‘re-fashioned’ (even if only in terms of when and where they are worn) by their users over time” (ibidem: 27-28). A focus on everyday dress does have a risk of looking dull “without careful styling and a specific context” (Harden, 2014: 135). One final solution to the exclusivity problem of fashion in museums, is producing exhibitions that reinforce the connection between antiquated and contemporary (everyday) dress, which could help visitors identify more strongly with what is on display as well, also involving the concept of ‘vintage’, “a trend which has become important in fashion history in recent years” (ibidem: 136).

The second general problem that can lead to contextual exhibitions in particular, as Vergo argues, is that the explanation and interpretation of objects almost always comes in the form of words (written or spoken), although there are many alternative ways to do this (Vergo, 1989: 52-53). Harden suggests to display other pop culture objects or everyday objects next to dress that show stylistic resonance with the garments on display (Harden, 2014: 135). Teunissen suggests to provide explanation through visualisation “by means of films, installations, lighting and scenography” (Teunissen, 2014: 37). Buckley and Harden

mention family snapshots and albums as examples of visualising the explanation and interpretation of displayed garments, which at the same time fits Horsley's idea of adding autobiographic reference to an exhibition (Buckley & Clark, 2016: 37).

The third and last problem is that the selector of the objects and the designer of the exhibition often do not collaborate closely enough, creating a gap between the design of the exhibition and the narrative told through the displayed objects (Vergo, 1989: 54). Pecorari also emphasises the importance of the balance between exhibition design and the objects (Pecorari, 2014: 53).

All the problems discussed above could be taken into account by the museum sector in the production of new exhibitions. According to Melchior, fashion museology is currently used as an alternative to new museology, as it also aims to reach and attract people who usually do not visit museums, specifically by giving the museum a fresh and new image and making it appear relevant to society through the display of fashion by contemporary designers. As discussed, the visitor's experience lies at the heart of this practice, similar to new museological practices. However, Melchior argues that most fashion exhibitions are still very traditional in their interpretations and insufficiently make use of reflexive practices. According to her, important topics of debate relating to fashion, for instance on the environment or issues of gender, are not addressed, and room for dialogue between the institution and its visitors is not created (Melchior, 2011: 7-8). Melchior wonders "what relevance fashion exhibitions have beyond the entertainment value of the display of a fashion designer's creativity or the joy of beauty expressed via clothing and body adornment" (Melchior, 2014: 13).

On a similar note, Ribeiro argues that "in some cases exhibitions are little more than arrangements of attractive garments (displayed, usually, in a chronological order), with little, if any, critical comment or in-depth contextual discussion of the questions that lie behind and alongside the actual object" (Ribeiro, 1998: 320). Furthermore, Teunissen writes that "the discussion now focuses on exactly how a fashion exhibition might legitimately place clothing objects in a new and broader context" (Teunissen, 2014: 44). Melchior therefore advocates finding a balance between maintaining visitors' and (corporate) sponsors' interest and also incorporating critical reflection into fashion exhibitions through which our current society can be better understood (Melchior, 2011: 8). According to Vergo, this can be tricky, since the different parties involved in the creation of exhibitions, both directly or indirectly, like sponsors, (guest) curators, conservation staff, scholars, designers and visitors, usually have conflicting interests, which could lead to tensions (Vergo, 1989: 43-44).

Steele would (at least partially) disagree with these arguments, as she identifies a couple of fashion exhibitions that “are both beautiful and intelligent”, and therefore reflect both fashion museology in their entertaining practices and new museology in their reflexive practices (Steele, 2008: 29). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that museums have usually assigned themselves the right to decide what to show visitors and interpret the displayed objects for them, taking on a traditionally educational role towards the ‘passive’ visitor (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 137). Steele, however, argues that “visitors should be – want to be – actively engaged in thinking about what they see” (Steele, 2008: 25). Moreover, she claims that “ideally, an exhibition will be good for thinking” (ibidem). Similarly, Ribeiro argues that “a really thought-provoking exhibition is an experience that creates a range of expectations and assumptions, and provokes different forms of appreciation and understanding” (Ribeiro, 1998: 320). Teunissen adds that a fashion exhibition should “be both entertaining and seducing in form, historically accurate in content, and provide insight into the phenomenon of fashion”, implicitly uniting the concepts of fashion, dress and new museology (Teunissen, 2014: 38). In some of the fashion exhibitions that Steele discusses, visitors are engaged in reflexive thinking and meaning making processes. The exhibitions inspire the visitors but need not be completely understood, as long as a dialogue between the displayed objects and the visitors is maintained (Steele, 2008: 28-29). Thus, Steele has a more positive outlook on contemporary fashion exhibitions than Melchior. She ends by asking relevant questions, such as “what is the ‘usual’ fashion exhibition?” and “are there not many kinds of different fashion exhibitions, which may be excellent in different ways?” (ibidem: 29). These questions fit well within a new museology paradigm, as they directly reflect on museum practices and the (different) meaning(s) of fashion exhibitions. I agree with Steele that new museological practices are as much present in contemporary fashion exhibitions as fashion museological practices. I will clarify this in the following chapters of this thesis.

New museology does not have to neglect a museum’s collection, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) argues it does. Harden discusses a new display concept, introduced at the Fashion Museum in Bath, which at first sight looks like a traditional exhibition with a dress museological approach, displaying the collection in a historically accurate and chronological way. There is a difference, however, as “the boxes are carefully arranged and set as scenes, and the impression is of beautiful, historic pieces spilling out of acid-free museum boxes, which are piled up high. The visiting experience is somewhat voyeuristic, with a feeling that visitors are being given privileged access to something not normally seen” (Harden, 2014: 134). The visitor should have an experience of actually being present in a collection’s storage

room. The boundaries between stored dress collections (back-stage) and dress on display (front-stage) are broken down. At the same time, it can give visitors a feeling of increased accessibility, which is one of the most important characteristics of new museology (ibidem: 137).

Pecorari discusses another particular example of new museological practices, namely MoMu, the fashion museum in Antwerp. In its exhibitions, MoMu tends to critically reflect on “the ways fashion is approached in fashion museums” and focuses on the entire production process of fashion and dress instead of solely on the final product, the latter being a characteristic of dress history (Pecorari, 2014: 51). By adopting industry practices, hiring industry professionals, and improving “the experience of visitors through curatorial decisions that resemble more the practice of commercialization of fashion rather than its musealization”, MoMu also critically reflects on the industry itself and the boundaries between the museum and the industry (ibidem: 50-51). Moreover, MoMu acknowledges the dialectic dialogue that exists between historical and contemporary dress and other fashion materials, like patterns, prints, sketches and photographs. In Pecorari’s words: “MoMu constantly challenges the exhibition’s ontology and the role of the museum as a place where past, present and future meet” (ibidem: 55). This reflexivity explicitly bears witness to a new museological approach.

On a different note, Pecorari stresses the importance of addressing all parts of contemporary fashion in fashion exhibitions, not solely high fashion and its designers, on which MoMu is primarily focused. For instance, exhibitions on the consumption and dissemination of (fast) fashion could also contribute to a better understanding of contemporary fashion. Through such a focus, “objects can become more important than the creator, brands can become more important than the product, the sketch more interesting than the final product, the consumer more important than the creator, and so on” (ibidem: 57-58).

In this literature review, I have discussed the various characteristics and examples of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology, including the different points of view on these concepts of various theorists, and fashion and museum professionals. It can be argued that the three museologies all have their advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, historical accuracy and an object-based approach are important to generate knowledge of aesthetic developments of fashion in different time periods and knowledge of its production, distribution and consumption contexts. On the other hand, this dress museological approach could maintain a distance between visitors and what is on display, letting antiquarianism

prevail. Creating a spectacular visitor experience through the display of glamorous contemporary fashion is important for its entertainment value, as a way to impress and immerse the public. Yet, on its own, this fashion museological approach remains quite superficial and meaningless when no critical discussion about the underlying questions and meanings of an exhibition is encouraged. Therefore, reflecting on societal issues and on museum practices themselves is important, because it adds a critical note and involves visitors in a dialogue with what is on display. Although, this new museological approach could ask too much from visitors who lack general and contextual knowledge on topics represented in an exhibition. Balancing the advantages of the three museologies within a fashion exhibition could be the best way of eradicating their disadvantages. I will now continue with the thick description and the analysis and interpretation of the exhibitions the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion*, to find out in what ways the three museologies manifest itself in these exhibitions and how they relate to one another.



## **Chapter 2: Thick description, analysis and interpretation *Temporary Fashion Museum***

### **Thick description ‘*Temporary Fashion Museum*’**

In this chapter I will provide a detailed description of what the *Temporary Fashion Museum* looked like, addressing all its various facets. The *Temporary Fashion Museum* took place in HNI in Rotterdam between 13<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Because I have not visited the exhibition, I have gathered information mainly from the website of the exhibition and some additional documents that were available online or have been provided by project managers Floor van Ast and Linde Dorenbosch. Subsequently, I will start with the analysis and interpretation of the exhibition, making use of the theories from the literature review and information retrieved from the interview with Van Ast and Dorenbosch and reviews of the exhibition, to eventually be able to answer the main research question. The interview with Van Ast and Dorenbosch took place on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 at HNI in Rotterdam. The reviews I have found of the exhibition mainly consisted of descriptions instead of evaluations. When possible and relevant, I have added some critical notes and remarks from reviews of different online sources to the analysis and interpretation.

As Van Ast and Dorenbosch have clarified in the interview, the exhibition was set up as a department store, a warehouse, divided into different parts, curated by different artists and curators. This spatial design was created by design office EventArchitectuur. On the ground floor there were multiple things to see and do without having to buy a ticket, which resembles the ground floor of a warehouse, where different brands try to sell you their products. For the other parts of the exhibition, visitors had to buy a ticket.

### **Open Source Fashion Manifesto**

For the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, designers Martijn van Strien and Vera de Pont wrote the “Open Source Fashion Manifesto”, addressing current problems in the fashion industry and introducing possible solutions for making this industry into a sustainable and fair one. New technologies, for instance the 3D-printer, would take up a central role in these sustainable practices. Consumers are asked to be actively involved and take matters into their own hands by contributing in various ways. Three messages from the Manifesto were printed on a large façade banner, hanging outside at the entrance of HNI, that was developed together with

TextielLab Tilburg. For the banner, different yarns were used that all responded differently to light. This resulted in only one message being legible at a time, depending on the time of day.

## FOYER

### Parfumerie du Parc

“Parfumerie du Parc” was located at the entrance of the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. It resembled a perfume section in a warehouse, which, according to HNI, is considered to be the most museum-like space related to fashion. Empty clear perfume bottles with golden tips, without any names or references to brands, were positioned in rows on glass shelves. Alessandro Gualtieri, who is a perfume designer, designed a new perfume for the *Temporary Fashion Museum* that was supposed to capture the smell of fashion and the museum.



**1. Schwartz, Johannes. *Parfumerie du Parc*. 2015. Photograph. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.**

### View on Fashion

This part of the exhibition changed every month and showed work of different players in the field of fashion in a small space.

I: Part I of View on Fashion featured the work of photography duo Anuschka Blommers and Niels Schumm. They created an installation inspired by their own archive, where their work passed by on a screen and visitors could press a button to stop at a particular photograph.

Their work often focuses on the relations between the body's role and fashion photography's conventions, letting questions of fashion, photography and art overlap.

II: Part II of View on Fashion featured the work of fashion designer Liselore Frowijn.

Colourful and graphic prints are particularly important in her work and these were presented as large images, accompanied by some of her designs.

III: part III of View on Fashion featured the work of fashion designer Pascale Gatzen, who belonged to Le Cri Néerlandais in the 1990s. She showed the project *With Light*, existing of five woven jackets, representing different weaving techniques, that were made with a special yarn by her weaving cooperative Friends of Light, located in the Hudson Valley, New York. The cooperative is focused on slow fashion, using local materials through a meticulous and sustainable production process, which could take the production of one jacket 150 hours. For Friends of Light it is not about profit growth, but about personal growth.

IV: For part IV of View on Fashion, style blogger and designer Ivania Carpio created a white space to inspire visitors. In the space, a screen was set up, with a Tumblr page that expanded in unpredictable ways, just like the internet does. Carpio wanted to challenge visitors to see the opportunities in an empty, white space, instead of limitations.



2. Schwartz, Johannes. *View on Fashion: Ivania Carpio*. 2016. Photographic. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.

V: Part V of View on Fashion, carrying the name 'Body Informs Material Informs Body', featured work of fashion designer Pauline van Dongen, who experiments with dynamism in

materials and how materials and bodies inform each other. Through the use of technology in her designs, she tries to counter the overproduction that is currently so prevalent in the fashion industry. Van Dongens production process is of particular importance to her final designs and therefore also took up a place in her View on Fashion presentation.

VI: Part VI of View on Fashion focused on the important role the user played at the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. Pascale Gatzen gave a series of workshops during which the hospitality team of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* created its own uniform. In the View on Fashion space, visitors could view behind-the-scenes footage of the different steps in the production process of the uniform, from the first sketches, to the deconstruction of clothes, to the final product. It was a democratic collaboration process, in which the employees were responsible for the design of their own uniform and everyone contributed something.

#### The New Mural

For the exhibition, typographer Job Wouters made four different murals inspired by different fashion related topics.

#### Block Bustes & Dazeld Dolls

Designer Niek Pulles designed busts and mannequins for the exhibition, addressing the relationship between fashion and the body, as there is “no fashion without body, no fashion exhibition without mannequins and busts”. Pulles tries to find the boundaries between the body and the material through his work. The mannequins were placed between walls with large mirrors. When visitors entered the foyer, their coats and jackets were taken and placed on the mannequins to be photographed, or put into special storage bags. In this way, the visitor already became aware of the fact that he or she is part of the fashion system as well.

#### The Now

For this part of the exhibition, Jop van Bennekom of *Fantastic Man* magazine and Penny Martin of *The Gentlewoman* selected the most recognizable pieces of the Fall/Winter 2015 and Spring/Summer 2016 collections of various fashion houses, like Dior, Prada, Versace and Jil Sander. The clothes were displayed behind glass on mannequins that were placed on glass pedestals.



**3. Schwartz, Johannes. *The Now*. 2015. Photographic. Het Nieuwe Insituut, Rotterdam.**

### Pumporama

Shoe designers Peterson + Stoop designed pumps in sizes 28 to 48 for the “Pumporama” part of the exhibition. Here visitors could try on the shoes and experience fashion’s influence on our movements and posture. The Pumporama resembled a regular shoe store where shoes are displayed on shelves placed against the walls, and with sofas placed in front of them so visitors could sit down and try on the shoes. Signs were hanging from the shelves indicating the different sizes. Visitors could also let themselves be photographed while wearing the pumps.

### GALLERY I

#### Speculative History of Dutch Fashion

HNI acknowledged that it is difficult to construct a canon of Dutch fashion, as fashion is such a temporary and ever changing cultural phenomenon. Still, they wanted to give it a try: “By projecting the speculative character of fashion onto the desire of the museum to capture a historical development, a canon of Dutch fashion is constructed” (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 1). According to HNI, The Netherlands and fashion are rarely associated with one another, although The Netherlands have had (and still have) a fundamental influence on (the modernisation of) fashion on an international scale. To be able to recognize this, it is important to broaden one’s perspective on the fashion system itself, which is what HNI tried

to do with this part of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* by focusing on the wearer of clothes instead of on designers. After World War II, the Dutch wearer influenced fashion more than any designer, sometimes even on a global scale (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 1).

This part of the exhibition was divided into eight different scenes, together forming the speculative canon of Dutch fashion. A newspaper-like booklet was available to visitors in which the background stories of the different scenes were explained. This information was also provided through information panels placed in each scene, displaying the corresponding 'article' from the booklet belonging to that particular scene. The first scene was called 'The House', representing the period between 1945 and 1955, during which Dutch housewives, with the help of the Dutch magazine *Libelle*, appropriated the luxurious and expensive clothes of Dior's New Look by copying them, but in sober and pragmatic ways using old dresses. After the war, scarcity of materials was a problem that was dealt with by reusing materials. This became the starting point of the Dutch democratic fashion and a new industrial system in which mass and high fashion started to blend (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 2-3). For the display of this scene, black and white dresses on clothing hangers were hanging from a rack, representing the designs of the housewives, with adjustments such as a wider waist compared to Dior's designs. One dress was displayed on a dummy, representing Dior's original New Look. However, all the designs were created by the tailor of HNI. The designs were accompanied by photographic material on the walls, showing a woman wearing Dior's iconic New Look and a mother and daughter crafting their own clothes at home.

The second scene, 'The Dike and The Square', represented the period between 1955 and 1965 during which two different youth movements were established as a response to the milieu of the petty-bourgeois. Two locations were of particular importance here: the Nieuwendijk and the Leidse Plein, both in Amsterdam. As a result of the growing prosperity, young people had enough money to spend on new clothes, products and experiences. The 'Dijkers' had their signature hairstyles, like the quiff and backcombing, inspired by American musicians and actors. The 'Pleiners' often wore black clothing, tight jeans and turtlenecks, inspired by French existentialism and New Wave cinema. Both youth movements drove mopeds and were not very politically engaged. Although they adopted particular fashionable looks, it was their attitude of resistance that in particular distinguished them from conventions. The Dijkers and the Pleiners continued the conceptually original and democratic attitude towards fashion of the housewives before them (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 4-5). The display for this scene incorporated a moped and various clothing items and accessories worn



by the Dijkers and the Pleiners placed on a stack of tiles representing the street. Photographic material showed members of these movements dressed in their signature fashion style.



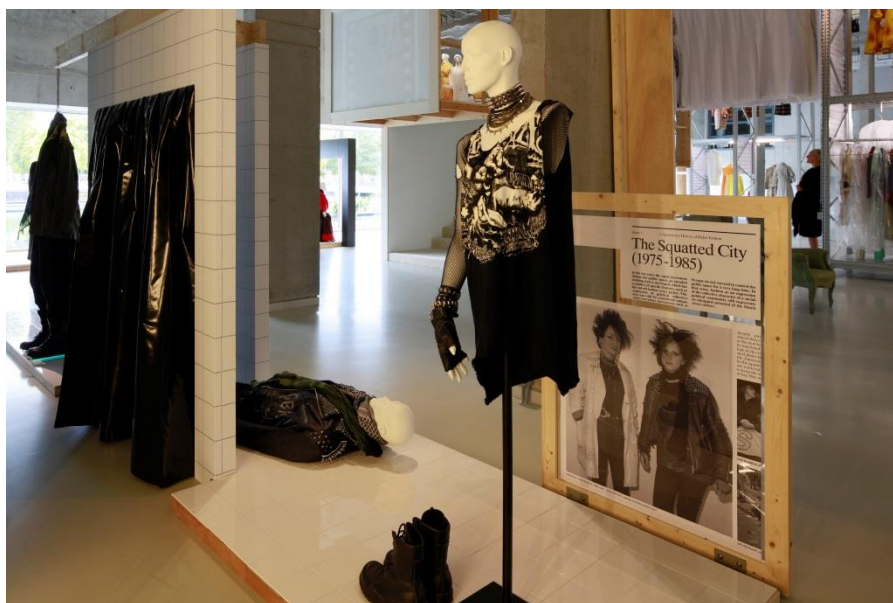
4. Schwartz, Johannes. *The Dike and The Square*. 2015. Photographic. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.

