

DISPLAYING FASHION: THE SCENOGRAPHY OF FASHION IN RETAIL AND  
MUSEUMS

by

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## **Abstract**

### **DISPLAYING FASHION: THE SCENOGRAPHY OF FASHION IN RETAIL AND MUSEUMS**

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Fashion retailers and fashion exhibitions are at a pivotal moment in 2019 as both accommodate changes including the decrease of in-person shopping and the increased visitorship of fashion exhibitions. At the heart of both spaces, however, is the display of fashion –whether simple or grandiose. This project looks further at the similarities of displaying fashion in both spaces, with possible consequences and potential futures for each space. It brings together extensive literature and field visits to nearly 100 different spaces, with a creative installation of a third type of space integrating both museums and retailers as a possible solution for the future.

*Keywords:* fashion retail; fashion exhibitions; fashion museology; exhibition design; retail design; experience economy

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

“All department stores will become museums, and all museums will become department stores.”

—Andy Warhol<sup>1</sup>

What is the relationship between these two spaces—fashion retailers and fashion museums? Have Andy Warhol’s sentiments about these spaces manifested themselves today? The modern iteration of public museum buildings<sup>2</sup> and retail department stores was founded in the mid-nineteenth century, with many of today’s “great” museums such as the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in London opening in 1852 as well as the establishment what is often considered the first department store, Le Bon Marché, in Paris, in 1838.<sup>3</sup> Both of these spaces have one similar goal—to display objects; albeit, they are displaying objects for different purposes (selling and learning). Both spaces have included fashion in their display and collections since their inceptions.<sup>4</sup> Although the histories of each of these types of institutions have diverged in subsequent years, the display of fashion continues unabated in each.

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<sup>1</sup> The exact origin of this quote could unfortunately not be sourced, although it is attributed to Andy Warhol, who did work as a window dresser at Bonwit Teller in 1961. It has been quoted (without any change) in several publications including: Lucy Fischer, *Designing Women: Cinema, Art Deco and the Female Form*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 17; Annamma Joy, Jeff Jianfeng Wang, Tsang-Sing Chan, John F. Sherry Jr., and Geng Cui, “M(Art)Worlds: Consumer Perceptions of How Luxury Brand Stores Become Art Institutions,” *Journal of Retailing* 90, no.3 (2014): 350; Maria Logkizidou, Paul Bottomley, Rob Angell, and Heiner Evanschitzky, “Why Museological Merchandise Displays Enhance Luxury Product Evaluations,” *Journal of Retailing*, xxx, 2018 (article still in press); James B. Mitchell, *Branded Nation*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 227; John Potvin, “Fashion and the Art Museum: When Giorgio Armani Went to the Guggenheim,” *Journal of Curatorial Studies*, 1, no.1 (2012): 47; and Deborah Solomon, “Is the Go-Go Guggenheim, Going Going...,” *New York Times Magazine*, (30 June 2002): 41.

<sup>2</sup> The history of “museums” dates for centuries before the mid-1900s, with early examples including Ptolemy’s Library at Alexandria in the third century BCE, Lorenzo de Medici’s collection of art and art objects in the fifteenth century, or the curio cabinets of wealthy scholars in the seventeenth century. Instead, the twentieth century is considered to be “The Museum Age” with the rapid increase of public museums in the western world. For reference, see Geoffrey D. Lewis, “History of Museums,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 19 Oct 1998, accessed on 14 May 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-museums-398827>.

<sup>3</sup> Jay Cantor, “Art and Industry: Reflections on the Role of the American Museum in Encouraging Innovation in the Decorative Arts” in *Technological Innovation and the Decorative Arts*, ed. Ian M.G. Quimby and Polly Anne Earl, Winterthur Conference Report 1973, (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1974), 332.

<sup>4</sup> Valerie Steele, “Museum Quality: The Rise of the Fashion Exhibition,” *Fashion Theory* 12, no.1 (2008): 8.



Initially, putting fashion stores and museums in dialogue may seem to be completely contradictory. After all, fashion is ephemeral and transient, changing regularly every season. Museum objects (art, artifacts, etc.) are the complete opposite given that they are held in museum collections and theoretically preserved forever as status symbols.<sup>5</sup> Through the twentieth century, the display of fashion in both contexts began to converge with boutiques, becoming spaces for art and the rise of fashion exhibitions.<sup>6</sup> Thinking of both retail and museum spaces as places of consumption (of knowledge and goods, respectively), is it possible today to have a singular space that can serve both? In the digital age, one might argue that there is no longer a need for either space given the accessibility of information and goods on the Internet. While some skeptics might argue that museums are outdated and not relevant,<sup>7</sup> nearly 1.7 million people attended in 2018 the Metropolitan Museum of Art's (The Met) *Heavenly Bodies* exhibition.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, many people believed in the "death of retail" as it was being replaced with e-commerce sites delivering goods almost instantly to your door.<sup>9</sup> Instead, both physical spaces still exist and are thriving, and part of that is undoubtedly the *experience* of each space that people long for. For example, popular e-commerce fashion brand, Everlane, who began conducting solely online sales and insisted that it was the only way they would conduct business, opened their first brick and mortar space in New York City in 2017 with lineups to get into the

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<sup>5</sup> Adam Geczy and Vicki Karaminas, "Art and Fashion" in *Fashion and Art*, ed. Adam Geczy and Vicki Karaminas, (London: Berg, 2012), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Geczy and Karaminas, 8-9.