The third scene, ‘The Street’, represented the period between 1965 and 1975 during which second-hand clothes and street markets became increasingly popular and fuelled the do-it-yourself clothing practices of combining different pieces of worn clothing in quirky and exceptional ways. These practices gave rise to various movements, like the Provos and hippies, each adopting their own particular fashionable style. These groups were not inspired by designer’s couture, like the housewives were, but they created and modelled their own original fashion. Furthermore, this scene illuminates how designer Martin Margiela became inspired by the activist interpretation of the colour white of Provo and how designer Helmut Lang became inspired by the Dutch democratised street fashion (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 7-8). This scene reserved a prominent place for the Provo white, showing a white bike, a white jacket on a white dummy, and other white accessories and clothes. Orange crates filled with objects and clothes placed on a surface of bricks represented the do-it-yourself and second-hand practices in the streets of this period. Photographic material showed members of different movements that arose during this period.

The fourth scene, ‘The Market’, represented the period between 1975 and 1992 during which a new connection arose between the designer’s studio and the public’s wishes as a result of the egalitarian Dutch culture. The first manifestation of fast fashion presented itself

in Mac & Maggie, which combined fashion trends from the catwalks with cheap production techniques. This example formed a precursor to the popular fashion chains of today. Street fashion became inspired by the international fashion world instead of by movements of resistance. Moreover, creating one's own clothes was replaced by buying them (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 10-11). This scene showed a platform with a black façade carrying the words 'Mac & Mauritz' as a reference to Mac & Maggie and its influence on later fast fashion chains like Hennis & Mauritz. Mannequins were positioned sitting on cubes wearing the clothes produced by Mac & Maggie. Behind the mannequins, some potential 'Mac & Mauritz' designs, for instance by H&M and Zara, were hanging on a rack and a video showing an interview with art director and stylist Frans Ankoné was also included.

The fifth scene, 'The Squatted City', represented the period between 1975 and 1985 during which the squatting movement developed a particular clothing style and through this a connection between clothing, politics and public space. One of its style's characteristics was the cut-off leather army jacket, inspired by the punk scene. Here, the do-it-yourself culture was still prominent, but in a more functional and pragmatic way, as the squatters had to collect found and cheap materials to be able to make living in the squats bearable and protect themselves from the cold (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 12-13). This scene showed a couple of mannequins wearing punk and squat inspired outfits, including leather jackets and boots. The plastic black curtain on the tile wall formed a reference to the squats. Accompanying photographic material showed members of the punk and squat scene in Paradiso, posing in their signature looks.



5. Schwartz, Johannes. *The Squatted City*. 2015. Photograph. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.



The sixth scene, 'The Club', represented the period between 1980 and 1995 during which the Dutch club scene experimented with fashion by breaking taboos and resisting the rules of the increasingly commercialised streets. Democratic fashion became more and more a provocation and a performance and in particular the nightclub RoXy represented this conceptual and performative approach to fashion (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 14-15). This scene provided more of an experience to the visitor, in which the entrance to, and an actual club was simulated. Inside the 'club' a large disco ball hung from the ceiling and on a screen images of people in club RoXy and at other parties were shown. These were the places where a radically new style was introduced.

The seventh scene, 'The School', represented the period between 1995 and 2005 during which a special system of grants made it possible for designers to enter the experimental realm, who were denied this access while working for the market. Pieces of clothing became the focus of extensive research and the collective Le Cri Néerlandais was formed, consisting of young designers Viktor & Rolf, Pascale Gatzien, Saskia van Drimmelen, Lucas Ossendrijver and Marcel Verheyen, as a response to the Antwerp Six. Minimalism carried the upperhand in the creations of these Dutch designers and reflexive design practices in relation to the fashion system became more common (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 16-17). For this scene, designs by Viktor & Rolf, Spijkers en Spijkers and Pascale Gatzien were reproduced in one and the same neutral fabric, representative of the minimalism of this period, and placed on dummies. The display as a whole looked like a study centre where the clothes could be thoroughly studied and experiments could be carried out.



6. Schwartz, Johannes. *The School*. 2015. Photograph. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.

The eighth and final scene, 'The Screen', represented the period between 2005 and the present during which the internet has taken up an increasingly important role in the production, distribution and consumption of Dutch fashion and its appropriation by users, blurring the lines between fashion producers and consumers. Both users and producers have access to new production modes and sources of knowledge, making fashion into an increasingly democratic industry. The question is posed if this democratisation of fashion has resulted in the disappearance of a national design identity (Beumer & Koning, 2015: 19-20). This scene showed many different screens hanging from walls that were decorated with graffiti-like drawings. The screens showed fashion shows of various Dutch designers. Here, HNI emphasised the role of the screen and the internet in innovative developments within the fashion industry, for instance downloadable designs and open source created collections.

### All-time Favourites

This part of the exhibition focused on three iconic fashionable items and one colour, selected by fashion stylist and designer Marjo Kranenburg: the white shirt, the lipstick, the pump and the 'colour' black. These have withstood the test of time in an industry where change is commonplace. At the same time, this is what makes it possible for the fashion industry to come up with new interpretations of them. The versatility of these items and colour were shown through a video installation created by Kranenburg and photographer Marcel van der Vlugt. Art historian Sophie Berrebi provided the research in the form of four essays that served as inspiration for the selected items and colour. An introductory text was available to the visitors and the four all-time favourites were displayed under glass cases, each accompanied by a headphone, through which a different young author would tell a story about that particular all-time favourite.

### Precious

In this part of the exhibition the relationship between fashion and perfume was addressed by curator Angelique Westerhof, through the display of several private and public collections of classic perfume bottles, designed by famous artists and fashion houses. The bottles were displayed in glass showcases. This display was accompanied by video interviews and documentary material showing the craft of creating fragrances and introducing the masters who have been indispensable to the development of the perfume industry. People who cannot afford the expensive clothes of fashion houses can still experience the luxurious lifestyle associated with them by buying their more affordable perfumes. Perfume has become

essential to the revenues of fashion houses, next to make-up and accessories, since “these products are significantly less exclusive than those of couture”.

#### Collected by...

This part of the exhibition was focused on three different collections: a private couture collection of more than 600 pieces by late Eva Maria Hatschek (1924-2010); a public collection of vintage clothing existing of both national and international pieces, collected by Ferry van der Nat; and the fashion photography collection of fashion photographer Paul van Riel. The first collection was displayed hanging from scaffolds, draped over mannequins or stored in boxes on the higher shelves. The second collection was presented on dummies hanging from cables attached to the ceiling. Several empty surfaces served as a study corner for visitors or researchers inspecting the garments.

The Swiss Eva Maria Hatschek was married to an important industrialist and was therefore able to afford couture and wear it every day. All the pieces were bought from luxurious fashion houses or especially made for her, using the patterns of these fashion houses. Most pieces are from Chanel, Givenchy and Yves Saint Laurent. The Swiss Textile Collection currently manages Hatschek's collection and adopts a 'prêt-à-toucher' approach towards it: at the *Temporary Fashion Museum* visitors were allowed to study and touch the garments under the supervision of professionals. The collection was also extensively researched during the exhibition period.



7. Schwartz, Johannes. *Collected by... Eva Maria Hatschek*. 2015. Photograph. Het Nieuwe Instituut Rotterdam.

Stylist, photographer and collector Ferry van der Nat used to own a vintage store and compiled a collection of vintage clothes especially for the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. Dutch designers took up a prominent role in the timeless collection, for instance Holthaus, Molenaar, Vos, Fong Leng and Govers. Van der Nat gave visitors the chance of closely inspecting the garments, trying them on and sometimes even buying them. With his collection, Van der Nat emphasises the relationship between fashion's past and its present and future.

The third collection on display represented one part of the more than 80.000 slides and negatives shot by Paul van Riel between 1974 and 1990, when he visited approximately one thousand fashion shows. The photos were accompanied by reproductions of published articles, lay-outs and other recordings, providing visitors with an image of 1970s and 1980s fashion.

## GALLERY -I

### Dressed by Architects

This part of the exhibition showed architectural drawings and sketches from the archive of HNI, selected by archivist Alfred Marks, in which expressions of fashion from the specific era in which it was drawn can be found, for instance elegantly dressed women and men walking down the street. Three interventions in the exhibition space of this part of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* could be found as well. Firstly, a façade curtain designed by Studio Plott with the help of a self-built 3D-printer and Studio Plott's work 'Flying Architect' in collaboration with Roos Meerman were exhibited. For the façade curtain, parts of drawings of architect Piet Blom were incorporated into a new printed pattern, resembling embroidery and weaving techniques. The project Flying Architect was funded by the Dutch Creative Industries Fund and was the result of a theory on the possibility of designing a flying 3D-printer. Experiments and research relating to this idea could be followed through a liveblog. New found results were constantly included in the exhibition space. A video showing a prototype of the flying 3D-printer was also included in the exhibition. With this still ongoing project, Studio Plott and Meerman try to achieve freedom of form for both architecture and fashion and to connect these two disciplines, which are already becoming increasingly connected (Marks et al., 2015: 2).

The second intervention was an Indigo Jacket designed by the label 18-11-81 and supported by design studio BuroBELÉN. The jacket was inspired by an Inuit coat from East

Greenland that was on loan from the National Museum of World Cultures Foundation. Similar to the Inuit coat, which was made of seal intestines, the design of the Indigo Jacket incorporated sustainable and unusual materials that made it waterproof and windproof. All of the material was used and nothing was discarded, making it into a highly sustainable design (Marks et al., 2015: 3).

The third and final intervention was a contribution by designer Camiel Fortgens, called ‘As Is’, consisting of three paper designs, through which Fortgens tried to capture the contemporary zeitgeist, solely with lines and planes. It was a continuation of his project Paper Clothes. No colour or patterns can be found back in the completely white designs. The fashionable figures in the images of the archive formed the main inspiration for the designs, as they also represent the zeitgeist of their time through their clothes. In his work, Fortgens explores the relationship between people and their clothes and how clothes express identity and a zeitgeist, which in turn influences society, including architectural environments. By means of photographic material the designs are put into context (Marks et al., 2015: 4).



8. Schwartz, Johannes. *Dressed by Architects: Camiel Fortgens. 2015. Photograph.* Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.

## DECK

### The New Haberdashery

“The New Haberdashery” is the only part of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* that is still open to the public, as it has been a huge success from the start. It is a store and a sewing studio in one where people can buy affordable fabrics and under supervision design their own clothes,

using professional equipment and patterns by various Dutch fashion designers. Besides helping people with making clothes themselves, The New Haberdashery is also aimed at maintaining the clothes and giving people advice on how to do this. In this way, visitors become more aware of the effort that goes into the production of a single piece of clothing and they will hopefully value their new assets more, taking better care of them. The New Haberdashery also offers workshops, during which visitors can learn how to work with different kinds of fabric. Children can make their own fashion accessories in the studio.

## GALLERY II

### Hacked

“Hacked” is a project by Dutch designers Alexander van Slobbe and Francisco van Benthum. With this project, they both criticize the notion of fast fashion and propose a new role for fashion designers in the design and production process by collecting the surplus of fabrics used for producing fast fashion that would normally be discarded, and reuse it for designing new clothes. The idea is to ‘hack’ the system, in which the production, distribution and consumption of fashion is going ever faster, by slowing it down to reinstall the designer’s signature style and his or her original ideas and to pay attention to issues of overproduction, waste and pollution relating to the fashion industry. Topics like copyright and the meaning of clothes are also addressed through this project.

In the exhibition, the project was represented through a display that resembled a clothing store. Mannequins wearing the designs, stacks of the designs and upcycled pairs of shoes were placed on platforms and hanging from racks. Moreover, there were actual fittings rooms with small square stools placed in front of them, so visitors could try on the designs and even buy them. In a separate white space with black polka dots on the walls, called the ‘Statement Cube’, the project was explained through the video material of an interview with the creators and through their manifesto as a text on the wall. The production process of the creators was also represented through the display of sewing machines behind glass cases, accompanied by informative texts, images and other materials for the visitors.





9. Schwartz, Johannes. *Hacked*. 2015. Photograph. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.

### GALLERY III

#### Fashion Data (Fashion Machine)

This part of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* was curated by José Teunissen and addressed the polluting and exploiting tendencies of the fast fashion industry through a compelling and aesthetic experience. In fast fashion, clothes from last season are easily discarded and replaced by this season's designs, constantly feeding into our consumption needs. By outsourcing the production of clothing to low wage countries, these clothes can be sold for significantly low prices. By means of graphic data visualisations designed by Rudy Guedj these practices were made visible to the visitors, for example by showing what the different costs are of producing one plain T-shirt or juxtaposing an image of a T-shirt with an image of a hamburger to emphasise the low costs of fast fashion clothes.

An alternative was also proposed: circular thinking. Today, only one third of all production is sold against a normal price and the rest ends up on sale or does not even leave the factory or warehouse. Moreover, the production of fashion uses a great amount of raw materials and energy, which is bad for the environment. Through circular thinking, second-hand clothing and fabric remains are recycled, that would normally be discarded. The practice of slow fashion also fits within this trend: the ecologically conscious and local production of clothes. Through these practices, we could start to revalue the craft of making clothes, is the message that this part of the exhibition is trying to convey.

Besides the data visualisations, an installation was constructed by designer Conny Groenewegen in collaboration with fashion academy students, called 'Fashion Machine'. The

fleece sweater formed the inspiration for this installation, as this item is discarded in huge amounts, but is not suitable for resale on markets in other parts of the world. For Fashion Machine many of these sweaters, most of them provided by Wieland Textiel, were cut and its yarn was draped around large spools. Large amounts of fleece sweaters and the spools with the yarn were scattered all over the floor of the exhibition space. Flags and mattresses were knitted from the yarn and the flags were hung from the railings on the third floor. Visitors could actually contribute by knitting parts of the flags themselves. Through this installation, the practices of fast fashion and its production mechanisms were made tangible for the public.



10. Schwartz, Johannes. *Fashion Data & Fashion Machine*. 2015. Photographic. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.



### **Analysis and interpretation ‘Temporary Fashion Museum’**

By consulting the data I have gathered, these being the thick description, the interview with the project managers, the website, the additional documents and the reviews of the exhibition, I will now provide the analysis and interpretation of the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, using the theories and standpoints discussed in the literature review. I will focus on how characteristics of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology are incorporated in the exhibition and how they relate to each other. Doing so will help me to answer the main research question.

From my interview with project managers Floor van Ast and Linde Dorenbosch, various motivations behind the realisation of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* have become clear. First of all, there has been an ongoing discussion in The Netherlands about whether a Dutch national fashion museum should be established. Ninke Bloemberg from the Centraal Museum and Madelief Hohé from the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague informed me about the existence of a report addressing this discussion, which I unfortunately have not been able to find. The director of HNI, Guus Beumer, who has a history of working in the fashion industry, and still has a network within it, wanted to give a Dutch fashion museum a try, but only on a temporary basis to keep things dynamic and lively, as Dorenbosch indicates in the interview. HNI is a museum focusing on design, architecture and digital culture. Since fashion can be considered part of design and had not been addressed yet by the museum, Beumer decided to open an entire fashion museum to be able to highlight as many fashion related topics as possible, which would not have been possible with just one exhibition. Furthermore, HNI wanted to experiment with the questions of what constitutes a (fashion) museum and where a museum stops and commerce begins, and with different opportunities for the museum as a cultural institution.

A conscious decision of HNI was to put the focus of the exhibition on the wearer, the user of fashion. The visitor was directly addressed as playing an active role in the fashion system, raising an awareness that everyone is part of fashion. The goal was to start a conversation with the public about fashion and what it does and means to the visitor as an individual, but also about the existing fashion system and the issues relating to it. HNI did not have one specific target audience in mind, but wanted to attract people who usually do not visit them through the theme of fashion. Because it was such an extensive exhibition, anyone could find something of interest to them.

It can be argued that a new museological approach was at the core of the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. HNI used this exhibition to reflect on itself as an institution, and to ask questions about a (fashion) museum's essence. In Dorenbosch's words: "It was a model to look at our own model". The aspect of temporality made it interesting in the sense that a traditional museum is about preserving objects, but fashion is about the opposite, namely about constant change. In an interview with *FashionUnited*, Beumer stated: "Where fashion tries to transform the past into the future, museums try to solidify time, as it were". HNI played with these ideas in various ways by superimposing these systems on top of one another. Furthermore, exploring the boundaries between what a museum is and where commerce starts resulted in two parts of the exhibition where visitors could actually try on clothes and even buy them ("Collected by...", "Hacked"). According to André van Dijk, art critic for the online platform *8Weekly*, these aspects turned the *Temporary Fashion Museum* into an "exciting playground, that makes the confrontation with, and the interpretation of, fashion into an interesting adventure" (Van Dijk, 2015).

The fact that the user of fashion, the visitor, was taken as a starting point, makes the *Temporary Fashion Museum* fit within a new museological paradigm even more, since engaging and involving visitors is of great importance to new museology. It could then be argued that HNI is more on that side of the new museology debates, as discussed by Harrison (2013), that wants to cater to the needs and wishes of broader audiences by using new exhibition methods and introducing new themes, in this case fashion. The user's role within the fashion system is made clear by Dorenbosch, when she says: "It's not only about designers, but we all are fashion". With "we" she means not only designers, models and other people working in fashion, but also consumers, the users, the wearers of fashion, which can be anyone.

### **Engaging and involving the visitor**

In various ways the visitor was addressed and involved in the themes of the exhibition. Starting with the "Open Source Fashion Manifesto", in which the visitor (consumer) is asked to become involved in making the current fashion system into a sustainable and fair one. At "Block Bustes & Dazeld Dolls", visitors could enjoy a special treatment, in which their coats and jackets were placed on specially designed mannequins to be photographed or the garments were placed in special storage bags. Here, the visitor was already slightly made aware of his or her own role within fashion. At "Pumporama", visitors could try on heels in almost any size, and directly experience what fashion can do to your posture and the way you

carry yourself. Photos were taken of visitors wearing the heels, which were then shared on social media, extending the experience to outside the building of HNI.

“Collected by...”, at first glance, seemed like an expression of a dress museological approach, as this part revolved around costume and dress collections, and Eva Maria Hatschek’s collection was also extensively researched during the exhibition period. The garments were partly stored in boxes, resembling a real storage room of a dress collection, and the garments had to be handled with extreme care using special gloves. However, the fact that visitors had access to this ‘storage’ area and even got the chance to handle the garments themselves (albeit under supervision), bears witness to a new museological approach, in which back stage becomes front stage, similar to the new display concept introduced in Bath, as discussed by Harden (2014), where visitors felt like they were walking through a depot of a costume collection. Visitors of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* could have felt like they were receiving a privileged treatment, by seeing and touching objects they have never seen or touched before. Noortje van Eekelen of the magazine *Metropolis M* says the following about this aspect: “The luxurious quality of the garments on the one hand, and the approachable attitude of the museum on the other hand, create a pleasant and inviting mood” (Van Eekelen, 2016). Moreover, Ferry van der Nat’s vintage collection even offered visitors the opportunity to try on and buy exclusive pieces of famous Dutch fashion designers. This whole collection department of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* then provided visitors with a special and unusual experience.

Similar to Ferry van der Nat’s collection was “Hacked”, where visitors could also try on and buy clothes. These were newly produced garments, but using the surplus of fabrics discarded by the fashion industry. “The New Haberdashery” was, and still is, entirely dependent upon visitor input, as visitors follow workshops there, making various products out of the available fabrics and patterns that are for sale. At “Fashion Data”, specifically the part called “Fashion Machine”, visitors were made aware of the speed at which fast fashion produces, and how much fabric surplus is created during this process, by actually contributing to knitting the large fleece flags. One last way in which visitors were, in Steele’s words, “actively engaged in thinking about what they see”, was in Ivania Carpio’s “View on Fashion” (Steele, 2008: 25). This presentation did not have a specific fashion focus, but aimed to inspire the visitor and make him or her aware of the possibilities offered by an empty white space. Visitors were supposed to imagine what this ‘minimalist white box’, which they could enter, could potentially look like. Carpio tried to encourage visitors to become inspired by the

absence of objects in a room, instead of offering them a finished, furnished space. She thus challenged the visitor's imagination and creativity.

### **Identifying with the exhibition**

As Peter McNeil (2008) argues, traditional fashion exhibitions could put off visitors in the sense that they cannot identify with the displayed designer garments, since only a small portion of the population is able to afford such luxury. As discussed by Horsley (2014), a way to avoid this alienation of displayed objects is to add autobiographical material to an exhibition. As Harden argues, obtaining a wardrobe collection is an example of such a strategy. Eva Maria Hatschek's collection belonging to the "Collected by..." part of the exhibition can be defined in terms of a wardrobe collection, as it shows "one person's approach to dressing" (Harden, 2014: 131). A review on the website of the magazine *De Architect* describes the collection as "very personal". Visitors could therefore relate the displayed garments and Hatschek's personal stories about them, to their own experiences with clothes. What is interesting though, is that many visitors actually expected to see designer clothes at the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, as they would in a more traditional fashion museum, according to Dorenbosch. Maria Hatschek's collection included designs made from patterns bought at Chanel but made by her tailor, so the designs carried the tailor's signature and not the Chanel signature. Some visitors were positively surprised by this information, but others were a bit disappointed, as Dorenbosch made clear: "Some visitors found it hard to accept, because which one is [made] by Chanel? (...) so when it's about fashion, it is very important, that the designer is stated".

Similar autobiographical material could be found at "All-time Favourites", in which four young authors would tell a personal story relating to one of the all-time favourites. In the "Speculative History of Dutch Fashion", the wearers/users of fashion were used as a starting point, looking at how they influenced Dutch fashion since the end of WWII until the present. The scenes depicting the different time periods also included autobiographical material of members of different social groups during those times, mainly photographs. In general, it might have been easier for visitors to identify with this kind of depiction of fashion, since it was about everyday dress. Harden's argument that displaying everyday dress could look dull "without careful styling and a specific context", was avoided by connecting the fashion of those time periods to its social and political context, which was also represented in the scenes, in which not only fashion was displayed, but more an overall atmosphere of a particular time was evoked, using various props, items and photographic material (Harden, 2014: 135). This

display method forms an alternative to merely adding words, written or spoken, as a way of explaining and interpreting displayed objects, the latter being extensively criticised by Vergo (1989). It also corresponds with Teunissen's (2014) proposed alternative display method of visualisation through scenography.

However, looking at photos and videos of the "Speculative History", this part did come across as a somewhat confusing and perhaps too conceptual display, asking for a great amount of interpretation from the visitors themselves. This problem is addressed by Van Dijk of *8Weekly*, who calls the display "messy" and argues that HNI usually does not use traditional display methods, which leads to visitors having to make a great effort to comprehend what is on display (Van Dijk, 2015). This problem was partly lifted by providing a booklet to visitors containing all the background information per scene. These background stories were also incorporated in every scene as a text on the wall. In this case, it could be argued that too much context information was provided, which could have led to visitors being overwhelmed by the amount of information. This part of the exhibition formed a clear example of the struggle of HNI to set up an exciting and challenging, but at the same time coherent and comprehensible exhibition.

The contemporary trend of vintage clothing that Harden (2014) identifies, was represented in Ferry van der Nat's vintage collection. The connection between old and new dress was addressed here, which tried to make the visitor aware of how old trends in fashion influence current trends in fashion. Most of these pieces were by luxury Dutch designer brands, which could have alienated the visitor again. The pieces that could be purchased were not inexpensive, so these were only reserved for the wealthier portion of the public that could afford them, making this part of the exhibition less accessible to a part of the public.

### **Fashion industry issues: production and consumption**

One of the characteristics of new museology is for a museum to reflect on the issues related to the subject of an exhibition (Melchior, 2014: 12-13). A temporary fashion museum approaching fashion from a new museological perspective then could not go without addressing the environmental and exploitative issues relating to the current fashion industry. Van Ast says: "I think you cannot make an exhibition on fashion anymore without addressing [these issues]". By focusing on the entire production process of fashion, instead of solely on the final product as would likely be the case in an exhibition taking up a dress museological standpoint, by focusing on fast fashion rather than high fashion, and making visitors aware of their consumption habits that also contribute to maintaining the current fashion system, HNI

has matched its practices to Pecorari's (2014) standards for an exhibition that contributes to a better understanding of contemporary fashion. Furthermore, by focusing on environmental issues relating to the fashion industry, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* forms an example that counters Melchior's (2011) argument that fashion exhibitions tend to be traditional and non-reflexive in their interpretations.

Starting with the "Open Source Fashion Manifesto", issues relating to fashion production and consumption were addressed, and consumers were asked to help in changing and improving the current fashion system by reflecting on their own consumption practices. New technologies that can help in generating a sustainable production of fashion were also mentioned, like the 3D-printer. The representation of these new technologies could also be found in Pauline van Dongen's "View on Fashion". She emphasises the importance of the production process, in which she uses different technologies for her designs to counter overproduction. Furthermore, the project "Flying Architect", one intervention of the "Dressed by Architects" part of the exhibition, is about a flying 3D-printer, through which the creators try to create new (sustainable) methods of production that provide new opportunities for the production of both fashion and architecture. Involving other disciplines, like architecture, in the production of fashion, could provide the fashion industry with new solutions to sustainability problems. Another intervention of "Dressed by Architects", called "Indigo Jacket", focused on how to create a sustainable and effective jacket that protects against various weather circumstances, like rain and wind. The final product was inspired by an old Inuit coat and no materials were discarded in the process. Pascale Gatzert's "View on Fashion" and her workshop, during which the hospitality team created their own uniform, also reflected and focused on fashion's production process. The five woven jackets Gatzert presented were made using slow fashion methods, which form the direct opposite of fast fashion production methods, using only local products and craftsmen who paid attention to every little detail in the production of the jackets. The production of the uniform of the hospitality team fitted this same slow fashion process, in which the different members contributed to the final design, which made it a unique product resulting from a blend of various standpoints and backgrounds, instead of a repetitive and impersonal design produced from above.

"The New Haberdashery" focuses on both production and consumption practices, making the visitors aware of how much work goes into the making of one piece of clothing or accessory, by letting them make these products themselves during workshops, but also giving advice on how to maintain and repair clothes, so they do not have to constantly buy something

new. “Hacked” and “Fashion Data” (including “Fashion Machine”) showed the problems with the current fashion system in terms of its production methods, which reveal large amounts of discarded material. They also let visitors reflect on their own consuming practices, since “Hacked” actually sells its products, made out of these discarded materials, to visitors and “Fashion Machine” involves visitors in its production of large flags made of discarded fleece material. “Collected by...” Ferry van der Nat also let visitors reflect on their own consuming behaviour by selling vintage clothes to them in a museum context. At the same time, this vintage collection counters the fast fashion paradigm, which is always representing the ‘new’, by stating that ‘old’ pieces are still wearable today. Reflection on consumption practices was also prevalent in the “Speculative History of Dutch Fashion”. Here the focus lay on the influence of the user of fashion in The Netherlands since the end of WWII. Through different scenes, the stories were told of various social groups appropriating specific fashion styles as an expression of their identities and their stance on social and political issues. Additionally, production played a role here as well, as DIY practices were also very common within some of the represented circles. The last scene focuses on the rise of the internet and how nowadays the lines are increasingly blurred between producers and consumers of fashion, thanks to blogs and other DIY practices, which might have made it easier for the younger portion of the public to identify with this part of the exhibition more strongly.

All of the above mentioned examples bear witness to the *Temporary Fashion Museum*’s reflexive practices concerning the fashion industry’s production methods consumption. By presenting new technologies that produce fashion in increasingly efficient ways and waste as little materials as possible, a sustainable future for fashion is outlined that does not have to go at the expense of the supply side of fashion. These examples explicitly show that fashion exhibitions do not have to be superficial by merely focusing on pretty dresses and a spectacular exhibition design. In this case, visitors are actively made aware of, and involved in, the various issues that the current fashion system faces, encouraging visitors’ critical stance on these important topics, and at the same time on the museum itself. This particular focus of the exhibition fits well within a new museological paradigm.

### **Dialectic dialogue between dress and other materials**

Pecorari (2014) mentions the dialectic dialogue between dress and other (fashion related) materials, in which they reinforce and influence each other. Dress is not something that is self-contained; it always relates to, and is influenced by, things outside itself, like the human body, prints, textiles, photography, and so on. The *Temporary Fashion Museum*

acknowledges this explicitly, just like MoMu in Antwerp, as discussed by Pecorari. As Steele argues, fashion “is worn *on the body*”, which makes it important not to ignore the dialogue between the body and dress (Steele, 2013: 14). The dialogue between body and dress, and body and materials, was addressed in Pauline van Dongen’s and Blommers & Schumm’s “View on Fashion”. Van Dongen looks at how bodies and materials inform each other through the use of various new technologies and Blommers & Schumm look at the role of the body in relation to the conventions of fashion photography. Questions of how fashion and photography relate to one another are also addressed here. In “Block Bustes & Dazeld Dolls”, the relationship between body and dress was addressed through the use of busts and mannequins, functioning as substitutes of human bodies, without which there would be no fashion, according to the designer and curator of this part of the exhibition, Niek Pulles. At “Pumporama” visitors could directly experience how fashion informs their bodies when wearing it, making this into a more interactive way of explaining the relationship between body and fashion.

The dialogue between fashion and prints, patterns and sketches was expressed in Liselore Frowijn’s “View on Fashion”, “The New Haberdashery” and “Dressed by Architects”. Prints form an essential part of Frowijn’s designs and were therefore highlighted by printing them as large images hanging next to some of her designs. In “The New Haberdashery” visitors have the opportunity to buy and work with various patterns and explore the roles these different materials play in the production of fashion. “Dressed by Architects” showed the overlap between the disciplines fashion and architecture by displaying architectural sketches and drawings, in which figures were drawn wearing the fashion of that period. This implies that even architects have always been sensitive to, and perhaps even influenced by, fashion.

One last interesting dialogue that was addressed in the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, was the one between fashion and perfume. “Parfumerie du Parc”, located at the entrance of the museum, was supposed to resemble a perfume section in a warehouse, which fitted the warehouse design concept EventArchitectuur had in mind for the museum. In this way, the importance of perfume to the (revenues of the) fashion industry was made clear from the start. A special perfume was even designed for the museum, which captured the smell of both the museum and fashion. “Precious” provided more context information on the role of perfume within the fashion industry by showing video material on the craft of making perfumes. For people who do not have the money to own designer fashion, there is always the option of buying perfume, which lets them experience a hint of the luxury of a designer brand. All these



examples show that fashion is not just about the clothes, the final products, but also about the materials, accessories and other items that influence the clothes' production and enter into a dialogue with them. By acknowledging this reciprocal influence of dress and other (fashion related) materials and making visitors reflect on these matters, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* takes up a new museological approach to the topic of fashion.

### **Relationship between past and present**

The temporal aspect of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* emphasised how old trends and traditions still influence those of today. HNI reflected on the relationship between past and present in various ways. The "Speculative History of Dutch Fashion" showed how the user of fashion in The Netherlands influenced the development of the Dutch fashion industry and how users currently still play a significant role in the production of fashion. Moreover, for "All-time Favourites", HNI focused on four different 'trends' that never go out of style, are 'timeless'. These then form an exception to the rule of fashion being about constant change. These all-time favourites are constantly reinterpreted by the fashion industry, so they still fit fashion's paradigm of change to a certain extent. In "Collected by...", Ferry van der Nat's vintage collection showed how nowadays there is still a demand for 'old' clothes, which has become a trend in itself, combining the concept of preservation in relation to a museum collection with that of fashionable change. In the "As Is" intervention of "Dressed by Architects", three designs were on display that represent the current "zeitgeist". The designer, Camiel Fortgens, was inspired by the architectural sketches from the archive, which show figures representing their zeitgeist through fashion. According to Fortgens, clothes influence society through the expression of a zeitgeist. In these parts of the exhibition then, it became clear to what extent and in what ways the past, present, and even the future, of fashion are interconnected and cannot be seen as separate entities. The past always catches up with the present, and in that way also influences the future. By emphasising how different time periods of fashion always influence each other, not necessarily in a chronological order, as many dress museological exhibitions tend to argue, and incorporating this argument in the context of a museum, which normally focuses on preserving objects, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* reflects on itself as an institution of preservation and change at the same time. These kind of reflecting practices are again characteristic of new museology.

## **Fashion museology?**

As I have tried to argue in this chapter, a new museological approach was prevalent in the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. Only in “Collected by...” some characteristics of dress museology could be found. But what about fashion museology? The only part of the exhibition that was clearly approached from a fashion museological standpoint, was “The Now”. The focus here lay primarily on visual spectacle, as visitors experienced being in the presence of designer fashion. Designs from recent collections by various luxury brands were displayed in glass showcases. The only information available to the visitor was the brand and the collection to which a design belonged. No contextual information was provided and the garments were just to be looked at and admired by the public, which made this part of the *Temporary Fashion Museum* into a particularly superficial version of fashion museology, as not even a conceptual narrative behind the designs was presented to the public, which, according to Melchior (2014), is characteristic of fashion museology. Although, the reason for this could be that it was not about just one designer, but about many different brands. The fact that the designs came from recent collections fits well within a fashion museological paradigm, in which antiquated designs are rarely represented. This part then was more about the entertainment value of the designs rather than asking any reflexive and/or critical questions concerning the displayed objects.

One other part of the exhibition that could be argued to fit within a fashion museological paradigm is “Parfumerie du Parc”. This part at the entrance was meant to make visitors feel like they entered a perfume section of a warehouse, which then almost literally felt like a fashion boutique, just as the fashion museological exhibitions discussed by Melchior, in which designer perfumes were sprayed in the exhibition space. A special new perfume was even designed for this part of the exhibition and the emphasis was purely on the experience of the visitor. Here, it was not so much about critical reflexive thinking, as about creating a conceptual and sensorial spectacle to awe the visitor. What could be considered a deviant aspect though, is the fact that “Parfumerie du Parc” did not include any clothes, which is naturally an indispensable aspect of a fashion exhibition and fashion museology. In this respect, it could be argued that “Parfumerie du Parc” was aimed at reflecting on the spectacle that accompanies fashion and, in the same sense, fashion museology. However, if this was supposed to be the purpose of “Parfumerie du Parc”, it would have asked a lot from visitors for them to be able to realise this and reflect on this spectacle as part of the fashion industry and of fashion museological exhibitions.

Finally, for “All-time Favourites”, fashion stylist and designer Marjo Kranenborg took up the role of curator, while art historian Sophie Berrebi provided the research concerning the all-time favourites. This type of relationship between the curator and theorist, and the associated exhibition practices, arose together with the rise of a fashion museology, according to Melchior (2014). In this particular respect, “All-time Favourites” could be argued to fit within a fashion museological paradigm as well.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that HNI has approached the *Temporary Fashion Museum* mainly from a new museological perspective: visitors were extensively involved and engaged in various ways and their role as wearer and user of fashion took up a central position in the exhibition. Moreover, the exhibition was not just aimed at entertaining visitors, but also to let them critically reflect on what a (fashion) museum is, or is supposed to be, and on the fashion system itself and their own role within it. These questions and themes fit perfectly within new museology. By taking the user as a starting point, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* set an example for other museums when it comes to the social role UNESCO (2015) has assigned them: pursuing inclusiveness, accessibility and reflection. High fashion, a topic that can easily be dismissed as something elitist, glamorous and exclusive, has been made accessible, tangible and relatable to visitors, who left HNI with new ideas of, and perspectives on, an industry that they themselves are just as much part of as any fashion designer, model or photographer.

I would like to address one main point of critique, which Van Ast, Dorenbosch and other employees of HNI were aware of. As the whole exhibition and its many parts were set up in a conceptual way and the public was confronted with a huge amount of information, the exhibition was not always as comprehensible. Sometimes not enough context information was provided. As Dorenbosch says: “There were multiple layers in the exhibition and if you wanted to reach them, you maybe had to read more about it.” As mentioned in the first chapter, Vergo (1989) makes a distinction between an aesthetic and a contextual exhibition, the former providing too little context information to the visitor and the latter providing too much context information. HNI seemed to struggle to find a balance between these two exhibition types, which sometimes led to an overestimation of the public’s general knowledge of a specific topic.

Moreover, the spatial design of the exhibition, the warehouse concept, might not have been as clear to the public as HNI and EventArchitectuur had strived for. This indicates a gap

between the exhibition's design and the displayed objects, also discussed by Vergo (1989), that could have resulted from the collaboration between many different designers, artists, curators and creative teams who have contributed to the exhibition and the exhibition designer EventArchitectuur. It therefore might have been too big of a challenge to add coherence to the entire exhibition.

Furthermore, sometimes there was so much going on within the confines of one small space that the intended route was not clear to visitors. This feedback led to a floor map being available to visitors later on, as Van Ast and Dorenbosch explained. To counter the impending chaos, HNI hired many volunteers to be of assistance to visitors if something was not clear to them, if they wanted to have more context information or wanted to start a discussion about a particular part or theme of the exhibition. Dorenbosch says the following: "We found it to be very important that some sort of hosts were present in the museum who could start a conversation with [visitors]".

Apart from the critique mentioned here, HNI incorporated many different facets that make for an intelligent, experimental and highly original new museological exhibition, as I have argued in this analysis, supported by the theories and arguments of various theorists. Only few characteristics of dress museology and fashion museology were to be found in the exhibition. Incorporating more characteristics of these museologies might have added more clarity, familiarity and balance to the exhibition as a whole.

## Chapter 3: thick description, analysis and interpretation *Out of Fashion*

### Thick description ‘*Out of Fashion*’

In this chapter, I will provide a detailed description of what the exhibition *Out of Fashion* looked like, addressing all its various aspects. *Out of Fashion* took place at the Centraal Museum in Utrecht between 8<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017, as the one hundred year anniversary of the start of the first paid costume conservator at the Centraal Museum, Lady Caroline Henriette de Jonge. I have gathered information mainly from my visits to the exhibition and some additional documents like a floor plan of the design of the exhibition and the exhibition’s catalogue. Subsequently, I will start with the analysis and interpretation of the exhibition, making use of the theories from the literature review and information retrieved from the interview with costume and fashion conservator Ninke Bloemberg, to eventually be able to answer the main research question. The interview with Bloemberg took place on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at the Centraal Museum in Utrecht.

For designing the exhibition, Bloemberg asked Maison the Faux, consisting of the duo Tessa de Boer and Joris Suk, who have divided the exhibition area into four different parts or themes: the maker, the wearer, the restorer and the visionary. These are all players in the field of fashion (exhibitions) and museum collections. As Bloemberg indicated in the interview, she believes in the synergy between content and form and always picks a different talent for the design of a new exhibition to offer them a platform for showing their creativity. Maison the Faux is an up and coming experimental designer duo and Bloemberg felt this could lead to an inspiring collaboration.

### ENTRANCE

In the hallway that leads to the first room of the exhibition, the visitor walks past two large colourful curtains hanging from the ceiling on the left and right side, with images of a model wearing various pieces from the exhibition. The exhibition design duo, Maison the Faux, worked together with photographer Olya Oleinic to separately shoot the pieces and the model in a three-dimensional way, and subsequently merge these images, as some of the pieces were too fragile to actually be worn on a model (Bloemberg et al., 2017: 8).



11. Van Hilten, Judith. *Colourful curtains at the entrance*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

### ROOM 1: The Maker

With the displays in Room 1, Bloemberg intended to make the magnificence of the collection tangible for visitors and to show the connections between the old and new garments within the collection. Moreover, Bloemberg tries to clarify the relevance of the old costumes in the exhibition, since these also influence contemporary fashion. Room 1 is presented as a depot where costume and fashion collections are usually stored and preserved.

When the visitor enters the first room, he or she is confronted with two garments, both with particular puffed sleeves, in Dutch called ‘schapenboutmouwen’. One is an antique costume and the other one is a modern interpretation of this style by Mattijs van Bergen. A first text on the wall provides the background information of the arrangement of, and objects presented in, this room for the visitor: the focus in this room lies on the maker of fashion and of fashion exhibitions (curators and conservators, in particular Caroline Henriette de Jonge). In one corner, a ‘conservator’s corner’ is established, representing the working area of a costume conservator. A desk with a lamp and a chair are placed on a small platform. The wall behind the desk is decorated with post-its, notes, images of works, and photos of various curators. Two boxes containing garments from the Centraal Museum costume collection are lying under and next to the desk. On the desk, various books on fashion and other inspirational material are displayed. This corner provides insight into the process of acquiring new garments for a museum collection, the exhibition process and sources of inspiration. A screen attached to a cardboard box shows various conservators talking about their job.



12. Van Hilten, Judith. *Antiquated and contemporary Toile de Jouy designs in the room of The Maker*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

Along the walls of the room, large cardboard boxes are placed carrying Centraal Museum logos and ‘fragile’-tape on the outside. On some of them, details are written of what object they contain (fictitiously), by whom it was made, in what year it was acquired, and the inventory number. On top of, and in between the boxes, various costumes are displayed, sometimes surrounded by crêpe paper to make it seem like they have just been unboxed and unwrapped. The costumes along the left wall are ones that carried a special meaning to the first paid costume conservator of the Centraal Museum, Caroline Henriette de Jonge, who collected them for various reasons. Along the right wall and in the middle of the room, both antiquated and contemporary clothes are displayed next to one another on top of platforms to emphasise the similarities and differences between the fashion of different eras. One contemporary dress with a particular pattern, called *Toile de Jouy*, designed by Ronald van der Kemp, is accompanied by a video with headphones, in which Van der Kemp explains the story behind this dress and his production method. An antiquated skirt with a similar pattern is placed next to the dress, showing the similarities between the two.



The platforms in the middle of the room contain glass cases that represent a conservator's worktable displaying found objects, like materials and attributes used by conservators. Some of the glass cases display both antiquated and contemporary fashionable items, like hats, shoes and jeans. All the objects in the room are provided with a text, both in Dutch and English, containing background information about their production, use and acquisition by the museum.

### TRANSITION ROOM: 1936

On entering this small hall in between room 1 and 2, a text on the left wall is visible, explaining the importance of the year 1936 and providing the context information for the displays in this room. In 1936, De Jonge organised the exhibition *The Costume of Our Ancestors* at the Ridderzaal in The Hague, which later on travelled to Arnhem, Amsterdam and Rotterdam as well because of its huge success, attracting two thousand visitors every day. Approximately two hundred costumes were exhibited in either one of 17 characteristic sceneries or in the costume overview of 1750 until 1915, compiled by De Jonge. De Jonge also provided for a comprehensive catalogue and organised popular costume shows, during which models wore the displayed garments (Bloemberg et al., 2017: 136).



13. Van Hilten, Judith. 1936 – *The Costume of Our Ancestors*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

Along the walls of the 1936 room, multiple open wooden crates are set up containing various costumes that were also on display during the exhibition in 1936. Some of the open



fronts of the crates have a glass window. Surrounding these crates are smaller wooden crates containing chandeliers. On the side of the first large crate on the left, visitors can read the texts providing the background information about the costumes in this room, accompanied by various photos of the exhibition of 1936. A screen on the wall at the end of the room shows fragments of the costume shows organised by De Jonge for the exhibition of 1936. Next to the screen, the exhibition catalogue and a newspaper article commenting on these shows are displayed.

## ROOM 2: The Wearer

The inspiration for this room was the vanity that is associated with fashion, emphasised by making the room look like a giant walk-in closet, as stated in the design plan of the exhibition. When one enters the room, the wall text on the left provides the context information of the pieces shown in this room and the role of the wearer. Garments specially designed for muses of different designers are also included in this room. Various round and half-round platforms are spread across the room, showing both antique and contemporary garments. The four round platforms have a partition in the middle covered by pink curtains with Centraal Museum logos printed on them. These curtains also hang on the wall behind the two half-round platforms. A bench is placed in the middle of the room, in between the two half-round platforms. On both sides of the bench a plinth is standing with silk flowers in glass cases on top. Numerous chandeliers are hanging from the ceiling of the room.

On both sides of the half-round platforms, shelves are attached to the walls, carrying multiple antiquated and contemporary shoes from the museum's collection and paper bags with *Out Of Fashion* logos on them. Accompanying signs stating the designer of the shoes and the people who have worn them hang on the wall next to the shelves. Texts containing background information on the pieces in the room hang on the walls, sometimes accompanied by old photos that show an original wearer of that particular garment. Two screens in this room show images of two different costume shows organised by the Centraal Museum, one in 1988 and one in 1995. Some of the pieces shown during these shows are also displayed in this room. These kind of shows do not take place anymore, since it can cause damage to the fragile pieces.



14. Van Hilten, Judith. *The room of the Wearer*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

#### HALLWAY: Winner Best Festival Outfit Lowlands 2017

The Centraal Museum visited music festival Lowlands to find the person with the best festival outfit. Eventually, two winners were chosen. Their outfits are now hanging on the wall in the hallway between Room 2 and Room 3. The colourful outfits represent the current zeitgeist, according to the museum.



15. Van Hilten, Judith. *Winner Lowlands Outfit 2017*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

### ROOM 3: The Restorer

In this room the working area of the restorer takes centre stage, the focus lying on the use of different materials and techniques. When entering the room, on the left the visitor can see a restorer's corner, separated from the rest of the room by wooden drywalls. On one of these walls, a text explains the context of the activities and displayed garments in this room. Three days a week, a restorer works on restoring an antique piece from the museum's collection here; this is called the *Live Science Program*. Visitors can observe how the restorers work and ask them questions. On top of this small 'shack', a dress designed by Viktor & Rolf is on display that looks like it is ripped and is falling apart, because of the loose pieces of textile the duo used. Next to the restorer's corner, a projector projects a video on the wall, showing the restoration process, including the different working methods and techniques of a restorer. Opposite the restorer's corner, an area is reserved where visitors can dress dummies placed on wooden crates in white cotton replicas of pieces from the collection under the supervision of skilled volunteers. This practice of dressing dummies and mannequins is called 'mannequinage'. Multiple wooden crates are placed against the wall next to one another, each one containing a replica. On the wall behind these crates, artist and illustrator, Julian Stips, created large illustrations of women wearing these costumes, explaining how to dress the dummies in the replicas.



16. Van Hilten, Judith. *The room of The Restorer*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

Further on, in the middle of the room, four worktables are set up, containing ‘dead’ pieces from the collection behind glass. These pieces have become too fragile to be properly displayed on mannequins; they run the risk of falling apart. The museum nonetheless wanted visitors to be able to see them, as they are still in beautiful condition. Against the left and right wall of the second part of the room, scaffold-like constructions show various antiquated and contemporary garments that are lit up with spotlights. All these pieces have been created using special materials or techniques, for instance Bart Hess’ Pins and Needles latex suit, covered in, as the name already states, pins and needles that magnetically stick to the latex. All the accompanying signs with background information on the displayed garments hang on the wall next to the scaffold-like constructions. On my last visit to the exhibition, they added plastic cards with the same information as on the wall, lying in a box. Visitors can take these cards with them to a particular garment, instead of having to walk away from the garment to read about it. At the end of this room, an empire gown that was specially restored for the exhibition, but remains very fragile, made from crêpe silk with gold thread and sequins, is displayed in an upright position in a glass showcase (Bloemberg et al., 2017: 48).

#### ROOM 4: Visionary

The last room shows the most recent acquisitions of the museum’s collection and emphasises the innovative developments in contemporary fashion, giving special attention to craftsmanship and new production techniques and materials used by experimental conceptual designers. This part focuses on the question to what extent designers depict a zeitgeist. Most of the garments on display here are pieces by various contemporary designers, but some antiquated pieces are also included in this room. On the left wall of the entrance to the room, an informative text is available to the visitor. The first part of the room displays six square platforms, each carrying either one or two different garments, sometimes with a clothing rack placed in between them, carrying white shirts with the Centraal Museum logo printed on them. One piece by Iris van Herpen is accompanied by a screen showing an interview with the designer telling about her design process and production methods. On the walls, the name of the museum and the exhibition are projected in large purple letters.



17. Van Hilten, Judith. *The room of The Visionary*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

The second part of the room is reserved for the project *FAUXever* resulting from the collaboration between designer duo Maison the Faux and the artist Hendrickje Schimmel of Tenant of Culture. Six pieces from Maison the Faux's collection *Faux Cosmetics* are preserved 'for eternity' by various objects and materials, like concrete, melting wax and silk organza. The creators were inspired by the different themes of the exhibition, all relating to the preservation of the museum's collection. With this experiment, the creators try to break through the boundaries that separate fashion from art by means of a multidisciplinary approach (Bloemberg et al., 2017: 10). On the left and right wall, a text provides context information to the visitor and the title of the project and the creators are projected in large purple letters. Two screens show fragments of Maison the Faux's fashion show.





18. Van Hilten, Judith. *FAUXever*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

The display in the last part of the room changes three times. First up is Future Generation, an initiative by Peter Leferink, in which four different designers got the chance to show their innovative and groundbreaking designs with a focus on new technologies, sustainability or a political statement. These four designers are Sunanda Koning, Atelier & Eva Roefs, Karlijne Opmeer and Imke Panhuijzen. No accompanying context information for any of the displays was available to the visitor here. Secondly, designer Liselore Frowijn and graphic designer Michiel Schuurman showed their work. Curated by stylist Pieter Eliens, eight mannequins wearing Frowijn's designs with Schuurman's colourful prints were placed on colourful pedestals. This collection was inspired by a research trip in Mexico. In one corner video fragments of both Donald Trump and the Mexican rodeo tradition were playing. Lastly, the collective Das Leben am Haverkamp, consisting of designers Anouk van Klaveren, Christa van der Meer, Dewi Bekker and Gino Anthonisse, showed its work. Two-dimensional

clothing designs made from various colourful and reflective materials were hanging on the walls. A screen showed video fragments of the fashion show of this collection. With this collection the collective questions the functionality of clothing by designing clothes that cannot be worn and only serve to express their artistic vision. There was no information available about the various materials or the methods that have been used in the design process.



19. Van Hilten, Judith. *Das Leben am Haverkamp*. 2017. Photograph. Centraal Museum.

#### GALLERY: Modemuze

Upstairs, in between Room 3 and 4, a small hallway is reserved for introducing Modemuze to the public. Modemuze is an online platform, where one can find the fashion and costume collections of various participating Dutch Museums. Modemuze collaborates with Europeana Fashion, which is a European portal for fashion and costume collections, to make these collections available online, as indicated on the website of Modemuze. For *Out of Fashion*, Modemuze has chosen one item of each participating museum's collection to show to the public.

### **Analysis and interpretation ‘Out of Fashion’**

By consulting the data I have gathered, these being the thick description, the interview with the costume and fashion conservator, and the catalogue of the exhibition, I will now provide the analysis and interpretation of *Out of Fashion*, using the theories and standpoints discussed in the literature review. I will focus on how characteristics of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology are incorporated in the exhibition and how they relate to each other. Doing so will help me to answer the main research question.

From the exhibition itself and my interview with the costume and fashion conservator of the Centraal Museum, Ninke Bloemberg, the motivation behind the realisation of *Out of Fashion* has become clear. The exhibition celebrates the one hundred year anniversary of the start of the first paid costume conservator of the Centraal Museum: Lady Caroline Henriette de Jonge. She has played an indispensable role in the expansion of the costume collection of the museum as well as in dress historical research and curating popular exhibitions in The Netherlands. She started off as an archivist at the museum, but soon began writing to noble families from her inner circle, asking them to donate their used garments to the museum. In the interview, Bloemberg emphasises the fact that the museum often has fashion exhibitions, but that these usually only show small parts of the collection. The collection consists of approximately 10.000 pieces. In *Out of Fashion*, 17<sup>th</sup> century pieces are shown as well as innovative pieces of upcoming talents, which makes it into a vibrant mix of garments that stresses the similarities between how fashion is looked at nowadays and how people used to look at fashion back in the day. As Bloemberg says, the anniversary is the concrete motivation “to really launch out for a change”, and show the extensiveness and versatility of the collection to the public.

Bloemberg wanted to avoid a traditional exhibition set up, in which garments are displayed in chronological order, and therefore has chosen to juxtapose old with new garments to emphasise their similarities and differences, as old materials, techniques and designs still influence contemporary fashion, according to her. This dialogue between antiquated and contemporary pieces forms the starting point of the exhibition and this is also what Bloemberg wants visitors to take home from it: “in terms of the experience [of fashion] nothing has changed, really”. The room of the maker looks like a museum depot where a costume collection is usually stored. The pieces in this room are displayed as though they have just been unboxed and unwrapped. The room of the wearer is entirely pink and looks



like a giant walk-in closet, emphasising the vanity that is part of fashion, as indicated in the design plan. The room of the restorer looks like a workplace where actual restorers are working on restoring old and damaged garments. The room of the visionary looks like a fashion boutique, with clothing racks set up between the displayed garments.

The most important target audience of the exhibition are fashion lovers in general, as “it should make any fashion heart beat faster”. Bloembergen wanted to involve and engage the audience by means of interactive elements within the exhibition, for instance the mannequing corner and the restorer’s corner. This fits a new museological approach, as involving visitors in discussions about the objects on display and the themes of an exhibition is an essential part of new museology. These interactive elements make it easier for visitors to identify with the exhibition and therefore make it more accessible. Bloembergen also says that in the end she feels it is more about letting visitors become immersed in the aesthetic experience of the exhibition. This fits a fashion museological approach, in which visitors should admire the spectacle presented through the exhibition, highlighting its entertainment purpose. The experience of the exhibition is what matters in this case. These two different attitudes towards the exhibition’s audience bear witness to the blending of various characteristics associated with dress museology, fashion museology and new museology. As I will argue in this chapter, these three museologies are all represented in *Out of Fashion* in a more balanced way than in the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, where a new museological approach dominated and dress museology and fashion museology were rather neglected.

### **Dress museology**

Dress museology is the guiding principle in *Out of Fashion*. Melchior defines it as “the actual material and practice of collecting dress”, which is the central topic of the exhibition, as I will argue (Melchior, 2014: 11). As I already indicated, the motivation for creating this exhibition is the one hundred year anniversary of the start of the first paid costume conservator of the Centraal Museum. The main subjects of the exhibition are the costume collection of the museum, how De Jonge has contributed to this collection and how the collection has expanded over the years. The whole exhibition revolves around the practice of collecting dress at the museum. The first room even gives the visitor the idea of walking through a costume depot, with large cardboard boxes stacked on top of each other.

The exhibition gives insight into the history of the museum’s collecting, preserving and exhibiting practices, and how these have changed over the course of time. For instance, the room that focuses on the exhibition in 1936 and the room of The Wearer both show videos

of fashion shows that were organised during the 1936 exhibition and a couple of fashion exhibitions at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Signs accompanying these videos indicate that these kind of shows do not take place anymore, because many pieces from the collection are too fragile to be worn by models. This bears witness to a change in attitude towards preservation practices; the museum has become more strict and careful when it comes to showing antiquated and fragile pieces from the collection. Another change that becomes evident in the exhibition, is the fact that over the last decades contemporary fashion has been taken up in the collection, sometimes coming straight from the catwalk. This is something that did not occur during the first decades of the fashion collecting practices at the museum. Furthermore, De Jonge (1955) called for better (inter)national collaboration between museums and academics when it comes to fashion and costume collections, as huge quantities of costumes have been lost over the previous centuries. Her call has not been in vain, as this collaboration is currently expressed through the online platform Modemuze that focuses on making costume and fashion collections of various museums available online, in collaboration with the international portal Europeana. Modemuze has its own section in the exhibition, in which one piece from the collection of every participating Dutch museum is on display. These examples (stricter preservation practices; focus on contemporary fashion; (inter)national collaboration) show how the collecting, preserving and exhibiting practices of the Centraal Museum have changed over the last century, emphasising a dress museological approach.

An object-based approach towards the garments on display, particularly characteristic of dress museology, is clearly prevalent in the exhibition as well. All the costumes are provided with signs that explain what materials and techniques were involved in their production. In the room of The Restorer in particular, the focus lies on the special materials and techniques used in making the garments in this room. The practice of restoring old and damaged garments is highlighted through the presence of an actual restorer who works on restoring a piece from the museum's collection. Visitors can also handle replicas of pieces from the collection in the mannequinage corner, by dressing the dummies in them. In this way, visitors are able to get a first-hand experience of how to handle garments themselves, even though these are not actual pieces from the collection. This element is more about experiencing the weight and touch of garments and how this influences their display on mannequins, which is distinctive of an object-based approach. The practice of description, documentation, registration and conservation of single objects, also characteristic of an object-based approach towards dress, according to Melchior (2014), becomes evident through the cardboard boxes in the room of The Maker, on which various details are written about the

garments they contain (the maker, the year of acquisition by the museum and the inventory number). These boxes do not contain actual pieces from the collection; they serve as part of the exhibition's design to make visitors feel like they are walking through a depot of a costume collection. This adds to the experience of the exhibition and reflects on the preservation practices of the museum itself. In this sense, fashion museology and new museology are also retrievable in this part of the exhibition, as both a focus on the visitor's experience and a reflexive attitude become evident.

The garments in the exhibition are not displayed in a chronological order, which would be typical of dress museology, as argued by Steele (2008) and Melchior (2014). As Bloemberg said in the interview, she wanted to avoid this type of classic exhibition, because "the topic is very current. The way they looked at things one hundred years ago, that is actually still the way we look at things. So I also find that important in the whole appearance of the exhibition". Hence, Bloemberg chose to avoid a chronological approach towards the garments on display, because the past and present of fashion are strongly connected and she wanted to emphasise the similarities between different fashion eras. Historically accurate displays, characteristic of dress museology, according to Steele (2008) and Melchior (2014), has not been applied in the exhibition either. The mannequins do not wear wigs or other accessories from a particular costume's time, because they do not even possess heads, which, according to De Jonge (1955), could be an aesthetic choice to not let any part of the mannequin distract the visitor from the garment it is wearing. The non-chronological display order and not presenting the mannequins in a historically accurate manner, as would be the case in a traditional dress museological exhibition, are well-advised choices made by Bloemberg that suit the exhibition's context and meaning.

Technical aspects concerning the preservation of displayed garments, as discussed by De Jonge, such as the way to handle them when cleaning or restoring them, and the temperature and lighting in the exhibition area, are also taken into account, as the restorer uses gloves, the temperature in the exhibition area is low and the lighting is dim. In the interview, Bloemberg states that they do comply with the ICOM international guidelines on how to handle dress and costumes in museums, but "we do not get a fine if we wouldn't". However, glass showcases are barely used for the display of the garments in the exhibition, which makes the garments not that well protected from visitors who want to touch them. One could argue that in this particular case the exhibition differs from dress museology and the Centraal Museum has become less strict and careful over the years in dealing with the display of pieces from the collection. This is opposed to what I argued previously, that the Centraal Museum

has become more strict by not showing any fragile pieces on human models during organised fashion shows anymore.

### **Fashion Museology**

Some parts and elements of the exhibition *Out of Fashion* fit a fashion museological approach to dress in museums. Melchior argues that fashion museology “emphasizes the visibility of the museum through the staging of spectacular shows, primarily creating unique visitor experiences and only secondarily raising collecting possibilities” (Melchior, 2014: 11). Spectacle and a unique visitor experience are definitely elements that can be found in the rooms of The Wearer and The Visionary. However, increasing the visibility of the museum by attracting people who never visit museums or fashion exhibitions, is not a big concern for Bloemberg, as she stresses that the target audience of the exhibition entails those people who already have a great interest in fashion. Moreover, the Centraal Museum is not secondarily, but primarily focused on raising collecting possibilities, since they own a large costume and fashion collection that is still expanding. The main focus of the exhibition lies on collecting and preserving practices of the museum and showing the collection’s versatility. In this sense, dress museology prevails in the exhibition.

The thematic approach of the exhibition, divided into four themes, and the focus on both antiquated and contemporary fashion, highlight the presence of fashion museology, as Teunissen (2014) argues that adding thematic and conceptual elements and mixing historical costumes with contemporary fashion in fashion exhibitions, heralded the development of fashion museology in the 1960s. I shall now explain how in particular the rooms of The Wearer and The Visionary are created from a fashion museological standpoint.

The colour that dominates in the room of The Wearer is pink, a colour that is often associated with femininity and vanity, according to the exhibition’s design plan. Multiple chandeliers are hanging from the ceiling and the shelves on the walls carry numerous bags and shoes. The garments on display are special, and often colourful, pieces, designed by well-known (sometimes living) designers, or worn by celebrities or famous historical individuals. Diana Vreeland considered these to be important aspects of displayed clothing in fashion exhibitions, as Steele (2008) discusses. Hence, this room emphasises “the dream of fashion”, which, according to Melchior, lies at the heart of fashion museological exhibitions (Melchior, 2014: 8). Visitors can fantasise about the glamorous lives the individuals live(d), who wore or made the pieces in this room.

Melchior (2014) argues that during the rise of fashion museology, fashion exhibitions started to look more and more like fashion boutiques as a way of letting visitors experience the glamorous and spectacular side of fashion. The room of The Visionary meets this kind of exhibition design, for it looks like a fashion boutique, with clothing racks placed in between the displayed garments. Visitors get a feeling of walking through a store instead of a museum. This element could serve to make the experience more relatable for visitors or to make visitors reflect on the boundaries between the practice of museum display and commerce. Since this room is mostly about contemporary fashion and new and sustainable production techniques and technologies, it seems fitting to emphasise current consumerist behaviour through a fashion boutique display. In that case, this part fits a new museological approach, as it is about reflecting on museum practices and issues relating to the current fashion system.

The room of The Visionary also focuses on the question to what extent designers depict a “zeitgeist”, addressing fashion’s cultural significance, which, according to Buckley and Clark (2016), is a characteristic of fashion museology. In both the room of The Wearer and the room of The Visionary, a front-stage perception of displayed fashion, as explained by Melchior (2014), is prevalent, which is part of fashion museology as well. Front-stage, a focus on the experience of fashion and visual spectacle is essential, which clearly can be found in both of these rooms. Bloemberg emphasises the importance of the visitor experience when she says that “above all, people should become immersed”.

Creating a narrative about one particular designer and his or her conceptual ideas is also part of a front-stage perception of dress, as Melchior (2014) argues. However, this practice is not included in *Out of Fashion*, as the exhibition is focused on showing the collection of the museum, which includes pieces by many different designers. Hence, there is no predominant narrative of one designer’s work. In this respect, the exhibition does not fit a fashion museological approach.

As Melchior (2014) argues, fashion museology’s focus on contemporary fashion by living designers often goes at the expense of museum collections, as antiquated historical costumes are usually ignored. This is not the case with *Out of Fashion*, as the exhibition is primarily focused on the museum’s costume and fashion collection. The collection includes both historical and contemporary pieces, either purchased, received as a donation or as a loan. This makes for an intriguing juxtaposition of fashion of the past and the present. A new strategy of fashion designers is to sell their designs to be included in museum collections, since this increases their prestige, as museums are considered to be highly regarded cultural institutions and designs seem more valuable and exclusive when preserving them for future

generations. One could argue that this strategy is also to satisfy commercial interests, as a designer is more likely to become well-known and popular when included in a museum collection. This strategy differs from the one used for more common fashion museological exhibitions, in which museums rely heavily on pieces from the archives of fashion houses, as a result making the exhibitions look like advertisements for one particular brand, as Melchior (2014) argues. *Out of Fashion* does not focus on the work of one living designer, but on the versatility of the museum collection that consists of the work of many different designers, both late and alive.

According to Melchior (2014), another fashion museological strategy of museums is to let designers curate their own exhibitions. Fashion scholars like Melchior, Steele (2008), Pecorari (2014), and Teunissen (2014) express their doubts about this practice for various reasons, such as issues regarding the curator's integrity and the commercial interests that are involved. In *Out of Fashion*, the work of the exhibition designer, Maison the Faux, is represented in the room of The Visionary. The clothes themselves do not take up a central position here, as the display is more of an experiment, exploring the possibilities of preservation by means of various materials. However, their work on the exhibition and the inclusion of their work does give Maison the Faux more exposure and publicity, which will probably be expressed in the sales figures as well. This in itself does not have to be considered a problem, because (the rest of) the exhibition does not look like an advertisement for Maison the Faux. Bloemberg explains that she wanted to give the duo this platform to profile themselves as up and coming designers, which is something that could evidently be well incorporated within the main focus of the exhibition: the museum's collection. This is then a different case than a fashion exhibition that solely focuses on the work of one designer, who could benefit financially from such exposure.

### **New Museology**

According to Vergo (1989) and Melchior (2014), the most important characteristics of new museology are high accessibility, in the sense of being inclusive and making sure everyone is able to visit a museum, actively involving visitors in dialogue, and reflexivity of the museum practice itself and of wider societal issues. In *Out of Fashion*, the involvement of visitors can be found in the restorer's corner, where visitors can enter into dialogue with a restorer and ask questions, and in the mannequinage corner, where visitors can get to work themselves and experience what it is like to touch and handle collection pieces. These elements create an atmosphere of inclusivity and increased accessibility, as visitors are shown behind-the-scenes

practices, that usually take place back-stage. Just like in the example of the Fashion Museum in Bath, as discussed by Harden (2014), back-stage becomes front-stage here, also in the sense that visitors feel like they walk through a costume depot or a workplace in the rooms of The Maker and The Restorer. These are usually areas that are not accessible to the audience. Harden's description of the Fashion Museum in Bath is therefore also applicable to the room of The Maker in *Out of Fashion*: "the boxes are carefully arranged and set as scenes, and the impression is of beautiful, historic pieces spilling out of acid-free museum boxes, which are piled up high. The visiting experience is somewhat voyeuristic, with a feeling that visitors are being given privileged access to something not normally seen" (Harden, 2014: 134). One last element that highlights increased accessibility and inclusivity, is the introduction of Modemuze in the exhibition, which is an online platform where anyone can consult the costume and fashion collections of various Dutch Museums; something that had not been possible until now.

In the room of The Wearer, many pieces are accompanied by information on their origins and who has worn them over time. As argued by Horsley (2014), this type of autobiographic reference can help visitors to identify more strongly with what is on display, by connecting the experience of former wearers of the displayed garments to the experiences of wearing their own clothes. This might have worked even better had there been contemporary pieces of everyday dress as well. There are contemporary pieces on display that were mainly worn by famous individuals and designed by distinguished designers. In this respect, a sense of exclusivity is maintained that could put off visitors, as McNeil argues (2008), or at least it becomes more difficult for visitors to identify with the displayed garments. The Lowlands best festival outfits hanging in between Room 2 and Room 3 form an example of autobiographic material that is easy to identify with for visitors. These outfits were worn by regular people who visited a music festival; something many visitors of the exhibition might also do. Seeing 'normal', everyday and modern clothes in a museum context, takes away the air of exclusivity often associated with museums (Melchior, 2011). What has been a good strategy as well, as Harden (2014) would likely argue, is the connection that is made between antiquated and contemporary fashion. Emphasising the similarities between fashion in the past and in the present could avoid alienating visitors, as they might need help to recognise similarities from their own time in antiquated garments on display.

*Out of Fashion* shows a highly reflexive attitude when it comes to the museum's collecting practices. The exhibition addresses topics such as the reasons behind acquisitions, the way clothes are preserved and restored, the way fashion exhibitions and collecting

practices have changed over the last one hundred years at the museum, and what the future will bring when it comes to these areas. Hence, also in its reflexive sense, the exhibition fits a new museological paradigm. Furthermore, the room of The Visionary presents work of various established and up and coming Dutch names in the fashion industry, who experiment with new and sustainable materials and production techniques, or focus on craftsmanship that is at risk of falling into oblivion, as a response to the polluting and exploiting ways of the fashion industry. Addressing these issues fits well within a new museological paradigm as well, though visitors might have difficulty picking up on these topics and issues or even the meaning behind the work on display. The last part the room of The Visionary lacks the context information needed for visitors to make sense of what they are seeing. Particularly, the work of Future Generation lacked any context information. At least some information was provided with the work of Liselore Frowijn and Michiel Schuurman, and *Das Leben am Haverkamp*, albeit a minimal amount.

This last aspect shows signs of an aesthetic exhibition, as opposed to a contextual exhibition, as discussed by Vergo (1989). An aesthetic exhibition lets objects speak for itself and barely provides context information for visitors, whereas a contextual exhibition provides too much context information, causing a neglect of the very materiality of the displayed objects. Strikingly, however, the rest of the exhibition fits into the description of a contextual exhibition, as visitors are confronted with a huge amount of information accompanying the various garments by means of signs and texts on the walls. I would argue that in the case of this particular exhibition, it is vital to provide visitors with this amount of information, as the main themes and topics of the exhibition, including the motivation behind its creation, could not have been made clear in any other way. At first, in the rooms of The Wearer, The Restorer and The Visionary many signs were hung up altogether on one wall. Visitors had to walk away from a particular garment to be able to figure out which informative sign belongs to it and to read it. On one of my last visits, an improvement had been made, as the signs had been supplemented with informative cards that visitors can take with them. In this way, they can stand in front of a garment and read the accompanying information.

The explanation and interpretation of the displayed objects is not only done by using words. Alternatives to the use of words, can alleviate the abundance of information that comes with a contextual exhibition, as Harden (2014) and Teunissen (2014) suggest. For instance, a dialogue between the garments on display is created by juxtaposing old and new ones, clearly expressing their similarities and differences to visitors. The illustrations on the wall in the mannequinage corner in the room of The Restorer indicate how the dummies



should be dressed using the replicas; no words are needed here (although occasionally there are some volunteers present to help visitors). Some of the garments are also accompanied by old photos and videos, besides textual information, which provides explanation to visitors through visualisation. Lastly, the scenography of in particular the room of The Maker (piled up boxes), the 1936 room (wooden crates) and the room of the Restorer (restoration place), explains to visitors that the exhibition is about the museum collection and associated practices. Hence, this is another form of visualisation by means of which the main topic and themes of the exhibition are explained to visitors. This only works because there is a clear balance between the exhibition design by Maison the Faux and the selected objects, which results from a close collaboration between Maison the Faux and the selector of the objects, conservator Ninke Bloemberg. The importance of this balance is stressed by both Vergo (1989) and Pecorari (2014).

Pecorari (2014) argues that it is relevant to focus on the entire production process of garments concerning fashion in museums. Mostly, this is not the case with *Out of Fashion*, which has a clear focus on the final product, characteristic of dress history and dress museology. In the room of The Restorer, the materials and production techniques of the pieces are highlighted and in other rooms some information is provided as well on how particular garments were produced. Still, a dress museological approach remains prevalent in the exhibition, as the final products, which are the displayed garments from the collection, form the centre of attention.

## **Conclusion**

From my analysis, it can be concluded that dress museology, fashion museology and new museology are all represented in *Out of Fashion*. Sometimes the characteristics of the three museologies overlap. At first sight, dress museology prevails, as the main focus lies on the costume collection and collecting practices of the museum. However, as I have argued in this analysis, many fashion and new museological elements are present as well in the exhibition. Fashion museology is especially to be found in the room of The Wearer and The Visionary, where the spectacle and glamour of fashion is highlighted and visitors become immersed in the experience of the exhibition. New museological elements are expressed through the involvement of visitors in the restorer's corner and the mannequinage corner in the room of The Restorer, but also through the reflexive quality of the exhibition, regarding both the museum's collecting, preserving and exhibiting practices and issues concerning the fashion industry. Because of its versatility, combining dress, fashion and new museological elements,

*Out of Fashion* can be considered as a counter-example of Melchior's (2011) argument that fashion exhibitions tend to be traditional and non-reflexive in their interpretations. The same applies to the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, as I have argued in the previous chapter.

Aside from the previously discussed lack of contextual information in the last part of the room of The Visionary, I would also like to address the amount of garments on display in the room of The Restorer. Many had to be positioned on a higher level because there was no space left to place them all on eye level for visitors. This means that these pieces cannot be viewed from up close by visitors, which is unfortunate, as especially in this room the focus lies on the details, the materials and techniques used in the production of the displayed garments. In this respect, the choice of showing a large quantity of pieces from the collection, resulted in a lower quality of viewing for visitors.

Apart from these issues, the Centraal Museum managed to make its costume and fashion collection more accessible to the public, by incorporating many different pieces in the exhibition and showing the connections between them and the motivations behind the acquisitions. In this sense, *Out of Fashion* not only makes the collection more relatable for the public, but also the topic of fashion in general; something the *Temporary Fashion Museum* did as well. *Out of Fashion* then also meets the social role of accessibility and inclusiveness UNESCO (2015) assigned to museums, as it makes the backstage practice of preservation and restoration into a frontstage exhibition for visitors. Visitors do not often get a look behind-the-scenes of a costume collection and the way it is preserved, restored and expanded. This makes *Out of Fashion* into a unique experience.

Pecorari mentions the role of the museum "as a place where past, present and future meet" (Pecorari, 2014: 55). This is definitely the case with *Out of Fashion*, in which a dialogue between fashion from the past, the present and the future is established. The historical costumes could be seen to represent the past and dress museology; the contemporary garments in the room of The Wearer could be seen to represent the present and fashion museology; and the contemporary designers whose work is displayed in the room of The Restorer and The Visionary could be seen to represent the future generation and new museology.

## Conclusion

In this thesis I have analysed and interpreted the ways in which characteristics of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology are incorporated in the fashion exhibitions the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* and how they relate to one another. As a result, the main research question can now be answered. The main research question of this thesis is the following:

*How do the concepts of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology relate to each other in the fashion exhibitions Temporary Fashion Museum and Out of Fashion?*

To sum up, dress museology, fashion museology and new museology consist of the following main characteristics, as argued by Melchior (2011, 2014):

### Dress museology

- A focus on the costume collection and accompanying research
- An object-based approach of describing, documenting, registering and conserving single fashionable garments and accessories
- A historically accurate and chronological display order

### Fashion museology

- A focus on the glamour, spectacle and imagination surrounding fashion
- A focus on contemporary fashion (designers)
- Creating unique visitor experiences

### New museology

- Involvement and engagement of visitors in democratic dialogue
- Addressing various societal issues through exhibitions
- Reflexive of the museum practice itself

First of all, I have provided a literature review addressing the definitions and characteristics of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology. Secondly, I have written detailed descriptions of both exhibitions, as it was important for my analysis and the readers of this thesis to know exactly what both exhibitions looked like. It was particularly relevant in

relation to the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, as I had not been able to visit this exhibition myself. Subsequently, by consulting the thick descriptions, the literature review, the interviews, the reviews, the websites and the additional documents of both exhibitions, I have managed to extensively analyse and interpret the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion*. I specifically looked at how the above mentioned characteristics of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology were incorporated in the exhibitions. The two exhibitions are very different in form and in the way they approach the topic of fashion, but also carry similarities. I will now provide a short summary of my findings for both exhibitions, as the answer to the main research question.

As I have concluded, the exhibition the *Temporary Fashion Museum* has mainly been created from a new museological standpoint. This can be seen in the way the visitor is addressed as being a huge part of the fashion system as well, and how visitors are involved and engaged in debates about various fashion related topics and issues, in particular the polluting side of the fashion industry. The motivation behind the creation of the exhibition was to play with the boundaries between museums and commerce and to experiment with the concept of a fashion museum; what does a fashion museum entail? These questions are reflected in the exhibition's various parts and highlight HNI's reflexive attitude towards itself as a cultural institution, which fits well into a new museological paradigm. Characteristics of dress and fashion museology have been rather neglected in the *Temporary Fashion Museum*. This makes sense for dress museology, as this is primarily about costume and fashion collection practices, and HNI does not own a costume collection of its own. There was a small amount of dress museological characteristics, though, which overlapped with new museological characteristics in the "Collected by..." part of the exhibition. Here, two fashion collections were represented. Eva Maria Hatcheck's collection was extensively researched during the exhibition period and the garments were handled with extreme care, using special gloves; two elements of dress museology. At the same time, visitors were allowed to handle the garments under the supervision of volunteers. Involving and engaging visitors in such a way, in particular by letting them carry out the work that is usually only done by professionals, bears witness to a new museological approach. In this case, back stage has become front stage, offering visitors privileged access to a fashion collection and the option to handle the garments themselves. Fashion museology was only reflected in the parts "The Now" and "Parfumerie du Parc", in which the focus lay on the experience of the visitor, and "All-time Favourites", in which the collaboration between the curator and the theorist played an important role. Some overlap between fashion museology and new museology in

“Parfumerie du Parc” could be identified, as this part was reflecting on the concept of the perfume department of a warehouse and fashion’s glamorous image.

In the exhibition *Out of Fashion*, characteristics of all three museologies are reflected and sometimes they even overlap. As I have argued, dress museology prevails in the exhibition, since the main focus is the costume and fashion collection of the museum and related practices, like the documentation, preservation and restoration of garments. Characteristics of fashion museology are to be found in the room of the Wearer and the room of The Visionary in particular, in which the visitor becomes immersed in the experience of the exhibition and is confronted by the glamour and spectacle associated with fashion. New museology can be found in the involvement of visitors in the room of The Restorer, where they can enter into dialogue with the restorer of a collection piece or be active themselves by becoming acquainted with the art of mannequinage. A large part of the exhibition is set up as a costume depot, giving visitors a feeling of privileged access, in which back stage becomes front stage. The fact that the exhibition also forms a reflection on the museum’s collecting and preserving practices, makes it fit within a new museological paradigm as well. In the room of The Visionary designers were included who might represent the current zeitgeist, according to the museum, and use sustainable materials and production methods as a response to the polluting and exploitative ways of the current fashion system. Addressing these issues by representing the work of these designers, is also characteristic of new museology.

As discussed in the first chapter, Teunissen argues that a fashion exhibition should “be both entertaining and seducing in form, historically accurate in content, and provide insight into the phenomenon of fashion” (Teunissen, 2014: 38). She implicitly unites the concepts of fashion museology, dress museology and new museology here. By combining these three approaches in one fashion exhibition, visitors get the complete experience: dress museology makes them aware of the importance and relevance of costume and fashion collections and provides them with historical knowledge regarding costume; fashion museology entertains visitors by immersing them in a glamorous and fantastical world, mostly of contemporary fashion; new museology makes them aware of current day issues regarding the fashion system and makes them reflect on museums themselves as cultural institutions. As I have demonstrated in this thesis, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* both include various characteristics of dress museology, fashion museology and new museology, and appropriate these to make them work within the exhibitions’ contexts and the confines of the available space, in both innovative and experimental ways.

Both the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* form counter-examples of Melchior's (2011) argument that most fashion exhibitions tend to be very traditional and superficial in their interpretations and insufficiently make use of reflexive practices. Neither of the two exhibitions can be considered traditional or are lacking in reflexive practices. Melchior wonders "what relevance fashion exhibitions have beyond the entertainment value of the display of a fashion designer's creativity or the joy of beauty expressed via clothing and body adornment" (Melchior, 2014: 13). What the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* have in common is their relevance, which does goes beyond superficial entertainment value and the joy of beauty. The exhibitions both make the topic of fashion into a relatable and accessible one for the public, by involving visitors in dialogue about fashion related issues and making them aware of their place within the current fashion system. This last aspect in particular is extensively elaborated in the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, where visitors were explicitly made aware of their consuming behaviour and the influence this has on the environment and the exploitation of human beings. Contrary to the *Temporary Fashion Museum*, in which a permanent collection was not represented, *Out of Fashion* also makes the museum collection more accessible and relatable for visitors, by emphasising the similarities that exist between antiquated and contemporary fashion, connecting past with present and future. Visitors who have difficulty identifying with old garments, are presented with recognisable contemporary pieces that bear a resemblance to the older pieces. This emphasises the way fashion changes over to course of time, but only to a certain extent, since production techniques, materials, prints, patterns, colours and silhouettes always have a way of coming back. Looking at all their various aspects, the *Temporary Fashion Museum* and *Out of Fashion* both fulfil the social role UNESCO (2015) assigned to museums around the world, as they both transform high fashion from an elitist, exclusive concept into a relatable and inclusive topic. *Out of Fashion* does the same with the museum collection by making it more accessible and relatable for visitors. In this sense, the two exhibitions set an example for other (fashion) museums around the world that also want to offer intelligent, versatile, engaging and reflexive fashion exhibitions to their visitors.

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## **Appendix 1: interview *Temporary Fashion Museum***

### **Wat was jullie functie bij het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum*?**

Linde Dorenbosch (LD): ik deed de projectleiding overkoepelend van de verschillende onderdelen en ook de projectleiding van de tentoonstellingen in de grote zaal beneden. Ik was speciaal voor het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum*, want ik ben freelance.

Floor van Ast (FvA): ik was verantwoordelijk voor de Foyer en het Deck, dus meer de publieke ruimte van het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum*, wat we stevig programmeerden: Pumporama, The Now, View on Fashion, Haberdashery, workshops, café.

LD: eigenlijk was Floor ook overkoepelend van alles.

### **Wat was de motivatie achter het opzetten van het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum*?**

LD: HNI heeft een aantal agenda's. Toen het werd opgericht was het een fusie van meerdere organisaties. Uit die organisatie kwam een nieuwe agenda voor een programma van ontwerp (mode), architectuur en digitale cultuur. Mode was sinds de oprichting nog niet geadresseerd. De directeur dacht toen laten we het dan ook goed doen door een heel modemuseum te doen, vier à vijf tentoonstellingen tegelijk. Onze directeur komt zelf ook oorspronkelijk uit de mode, in de jaren '90, die had nog wel een netwerk daarin. Vanuit die interesse eigenlijk.

FvA: het ging ook wel heel erg om vernieuwing als instituut, als museum, om daarmee te experimenteren.

LD: ook gewoon voorbij mode, het instituut zelf. Zoals de Foyer en nu uitziet na het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum*, dat was daarvoor niet zo. Toen was het nog gewoon een hal waarbij je dacht...

FvA: waar ben ik?

LD: dus dat is ook eigenlijk een model om naar het eigen model te kijken. Er is in Nederland ook al vaak discussie geweest over dat Nederland ook een modemuseum moet krijgen, zoals België in Antwerpen, daar heeft iedereen allerlei ideeën over, maar Guus dacht dus laten we dat maar even proberen. Als Nederland dat dan moet hebben laten we dat dan doen, maar dan tijdelijk. En heel bewust is er toen voor gekozen om dit modemuseum niet uit te laten gaan vanuit de ontwerpers, want dat wordt al best wel vaak gedaan, de jurken op een sokkel en dramatisch licht, dat werkt gewoon, dat weten we. Dus Guus zei nou dat hoeven we niet te onderzoeken, maar wel wat zijn andere manieren om naar mode te kijken? Het belangrijke daarvan is de gebruiker, wij allemaal. Wij denken misschien ook dat mode alleen maar in Parijs op de catwalk is, eigenlijk zijn wij ook allemaal onderdeel van mode. Die aspecten

kwamen ook terug, dat je als bezoeker soms een actieve rol moest spelen of dat het over jou ging, of dat het bijvoorbeeld in de Speculatieve Geschiedenis ging over hoe de Nederlandse gebruiker de mode had beïnvloed.

FvA: wat ook nog een belangrijke reden was voor de vorm die we hebben gekozen, de gedachte vanuit Guus, zijn mening over mode, dat daar eigenlijk heel weinig binnen de hele mode, binnen het onderwijs, hoe erover geschreven wordt, dat dat heel erg achterligt als je naar de andere disciplines kijkt. Architectuur is enorm met theorieën en terugblikken en bij mode is dat eigenlijk een beetje onderontwikkeld. Dus dat was voor Guus ook een belangrijk punt om dit nu aan de kaak te stellen en op deze manier.

**En werden vragen zoals wat is een museum en het tijdelijke aspect geadresseerd?**

FvA: ja zeker.

**Wat waren de belangrijkste thema's van het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum* en hoe hebben jullie die gestalte gegeven?**

FvA: ja dat was ook het idee van een warenhuis, waar je dus verschillende onderdelen...

LD: ja er waren dus eigenlijk een aantal delen, het archief van de mode. Als je binnenkwam dachten we 'wat is nou het entreegebied van de mode of waar verkoopt de mode zich aan iedereen'? En dat is eigenlijk het warenhuis, of de parfumerie om nog specifieker te zijn, want je kwam binnen in de hal en dat was de parfumerie van het modemuseum. En dan kwam je in een soort omgeving die inderdaad geïnspireerd was door bijvoorbeeld de begane grond van de Bijenkorf, waar je al die standjes hebt en allemaal merken zich aan je willen verkopen. Daar hadden we ook allemaal dingetjes die je als bezoeker kon doen en kon zien zonder kaartje, dus dat was een beetje daardoor geïnspireerd, dat publieke deel van de mode. In zaal 1 beneden ging het over het archief, het geheugen van de mode, waar je dus die collecties had van die Zwitserse dame en het Kabinet en die geschiedenis. En boven ging meer over...

FvA: Hacked. Ja meer het modesysteem. Meer inzicht daarin. Zaal 2 speelde ook weer met dat model, een winkel waar je iets koopt. Je gaat een museum in en je komt eigenlijk terecht in een winkel, wat best een gekke omkering is. Eigenlijk draaide we het helemaal om. Hacked gaat heel erg over het systeem binnen de mode industrie en in plaats van dat je begint bij de productie was het hier andersom. Het eindpunt normaal van de hele keten, daar startte de presentatie.

LD: naast het systeem van de mode ging het ook over de rol van de ontwerper. Kleinere ontwerpers kunnen zich moeilijk staande houden of doorbreken, en zij (Hacked) hadden daar

een soort nieuw systeem voor. En op de bovenste verdieping ging het nog serieuzer over het systeem van de mode, van waar zijn we eigenlijk mee bezig? En dan op het Deck, de Haberdashery, de stoffenwinkel, dat ging eigenlijk over het zelf doen. Maar door alles heen zat de consument, wat is jouw rol in de mode?

FvA: als gebruiker maar ook als criticus.

### **Dus het was ook bedoeld om een soort bewustzijn te creëren bij de bezoeker?**

FvA: ik denk dat je geen tentoonstelling over mode meer kan maken zonder dat te adresseren. En wel die gelaagdheid vond ik er heel goed aan. Het was ook niet alleen maar overspoelen met de ene of de andere kant van mode.

### **Waren er verschillende partijen betrokken bij de uitvoering?**

FvA: onze directeur was wel echt all-over art director of hoofdcurator. Het is natuurlijk onmenselijk om één iemand dat allemaal te laten doen, dus hij heeft daar weer een heleboel deelprojecten toebedeeld. En hetzelfde met het ruimtelijk en grafisch ontwerp was er wel een overkoepelend EventArchitectuur verantwoordelijk voor en zij hebben weer allemaal mensen uitgenodigd. Ik denk dat dat ook wel de kracht was van het project, dat dat heel goed samenviel en ook wel mensen die al eerder met elkaar hadden gewerkt, maar ook een heleboel nieuwe mensen. Dus dat was een heel breed... van oude rotten in het vak tot echt hele jonge nieuwe talenten die we een plek hebben kunnen geven. Die energie die daarin zat, dat heeft het voor mij in ieder geval wel gemaakt.

### **Hoeveel vrijheid kregen de verschillende deelnemers / artiesten?**

LD: soms kregen ze letterlijk heel veel vrijheid. In de Foyer in View on Fashion was het telkens iemand anders, die kreeg dan een hokje...

FvA: die structuur was natuurlijk bepaald en die viel binnen het concept van het warenhuis, dat je al die verschillende stands had en dat kwam wel echt van de hand van EventArchitectuur. Uiteindelijk werd de invulling door de mensen zelf bepaald, ik denk dat daar de meeste vrijheid was.

LD: ja het verschilt een beetje per ding en hoeveel mensen erbij betrokken waren.

Bijvoorbeeld bij Hacked waren de ontwerpers ook zelf de curatoren en in goed contact met de ruimtelijke ontwerpers, dus die veranderden ook steeds hun winkel. Dus er was nergens dat de hoofdcurator zei 'nee het moet zo'. Per onderdeel zat gewoon een team en die hebben gewoon steeds bepaald hoe hun ding eruit kwam te zien.

FvA: en in goed overleg. En in die zin denk ik ook dat vanaf begin af aan het vertrouwen er was dat, er is heel bewust voor mensen gekozen, en bij die beslissing geef je eigenlijk al dat vertrouwen. En het zijn natuurlijk wel verschillende overleggen geweest waar juist alle ruimtelijke ontwerpers samenkwamen. Dan ben je al veel verder eigenlijk.

### **Dus er was geen duidelijk opdrachtgever, maar het was meer een samenwerking?**

FvA: het was wel helder wie er uiteindelijk inhoudelijk de eindverantwoordelijkheid had. In de beginfase ga je heel erg die lijnen uitzetten en dan worden er gewoon een heleboel beslissingen genomen. Uiteindelijk de details verder in, het was niet zo dat dan overal nog overleg over nodig was.

LD: wij waren de opdrachtgever. En dan inderdaad worden de grote beslissingen samen genomen en dan kleine teams, die zorgen voor de kleine dingen. Maar wij waren wel de opdrachtgever.

### **Waren er nog sponsors en subsidiënten?**

LD: we hadden één overkoepelende subsidiënt, dat was Fonds21. Die heeft eigenlijk een groot bedrag voor het hele museum bijgedragen. En verder hadden we per tentoonstelling ook soms een sponsoring, elk onderdeel had ook nog wel weer kleine subsidiegevers. ELLE was de mediapartner, maar de grootste was Fonds21, die heeft echt een bedrag bijgedragen en verder zijn er allemaal kleine...

FvA: het is ook goed om te weten dat wij natuurlijk... HNI krijgt van het Ministerie van OC&W het merendeel, ook van een aantal andere ministeries maar dat is eigenlijk kleiner. Structureel vanuit het OC&W. Opdracht is ook om presentaties te verzorgen, dus we krijgen er echt geld van, dus we hebben op jaarbasis... en deel van het subsidiegeld dat we krijgen wordt echt besteed aan tentoonstellingen en publieksprogramma en educatie. Educatie is ook echt een belangrijke opdracht aan ons, waar ook echt aparte budgetten voor zijn. Dus in die zin streven we er naar om derde gelden te krijgen, zoals Fonds21, maar we zijn er niet afhankelijk van. Wel als je ambitie groeit en dat merken we nu ook, maar zeker het modemuseum is grotendeels gewoon uit onze eigen middelen gefinancierd.

### **En de bezoekers waren daar ook een grote bron van, inkomsten genereren?**

LD: daar zijn we dan niet afhankelijk van, omdat we door OC&W worden gefinancierd.

FvA: we rekenen het wel mee. Het modemuseum was in die zin echt een succes voor ons, qua betalende bezoekers, dus dat draagt zeker bij, maar het is niet zo dat als die bezoekers niet

komen dat we dan niks meer kunnen doen, gelukkig. Dat is wel een luxe hoor. In die zin zijn we ook geen klassiek museum.

LD: we gaan er normaal gesproken ook niet vanuit om inkomsten te genereren uit bezoekersaantallen, omdat je nooit weet voor wat ze dan kwamen (meerdere tentoonstellingen in gebouw). Met het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum* kwamen ze natuurlijk voor dit project (besloeg hele gebouw), dus dan kon je het wel als inkomsten opvoeren.

FvA: natuurlijk hadden we een projectbegroting. Of we daar binnen zijn gebleven?

LD: nee, maar de projectbegroting was zo opgebouwd dat je een deel had voor overkoepelende zaken, en specifiek per project ook weer. Het was zo'n ambitieus project dat op het laatst, we hadden hele korte tijd om het te realiseren, er kwam heel veel bij elkaar, dus we zijn er wel overheen gegaan, maar het was ook een groot succesverhaal.

FvA: ik denk dat we in zoverre ook nog niet de ervaring hadden om bijvoorbeeld zo'n hele Foyer te programmeren, we hadden niet de ervaring om met vrijwilligers te werken, wat ook best wel een kostenpost is. Ik denk dat dat met het schrijven van het plan, bijvoorbeeld het opstellen van de jaarbegroting, daar is helemaal geen rekening mee gehouden. Toen eenmaal de plannen er waren en wij gingen rekenen was het echt van hallo, dit gaat niet werken. Gelukkig onderschreef iedereen de ambitie en ook de kwaliteit, dus er is wel gekozen om het door te zetten, ook op dat niveau.

### **Hadden jullie een bepaalde doelgroep in gedachte of was het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum* voor iedereen?**

FvA: voor iedereen is het nooit natuurlijk, maar we wisten wel het onderwerp mode is iets...

LD: het is altijd moeilijk om een doelgroep aan te wijzen, want mensen gaan toch niet doen wat jij zegt, maar ik denk dat we altijd zoeken naar iets wat een groot publiek aanspreekt, maar ook een vakpubliek. Dat probeer je misschien ook in de tentoonstelling zelf te doen, dat je misschien twee lagen hebt dat een bezoeker die zich wil verdiepen ook iets leuks heeft. Maar nu zat het ook wel in het hele museum zelf, dat als je letterlijk alleen maar even wilde komen kijken dan kon dat in de Foyer, of in de kelder ging het over hoe mode in ons architectuurarchief zat, dus je kon eigenlijk overal wel iets vinden. Bijvoorbeeld in die geschiedenis tentoonstelling, die tentoonstelling zelf waren gewoon eigenlijk pop-ups bij het grote verhaal, dat je ook nog kon meenemen (krantje). Ik denk dat dit een van de breedste doelgroepen was ooit, omdat je zoveel mensen kon aanspreken, er zat voor iedereen wel iets in. En ook omdat we juist zeiden dit is niet alleen voor ontwerpers, maar wij allemaal zijn mode.

**Probeerden jullie mensen aan te spreken die niet zo snel een museum zouden bezoeken?**

FvA: in ieder geval die ons niet zo snel zouden bezoeken. Je hebt die verschillende subgroepen, en je hebt altijd wel die mensen die een hoge interesse hebben in mode of museumbezoek in het algemeen. Maar ik weet zeker dat er ook mensen zijn geweest die nooit eerder ergens naar binnen zijn gestapt of die iemand kenden die betrokken was, op die manier vertakte het. En ik denk dat ook mede omdat we het zo breed hebben geprogrammeerd met zoveel mensen, ja een olievlek.

**Wat wilden jullie teweg brengen bij de bezoekers? Een bewustzijn van wat voegen wij zelf toe aan het modesysteem?**

LD: ik denk wat we sowieso teweg wilden brengen met het museum zelf was meedoen aan die discussie van wat is nou een modemuseum en ik denk niet dat elke bezoeker daar mee bezig is geweest, maar dat was wel iets wat over alles heen liep. Ik denk dat het voor ons belangrijk was om ze actief te laten zijn in het museum, dat je niet alleen hoeft te kijken en dat mode ook iets is wat wij zelf ook zijn. In het archief mocht je zelf bijvoorbeeld een doos uitkiezen om te bekijken of er was nog altijd iets om te ontdekken. Misschien ging het ook wel meer om het museum zelf, dat je niet altijd alleen maar hoeft te kijken.

FvA: dat het niet zo statisch is.

**Waren mensen verrast door het museum, aangezien het waarschijnlijk vaak iets anders was dan in eerste instantie gedacht (zoals een ‘normaal’ modemuseum met tentoonstellingen over designers)?**

LD: ja ze moesten er wel aan wennen ja. Wat ook verrassend en leerzaam voor onszelf ook was, bijvoorbeeld in zaal 1, daar had je die collectie van die Zwitserse dame en in die tijd dat zij die collectie aan het aanleggen was, haar kleedster maakte alles voor haar. Ze woonde in Zwitserland, en dan was het heel normaal om in Parijs patronen te gaan kopen van Chanel of allerlei grote huizen, en dan ging je in Zwitserland dat namaken, en juist wilde ze dat in Zürich doen want daar zaten de allerbeste zijdefabrikanten. Het was een heel hoog aangeschreven iets dat je juist die stoffen daar had en niet dat je zo zeer bij Chanel een pakje had gekocht, maar hun patroon. Dus dat vonden wij interessant aan die collectie, maar dat betekende ook dat alles een handschrift had van die kleedster en niet dat Chanel label erin. En dat vonden bezoekers best wel moeilijk, want ja, welke is dan van Chanel? Terwijl het daar eigenlijk niet om ging, maar meer om een beeld van een persoon en om het handwerk van die tijd en om die stoffen en kwaliteit. Die vrijwilligers die daar stonden hebben best vaak



discussies moeten hebben over of dat nou belangrijk is dat bijvoorbeeld die ontwerper wordt genoemd en daar waren mensen best wel fel over soms. Dat is best wel iets wat we hebben... ik zou het nu niet anders doen, maar als het over mode gaat is dat dus wel heel belangrijk, dat de ontwerper erbij staat. Kijk, die dingen als je er naar kijkt, was het echt fantastisch, en zodra je het vast had ging het ook over iets heel anders, maar dat was wel iets denk ik waar mensen aan moesten wennen, het was anders dan wat je had verwacht. Sommigen waren daardoor heel erg verrast, maar anderen waren van waar zijn de Chanelpakjes?

FvA: je had natuurlijk de Haberdashery, dat was meer een ander uiterste, waar je juist wel die patronen van ontwerpers kon kopen, maar het zelf moest gaan maken, of je kon er alleen stof kopen. En bijvoorbeeld de vintage collectie van Ferry, dat vonden mensen echt fantastisch dat je gewoon in een museum echt iets kon passen en iets kon kopen.

LD: we wilden mensen eigenlijk gewoon laten voelen, wat doet mode met je? Zo'n hak, en dat je dan meteen kon voelen van ik sta hier anders door of ik ga er anders van lopen. Alle maten. Het was misschien niet wat je verwachtte, maar daardoor raakten mensen wel gecharmeerd ervan denk ik, van zo'n andere modetentoonstelling dan normaal.

### **Er was dus meer sprake van interactie met het publiek in plaats van puur en alleen kennisoverdracht?**

LD: het was meer een gesprek over mode denk ik dan dat je mode wil laten zien. Guus was vroeger creatief directeur van het merk SOOF met Alexander van Slobbe, en die waren gewoon, in een keer ontplofte die en gingen naar Japan, en die heeft alles van de modewereld toen gezien. Die weet gewoon als geen ander hoe mode in elkaar zit en hoe mode kan verleiden en flexibel kan zijn en altijd zichzelf kan vernieuwen of kan veranderen, zichzelf iets kan verklaren waarvan je dacht, 'oh is dat nu ook in de mode'? Dat is heel interessant eigenlijk. Dat model van de mode, dat je kan zeggen, die broek van vorig jaar schilderen we nu blauw en het is helemaal van nu. Dat zou een museum nooit doen, die broek moet juist in de vitrine komen te liggen. Je mag er nooit meer aankomen want het is die broek van vorig jaar. Die twee modellen, wat gebeurt er als je dat over elkaar heen legt? Dat je die schoenen zelf aan mag doen in een keer, in plaats van dat ze op een sokkel staan, dat is denk ik een heel belangrijk idee van het modemuseum. Mode is niet bang om iets wat ze al hebben gedaan weer te diskwalificeren of te verknippen, die zijn veel flexibeler, dus veel organischer en inderdaad een museum is heel statisch. Dit was wel een belangrijk ding ja. Dus dat wilden we ook wel de bezoeker meegeven dat het wat anders was dan...

FvA: en dat laat ook wel die verschillende niveaus zien waarop we hebben geopereerd. Dat hele gesprek voor de professional, we hebben dat wel ergens meegegeven aan de bezoeker, maar dat is niet het eerste waar je het over hebt. Terwijl voor een collega, tentoonstellingsmaker, is juist dat verhaal over de modellen en ... publiek heel interessant, en ik denk dat we dat wel ook in de donderdagavond ...programma die onderwerpen zijn aangesneden, dus dan kan je heel gelaagd, in essays. Je hebt wel gezien in de dossiers wat een enorme hoeveelheid dat is. Ik denk dat dat ons ook wel anders maakt dan misschien de burens aan de overkant (Boijmans, Kunsthal), dat is toch wel een andere benadering.

LD: het vraagt dan ook wel meer van een bezoeker denk ik.

FvA: het maakt het niet altijd even toegankelijk.

### **Door die conceptuele insteek ook?**

LD: ja er zitten meer lagen in de tentoonstelling en als je die wil bereiken moet je wel misschien er meer over lezen, maar daarvoor hadden we juist die vrijwilligers. We vonden het heel belangrijk dat er een soort hosts waren in het museum die met jou het gesprek aan kunnen gaan.

### **Heeft het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum* aan jullie verwachtingen voldaan?**

LD: het heeft aan onze verwachtingen voldaan, maar ook nog veel meer wat we wilden bleek tijdens het museum zelf dat we dachten wat?! Wij waren er natuurlijk altijd mee bezig, maar zodra het er is wordt je de hele dag plat gebeld door ontwerpers en artiesten. Er waren heel veel mensen die dachten 'oja dit gesprek over mode en ontwerpen of het modesysteem', daar kregen we best veel positieve reacties op en die dachten ik doe iets wat hier perfect bij past. Dat was te gek, maar die mensen kon je bijna allemaal niet meer een plek geven. Dus in die zin voor een volgende keer zou er wel meer ruimte worden ingeruimd. Dus het heeft eigenlijk onze verwachtingen overtroffen in die zin. Er was nog zoveel meer wat je wilde doen. Vrijwilligers werkten zo positief en als je in de Foyer kwam was er nu van alles te doen, waar het eerst een lege hal betrof.

FvA: en er zaten mensen boven te werken en te stikken en er was een schoolklas, veel meer leven. Maar ook er was gewoon echt meer te doen in die Foyer. Het voelde veel levendiger en die feedback kregen we ook echt van mensen die het ook van een paar jaar geleden kenden of van de start van het instituut. Voor ons heeft het museum ons als organisatie ook veel gebracht, wat gedurfder. Dat was ook wel een strategie van onze directeur, ook op het moment dat je iets tijdelijk noemt, dan kan je best wel veel veranderen en we hebben echt

hele fundamentele dingen waar mensen die hier al heel lang werkten best wel tegen waren, een beetje negatief klinkt het, maar die zoiets hadden van ‘nee zo doen we het, en zo blijven we het doen’, maar we hebben het daardoor best wel los kunnen weken en echt op een andere manier dingen uit kunnen vliegen die nu in sommige gevallen ook nog steeds op die manier gebeuren. Daar heeft het publiek niks mee te maken, maar voor ons als jonge organisatie was dat wel echt een belangrijk punt.

LD: ik denk dat we misschien qua tentoonstelling niet uit de comfort zone zijn gegaan, maar intern soms wel. Bijvoorbeeld dat zo’n Foyer een andere invulling krijgt, en dat heeft wel echt zijn vruchten afgeworpen. En die Haberdashery is er nog steeds, er zitten nog steeds allemaal mensen in.

FvA: we werken nog steeds met vrijwilligers, en de indeling van de Foyer is ook nog steeds zo.

### **Waren de reacties van publiek en pers over het algemeen positief?**

FvA: kijk, absoluut zijn er ook kritische noten in de pers, op de tentoonstellingen niet zozeer. Er is wel kritiek geweest over de samenwerking, dus meer hoe het team samen was gesteld. Maar eigenlijk inhoudelijk, buiten dat verhaal, niet echt. Het was vooral positief.

LD: ik denk dat die nieuwe kijk op de mode, of op het modemuseum moet ik zeggen, werd best wel gewaardeerd. Kritiek uit de pers was er niet zo, en van bezoekers inderdaad soms dat je dacht ‘ja maar wanneer komen al die Chanel’? Dat vonden mensen moeilijk. En het was veel. Het is ook heel moeilijk als je zo’n tentoonstelling aan het ontwikkelen bent. In zaal 1 zaten drie tentoonstellingen, en tijdens de ontwikkelingen zie je dat op de plattegrond, dat is dan duidelijk te onderscheiden, dan is dat er. Maar dan komen die mensen de zaal in en denken ‘oh glitterjurken’, die hele route die je dan hebt bedacht gaat dan een beetje mis, dus dat waren wel dingen van het is heel veel, dus daar is later een plattegrond bijgekomen. Dat was wel wat we van reacties van het publiek...

FvA: in die zin, de publieksbegeleiding, door middel van vrijwilligers, ik denk dat dat een hele goede zet is geweest, maar verder de vorm van de teksten, de hoeveelheid van zo’n tekst, dat dat wel een aandachtspunt is.

LD: ja als je dan een rondleiding krijgt is het super leuk en dan kan je het heel goed vertellen, maar als je dan met zo’n krant... ja voor ons is het duidelijk, ze gaan gewoon zo’n rondje, maar dan zien ze zo’n stellingkast met allemaal mooie jurken. Maar daarom was het goed dat er altijd mensen in de zaal waren, die vrijwilligers konden dat wel weer. Dat was feedback, waarmee we dachten hier moeten we iets mee.

### **Heeft het publiek ergens feedback kunnen achterlaten?**

LD: ja er was wel een gastenboek, bij de garderobe. En ook, dat was een nieuw ding voor ons, als je die hakken aan had kon je op de foto en dat ging weer op Facebook. We hebben wel gemonitord hoe vaak dat op Facebook werd gedeeld en hoe vaak op Instagram en dan zag je dat daar wel positief op werd gereageerd, maar je zet natuurlijk ook geen plaatje op Instagram als je het superstom vond. Maar daaraan kon je wel zien dat er heel veel reacties waren in ieder geval en mensen konden inderdaad in een gastenboek dingen achterlaten. En in het archief in zaal 1 kon je een soort questionnaire invullen. Het idee was natuurlijk, er was een archief en er werden dingen getoond. Maar er waren nog veel meer dozen, want we konden niet alles laten zien. En de host daar die ging dan met jou een soort gesprek aan van ‘okay dan ga ik voor jou doos nummer 20 pakken’ ofzo, dat was het idee, dat zij iets voor jou zouden bedenken, maar je kon ook zelf zeggen ‘ik wil die doos’. En daar kon je dan ook een soort vragenlijstje invullen van wat je favoriete stuk was van het archief, en die hebben we ook nog. Dus er waren wel dingen waar je iets kon achterlaten.

FvA: we hebben ook veel feedback via de vrijwilligers gekregen. Daardoor hebben we soms een beetje bij kunnen sturen. Dat je wist van hier is iets onduidelijk of, maar ook juist in positieve zin, veel leuke reacties, en ze hadden ook een soort, per deelproject was er een soort logboek waarin vrijwilligers een overdracht naar elkaar hadden, maar ook een soort van positieve, of als er een punt van kritiek was, werd het genoteerd. Dat was voor ons ook zeker in de beginperiode, bijhouden, lezen, kijken of je daarop kon anticiperen.

### **Wat waren voor jullie de grootste obstakels of problemen?**

LD: ik denk een paar nieuwe dingen, zoals die vrijwilligers. Het was geen obstakel in die zin, maar we hadden het gewoon een beetje onderschat. Op een gegeven moment had je om alles te bemannen boven de honderd man nodig voor die hele tijd, het was acht maanden open. En je kan ook niet van een vrijwilliger vragen of die vijf dagen wil komen, dus we kwamen op een gegeven moment op een schema van, ‘okay hoe gaan we dit doen’? Maar op een gegeven moment hadden we een oproep gezet en toen kwamen er ook echt zoveel mensen, want die horen het woord mode en denken ‘leuk’. Dan zaten we met die mensen aan tafel, een paar sessies kwamen die langs, en dan dachten we ‘wow dit is een rijkdom hier aan tafel’, iedereen had iets met mode, iedereen had weer een andere kennis over mode. Dat vond ik echt heel leuk. Maar dat was echt een soort ding dat we dachten van ‘oh dit is echt een project op zich’, om ervoor te zorgen dat zij weten wat ze moeten zeggen op de vloer, het was best wel

onmogelijk. En natuurlijk kwamen er steeds nieuwe mensen, dus dat was echt iets wat een obstakel was, maar wat ook goed uitpakte. En het kwam ook door de tijd dat...

FvA: ik denk dat dat het voornaamste is, het initiële idee was er al best lang. Maar hoe het dan daadwerkelijk zou worden ingevuld, dat mensen echt heel last-minute, niet alle onderdelen, maar zeker de Foyer en zaal 1, was echt best wel op het laatste moment. Zaal 2 en 3 kenden een andere voorbereiding. Het is ook wel iets wat een beetje onze manier van werken is als museum of instituut, dat we dat eigenlijk vaak hebben, dat we vrij kort ... het is niet dat we twee jaar vooruit werken. Soms heb je wel een jaar dat je weet 'okay dit gaan we doen', maar toch moet het tot een soort kookpunt komen en alles samenkomen en dat was hier zeker bij en dat heeft op sommige punten wel ervoor gezorgd dat je al aan het produceren was terwijl eigenlijk sommige punten van de inhoud nog niet helemaal vaststonden. Ik denk dat dat in het proces soms wel lastig was. Maar aan de andere kant bracht het ook een soort energie, alle neuzen dezelfde kant op, zowel intern als extern, dat was ook wel de energie en de kracht van het project. Misschien als we hier twee jaar mee bezig waren geweest dat het ook een beetje... en ik denk ook wel het actief houden en het goed houden dat was ook wel iets om... vaak is een tentoonstelling heel statisch, dus het opent en dan dat is het. Dan ga je misschien nog een keer een klein dingetje aanpassen, maar nu was het constant in beweging, en wij hebben dat als best wel pittig ervaren.

LD: normaal is dat niet zo, want als de opening dan is geweest heb je een week vakantie en dan ga je naar het volgende project. Maar we zijn nog rustig twee maanden bezig geweest sowieso met allemaal dingen.

FvA: in die zin was het wel een intensief project, omdat we het zo...

LD: we hadden het best wel ambitieus gemaakt, in de zin van heel veel nieuwe dingen, we hadden nog nooit een stoffenwinkel gehad, of we hadden nog nooit 150 vrijwilligers gehad die bij elkaar moeten komen. Wij zijn dan met een groot team, maar alles dat nieuw is, is extra energie. En in januari wilden we een aantal dingen weer vernieuwen, en eigenlijk had je niet zoveel tijd tussen de opening en dan (Kerst), dus wij dachten okay daar gaan wij dan wel aan werken. Dus dat soort dingen.

### **Kwamen er mensen nog voor een tweede of derde keer terug als er dingen veranderden?**

LD: ik denk het wel soms ja.

FvA: ja dat was ook wel echt onze insteek ook om die Foyer actief te programmeren, het randprogramma, de stoffenwinkel, en de wisselingen. Het zal zeker niet het merendeel zijn geweest, maar er waren zeker mensen die teruggekomen zijn.

**Hoe kijken jullie nu naar de formule van ‘tijdelijk museum’ (nieuw idee voor tijdelijk design museum in Amsterdam)?**

FvA: ja, dat is nog niet in de openbaarheid, maar het idee is om dat eerst hier in huis letterlijk te laten landen, en het dan echt in Amsterdam te laten landen. Dus het idee van iets tijdelijks, een tijdelijk museum, dat is zeker iets wat wij aantrekkelijk vinden, wat voor ons werkt.

LD: het woord ‘tijdelijk’ maakt ook een goede energie bij iedereen los, want je denkt het is tijdelijk, ik weet niet, het werkt gewoon goed ofzo, een goede frisse energie.

FvA: en niemand kan tegen tijdelijk zijn. Dus als je echt iets wil veranderen of iets nieuws wil proberen, maar zegt we doen het tijdelijk, je krijgt veel beweging erdoor en ik denk dat dat heel leuk eraan is. Er zijn ook een aantal onderdelen die nog steeds hier een plek hebben. De Haberdashery is daar denk ik het beste voorbeeld van. Maar ik denk dat de Thursday Night die we nu hebben is ook wel een beetje een samenloop van dat het team van die Thursday Night toen ook op de ontwikkeling zat, is door het modemuseum voor mij wel echt volwassen geworden. Ook het werken met vrijwilligers, dus veel meer activiteiten op zaal en het ook gewoon eens echt om durven te draaien, ik denk dat dat wel blijvende ingrediënten zijn voor ons als instituut.

LD: dat team van Thursday Night is ook gewoon een leuk creatief, die wilden dus ook even wat anders, maar tijdens het *Tijdelijk Modemuseum* waren er ook avonden dat je ineens tussen de stellingkasten zat, dat soort dingen gingen zij veel meer doen en daar bood het museum ook wel ruimte voor. Dus dat was leuk en dat wordt nu ook nog wel steeds gedaan. Dan was er geen lezing meer in het auditorium, maar de Reading Room, en een avond ging Guus dan met een klein groepje door die geschiedenis heen lopen en vertellen, dus dat is allemaal heel anders en veel leuker dan dat je moet zitten en luisteren. Daar bood dit model ook wel plek voor, denk ik. We hebben nog wel veel mensen gevraagd, een deel, kunnen we een deel van het modemuseum nog ergens anders laten doorgaan? En juist doordat het zo tijdelijk was en zo snel tot wording kwam, dat kon dan net niet. Want dan was het speciaal voor deze zaal, en dan kunnen we het wel weer aanpassen, maar dan wordt dat juist een intensief proces. Dus misschien voor een volgende keer kan daar ook meer op worden geanticipeerd. Ik moet ook zeggen, we hadden aan het begin heel veel geluk met die mensen die dat archief uitleenden, die hadden gewoon die dozen een keer gekregen en die hadden nog nooit echt zo’n tentoonstelling gehad. Die kwamen ook hier die waren helemaal van ‘wat mooi dat jullie het zo hebben opgehangen, dat hebben we nog nooit gezien!’ Als je van een museum zou moeten lenen, moest het in een dichte kast met maar twintig lumen lichtintensiteit. Dus we hadden ook wel geluk met, en bij elke tentoonstelling wel, het team waarmee we werkten. Dat was

ook een goed model, dat we met allemaal flexibele mensen... bezoekers mochten ook met handschoentjes, dat mocht wel.

FvA: ik denk dat dat ook een bewuste keuze was, om niet uit te gaan van allemaal bruikleen.

Dat heeft er ook mee te maken dat we niet vanuit die auteurspositie... het ging helemaal niet om die topstukken.

LD: nee precies, het ging meer om de verzamelaar.

## **Appendix 2: interview *Out of Fashion***

### **Hoe ziet jullie collectie er nu uit en hoe is deze tot stand gekomen?**

Ninke Bloemberg (NB): we zijn het oudste stedelijk museum van Nederland, dus we hebben een paar jaar geleden het 175-jarige jubileum gevierd, heel bijzonder. En vanaf begin af aan zitten er fragmenten van mode bij, maar eigenlijk heeft die modecollectie een enorme boost gekregen in de tijd van Jonkvrouw De Jonge, die dus honderd jaar geleden in dienst is gekomen van het museum. Oorspronkelijk als archivaris, maar al snel ging ze haar netwerk aanschrijven, adellijke families, met de vraag om kledingstukken die ergens nog op zolder liggen aan het museum te doneren. En zij heeft echt een hele belangrijke bijdrage geleverd aan het eerste deel van het tot stand komen van deze collectie. We hebben nu ongeveer 10.000 stukken. Dus in zo'n honderd jaar tijd is die enorm uitgebreid. De laatste jaren, er wordt gewoon heel erg actief verzameld. Schenkingen, bruiklenen, aankopen.

### **Aan welke voorwaarden moeten stukken voldoen om opgenomen te worden in de collectie?**

NB: dat hangt er een beetje vanaf waar iemand mee komt. Wij verzamelen in principe aanstormend talent, die een beetje buiten de kaders van mode denken, dus die experimenteel ook zijn. Niet direct de haute couture bijvoorbeeld. En we verzamelen niet direct met terugwerkende kracht, dus dat wil zeggen met hiaten. Aan de andere kant komen af en toe nog wel hele leuke dingen van zolder, maar dan moet er een interessante link zijn met Utrecht bijvoorbeeld, als het om dat historische deel gaat. Want anders zijn er collega instellingen bij wie het ook heel goed kan.

### **Zijn er bepaalde voorwaarden waaraan jullie moeten voldoen bij het tentoonstellen van oude stukken, bepaalde ICOM voorwaarden?**

NB: nou wij hoeven geen verantwoording af te leggen aan iemand, helemaal niet, en sterker nog ik ben een bestuurslid van die club. Maar er zijn wel internationale guidelines, regels, niet echt regels, richtlijnen natuurlijk, maar in principe hebben we ons eigen beleidsplan, ons eigen beleid daarin, dat past wel binnen dat internationale concept en dat voldoet aan een aantal eisen, dat wil zeggen niet meer dan vijftig lumen licht, niet meer dan drie, vier, zes maanden tentoonstellen, een beetje afhankelijk van het stuk. Niet bij vocht, daglicht, beestjes,



et cetera. Maar in principe voldoen wij gewoon aan die ICOM richtlijnen, niet dat we een boete krijgen als we dat niet doen.

### **Wat is de motivatie voor het opzetten van deze tentoonstelling?**

NB: omdat Jonkvrouw De Jonge hier dus honderd jaar geleden is aangenomen en omdat ze zoveel heeft betekend voor de collectie. We maken natuurlijk heel erg veel modetentoonstellingen, waar vaak maar fragmentjes te zien zijn van onze collectie, we lenen ook veel uit aan andere tentoonstellingen. We hebben zo ontzeten veel moois, het werd echt tijd om dat een keer in de schijnwerpers te zetten. Het is dus echt een mix van 17<sup>e</sup> eeuw tot, er is een platform voor aanstormend talent, ontwerpers die hun visie op de toekomst ook laten zien. Dus dat is eigenlijk de concrete aanleiding, of excuus om een keer flink uit te pakken.

### **En verschillende thema's, hebben jullie je daar nog op gericht?**

NB: ja, de maker, de drager, de restaurateur en de visionair, zijn de thema's. En dan bij de maker kijken we zowel naar de maker als zijnde de ontwerper bijvoorbeeld, dus we zijn bij Ronald van der Kemp z'n atelier geweest, waar hij vertelt over zijn specifieke werkwijze en gebruik van stof et cetera, tot de maker als zijnde de conservator, de tentoonstellingsmaker, dus de meeste begrippen nemen we wat ruimer. Bij de drager gaat het dus om bijvoorbeeld de muzen van de modeontwerper, maar ook mevrouw Otten uit bladiebla, die een hele bijzondere japon heeft, dus ook echt letterlijk de dragers. Wat ik al zei, de muzen, en het museum zelf is misschien ook indirect een drager. We hebben bijvoorbeeld een ontwerp van Iris van Herpen direct van de catwalk gekocht, dus dat belandt dan niet zoals vroeger eerst bij iemand op zolder, maar dan direct in de collectie. Bij de restaurateur mogen mensen zelf aan de slag met het aankleden van poppen, met replica's van historische kledingstukken en er is een restaurateur aan het werk drie dagen lang. Dus die is echt onze collectie aan het restaureren, iets wat altijd achter scherm gebeurt.

### **En dat kunnen mensen ook bekijken?**

NB: dat kunnen mensen ook bekijken en over meepraten, ja.

### **Welke partijen zijn bij de tentoonstelling betrokken (vormgever?)**

NB: dat is Maison de Faux, die hebben de vormgeving gedaan. Ik geloof echt heilig in de synergie tussen inhoud en vorm. Het kan een vrij klassieke tentoonstelling worden, omdat we best wel wat historische kledingstukken laten zien, terwijl het onderwerp is heel actueel. Hoe

zij honderd jaar geleden al tegen dingen aankeken, dat is eigenlijk nog steeds hoe wij ernaar kijken. Dus dat vind ik dan ook belangrijk in de hele uitstraling van de tentoonstelling. Met hen raakte ik in gesprek en we begonnen eigenlijk direct te sparren en dat is eigenlijk een beetje organisch verlopen. Ik kies wel bij elke tentoonstelling een andere vormgever uit, omdat ik het heel leuk vind om talenten een podium te bieden. Ze zijn ook niet zo heel lang nog bezig. Inmiddels in de korte tijd dat wij elkaar nu kennen hebben ze twee keer aan de fashion week in New York meegedaan en in China, dus die gaan echt als een speer. En dan is dit denk ik voor hen ook weer een hele mooie kans, maar ook wel weer heel spannend, want een tentoonstelling vormgeven is toch wel weer iets anders dan kleding ontwerpen of een collectie ontwerpen. Maar een gevoel voor esthetiek is er zeker en het pakt tot nu toe heel erg goed uit.

### **Hoe zit het met subsidies en sponsoring?**

NB: nou we vragen eigenlijk voor elke tentoonstelling die we maken subsidies aan bij verschillende fondsen, dus dat is in dit geval het VSB Fonds en het Mondriaan Fonds, die hebben heel genereus bijgedragen. Sponsoring is iets wat zich aan het ontwikkelen is, maar daar is bij deze tentoonstelling niet direct sprake van, maar we werken wel met veel partijen samen. Bijvoorbeeld met Harper's Bazaar, maar dat is meer mediapartnerschap. Met Fashion Week en Future Generation met wie we dan in de laatste zaal dat wisselplatform hebben. En van het Rijksmuseum hebben we hele fijne paspoppen kunnen lenen. Zo zijn er op allerlei manieren samenwerkingen. ModeMuze uiteraard, heel belangrijk. En bruikleengevers, dat is een relatief klein onderdeel dit keer, maar zeker belangrijk.

### **En dit is de zaal van de drager?**

NB: ja, dus die wordt hier echt in de schijnwerpers gezet. Dus die drager die zie je dan ook daarboven staan.

### **Wie neemt de beslissingen / met wie werk je samen?**

NB: nou we werken in principe met een projectteam, intern dan, dus dat is iemand van marketing, van collectie, educatie. En dan werken we nu omdat dit heel erg veel voorwerk is geweest in het depot. Dat zijn zoveel verschillende silhouetten die aangekleed moeten worden. Het was een ontzettend goed team dat in het depot is bezig geweest om al die silhouetten kloppend te maken. Dingen zijn gerestaureerd. En dan hebben we natuurlijk een projectcoördinator, dus dat is eigenlijk de producer zou je kunnen zeggen.

### **Hebben jullie een bepaalde doelgroep in gedachten?**

NB: alle mode liefhebbers, die kunnen hier echt volledig losgaan. Ik denk dat ieder modehart hier wel sneller van moet gaan kloppen inderdaad. Dus dat is uiteindelijk wel de belangrijkste doelgroep. En jong en oud, ik vind leeftijd niet zo heel relevant.

### **Wat willen jullie teweegbrengen bij het publiek, wat moeten ze ervan mee naar huis nemen?**

NB: nou wat ik heel interessant vind, met het doen van het onderzoek, dat heel veel dingen nu worden aangekaart als actueel, terwijl ik diezelfde discussies ook honderd jaar geleden tegenkom, dat vind ik gewoon heel interessant. Het bevragen van het toen, het bevragen van het nu en ook dat kruislings presenteren van de tijden. Van sommige kledingstukken zie je natuurlijk heel duidelijk van dit is een bepaald tijdsbeeld. Nu is het wat eclectischer. Ik kreeg laatst ook van iemand de vraag die zei 'ja die trends, die modes, volgen die elkaar nu sneller op dan in het verleden?'. En toen zei ik, er zijn natuurlijk modehuizen die vier keer per jaar met een collectie komen en ook de ketens zoals de Zara, de H&M die eigenlijk gewoon permanent nieuwe collecties presenteren, maar aan het gevoel is eigenlijk niks veranderd. Dus er zijn wel een paar kenmerken veranderd, zoals media uiteraard, vroeger was er geen internet, dus dat is wel sneller gegaan, dat als er iets is dat dat wordt gelivestreamd en dat je het meteen ziet, maar het gevoel, in de 18<sup>e</sup> eeuw verzuchtte men ook al, 'och die mode die steeds verandert' en 'wat gaat het toch snel', dus in die zin is er qua beleving eigenlijk niks nieuws.

### **Zijn jullie meer gericht op het aangaan van een dialoog met het publiek of meer van kennisoverdracht?**

NB: een dialoog met het publiek vind ik in die zin lastig, want we hebben niet hier iemand staan die continu... we proberen wel op verschillende manieren het publiek te betrekken, wel vrij actief, zoals met de restaurateur, zoals met het zelf doen, er worden verschillende avonden georganiseerd waar er gesprekken zijn met modeontwerpers, met samenstellers, met partners ook, dus in die zin dat zijn wel momenten zeg maar. We gaan ook nog een actie samen met Lowlands doen. Als je het dan hebt over de drager willen we op zoek gaan naar de meest originele festivaloutfit. Dat is ook wel iets wat iets zegt over de tijdsgeest. We denken dat we allemaal een individu zijn en ondertussen lopen we er allemaal heel gestyleerd en nonchalant bij. Daarom vind ik het interessant. Dus we gaan echt op Lowlands scouten en dat komt dan uiteindelijk ook hier in de tentoonstelling. We hebben natuurlijk een oproep gedaan met de

dekbedjas. Dus in die zin zoeken we wel verschillende manieren, betrokkenheid van het publiek op. Maar dat hoeft natuurlijk niet permanent, uiteindelijk moet de tentoonstelling het ook gewoon doen en moeten mensen ook vooral lekker ondergedompeld worden en er is ontzettend veel te lezen, maar mensen mogen ook gewoon lekker kijken. We hebben echt voor alles, dat is vrij uitzonderlijk, bij alles wat er staat is er een tekst van 150 woorden, dat doen we niet altijd. Maar ik vond dat voor deze tentoonstelling essentieel. Waarom is iets in deze collectie terecht gekomen? Wie heeft het gedragen? Wat is het voor bijzonder verhaal, bijzonder materiaal?

### **Zijn jullie binnen je begroting gebleven?**

NB: dat is altijd een uitdaging. Sommige kosten vallen weer heel erg mee, andere die vallen toch weer anders uit dan je had verwacht. Je probeert natuurlijk een zo goed mogelijke begroting te maken en zoveel mogelijk vooraf offertes op te vragen zodat je een beetje weet waar het over gaat. Maar op de een of andere manier komen er altijd weer dingen [waar je niet over na hebt gedacht]. Maar dat is natuurlijk het werken, het creëren, dat hoort bij creëren.

### **Is er een mogelijkheid voor het publiek om ergens feedback of een reactie achter te laten?**

NB: nee, we hebben nu niet echt een plek, met een boek, dat is heel klassiek natuurlijk, maar soms hebben we wel zo'n *people's wall* waar mensen iets kunnen, dat hebben we er nu niet in. Dus eigenlijk via de gewone wegen, website, etc.

### **Wat zijn de obstakels die jullie tot nu toe zijn tegengekomen?**

NB: de meeste hebben we hopelijk wel getackeld. Dat kunnen van die kleine dingen zijn als, ja je komt altijd duizend dingen tegen. Wat ik al zei, we hebben ontzettend veel tekst, daar hebben we onszelf een beetje op verkeken, en we hebben toch een boekje erbij gemaakt, en dat zijn ook dingen waar ik ontzettend blij mee ben. Maar goed, je bent aan het schrijven en je moet het redigeren en iemand anders redigeert het, dat is echt ongelooflijk tijdrovend, ja er zijn altijd wel duizend dingetjes waar je tegenaan loopt. Het voordeel dat we nu hebben juist omdat het eigen collectie is, is dat in principe een soort van generale repetitie doorpas in het decor geweest. Dus ondanks dat het heel veel stukken zijn, meer dan honderd stukken, en als het goed is zijn de meeste dingen wel getackeld. En ook hier blijf je natuurlijk nog wat dingen tegenkomen, maar het zou goed moeten gaan. Meer als extra cadeautje, als mensen binnenkomen lopen ze door gordijnen, dat is iets wat we van tevoren niet bedacht hebben,

maar we hadden de vormgevers gevraagd om andere tekeningen en daar hadden ze geen foto van dus toen hebben ze een andere ruimte gebruikt, van 'hey dat is een leuk idee eigenlijk', dus dat zijn dingen die we wel weer hebben kunnen realiseren. En qua tegenvallers of iets, ik moet zeggen dat het me nu met de uitvoering heel erg meevalt. Het blijft altijd moeilijk als je ziet hoe dingen zijn op de tekeningen en hoe ze dan in het echt zijn, of dat qua verhouding een beetje klopt . deze ruimtes zijn heel fijn, want dan kun je iedere keer weer een andere metamorfose. Ik zit even te denken. Ja, iets waar ik ook nog wel heel blij mee ben is, we wilden Modemuze ook echt een platform geven en we kunnen nu de vitrines van OBA, die worden nu ook gebruikt, dus die komen hierboven te staan, dus die krijgen echt een soort eigen tentoonstelling, dat is ook wel heel erg leuk.