<sup>7</sup> Vince Dziekan, *Virtuality and the Art of the Exhibition: Curatorial Design for the Multimedial Museum*, (Chicago: Intellect, 2012), 9.

<sup>8</sup> The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "1,659,647 Visitors to Costume Institute's *Heavenly Bodies* Show at Met Fifth Avenue and Met Cloisters Make It the Most Visited Exhibition in The Met's History," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 11 Oct 2018, <https://www.metmuseum.org/press/news/2018/heavenly-bodies-most-visited-exhibition>

<sup>9</sup> Phil Wahba, "The Death of Retail is Greatly Exaggerated," *Fortune*, 9 June 2017, accessed 15 May 2018, <http://fortune.com/2017/06/09/retail-store-closings-ecommerce/>.

store regularly due to the “focus on the shopping experience first.”<sup>10</sup> Pine and Gilmore in *The Experience Economy* define that when one purchases an “experience” it comes with memorable events similar to a theatrical play. They argue that experiences do not necessarily have to be the same as entertainment, instead “companies stage an experience whenever they engage customers, connecting them in a personal, memorable way.”<sup>11</sup>

The design of these spaces is integral to creating memorable experiences. While Walter Benjamin might often be credited for his writing on the “aura” or a “strange, connective tissue of space and time;” the concept is derived from classical architecture and aesthetics that value the beautiful, the sublime, and the atmosphere/aura.<sup>12</sup> Atmospheres and their study examine “how one feels in an environment.”<sup>13</sup> Describing her retail space (and exhibition space at The Met in 2017), Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons said: “My clothes and the space they inhabit are inseparable—they are one and the same. They convey the same vision, the same message, and the same sense of values.”<sup>14</sup> The study of the scenography or the design of the space,<sup>15</sup> environment, and accompanying display of fashion is just as important in the study of fashion, fashion exhibitions, and fashion retail. They are all a part of the total experience of fashion.

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<sup>10</sup> Lauren Sherman, “Everlane’s Five Tactics for Winning at Physical Retail,” *Business of Fashion*, 21 Mar 2018, accessed 15 May 2018, <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/professional/everlanes-five-tactics-for-winning-at-physical-retail>. In my experiences of visiting Everlane on several occasions in September 2018, I waited upwards of thirty minutes to get into the store.

<sup>11</sup> B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore, *The Experience Economy*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1999), 2-3.

<sup>12</sup> Gernot Böhme, “Contribution to the Critique of the Aesthetic Economy,” *Thesis Eleven*, 73 (2003): 78.

<sup>13</sup> Böhme, 78.

<sup>14</sup> Rei Kawakubo, 2017, quoted in “Rei Kawakubo / Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, exhibition guide, 2017, in author’s possession.

<sup>15</sup> Although “scenography” is often a term used solely in performance studies to denote the study of the visual elements of theatre including but not limited to the scenery, lighting, costumes, movement; its application to the study of exhibition and retail designs are included in Sara K Schneider, *Vital Mummies: Performance Design for the Show Window Mannequin*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), and Jeffrey Horsley, “A Fashion ‘Muséographie’: The Delineation of Innovative Presentation Modes at ModeMuseum, Antwerp,” *Fashion Theory* 19, no.1 (2015): 43-66.

The correlation between the scenography of fashion displayed in both museum exhibitions and retails is not a new concept or one that previous scholars have ignored; however, it has not been given adequate attention. Specifically, the implications of both spaces mirroring each other in their display of fashion need to be given proper consideration, and this display begins with the obvious placement of fashion on mannequins. For the museum, using mannequins is beneficial to attracting inexperienced visitors since they already know the visual language of clothes on mannequins from any previous retail encounter. Likewise, many retail stores have benefitted in sales from mimicking a museum setting, whether that is using a “white-cube” interior, minimalist stock, ways of educating about products, or using company heritage as a marketing tool.<sup>16</sup> Theodor Adorno wrote: “The fusion of culture and entertainment that is taking place today leads not only to a depravation of culture, but inevitably to an intellectualization of amusement.”<sup>17</sup> This critical evaluation of the similarities between commerce and culture has discouraged investigation into their parallels.

This research project looks at both contemporary fashion exhibitions and retail displays that I have visited since beginning in the fall of 2017 (see Appendix A and B) supplemented with a few other contemporary examples supplemented. Using auto-ethnographic methods and existing literature, I will look at their similarities which will lead broader examination of their role within contemporary society. This research was then enhanced by a creative installation that truly challenges these spaces by using techniques found in both. Ultimately, the goal is for visitors to ask: “Is this a museum? Is this a store? *[How] Can it be both?*”

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<sup>16</sup> Joy, *et al.*, “M(Art)Worlds,” 347-64.

<sup>17</sup> Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” in *Stardom and Celebrity: A Reader*, ed. Sean Redmond and Su Holmes, (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2007).

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

In understanding the correlated fields of fashion museums and fashion retail, it is imperative to begin with an exploration of the expansive literature already written. While some scholars, including Alexandra Palmer,<sup>18</sup> touched on the intersection of these two spaces, there has been no formal scholarship looking at the parallels and its implications. There is some research on the relationship between museums and retail spaces, both without a specific focus on “fashion”. In 1974, Jay Cantor presented at the Winterthur Conference on how museums (specifically The Met.) were able to help innovate in the decorative arts, in particular through the dissemination of taste in design.<sup>19</sup> Cantor wrote about how the museum was essentially able to educate the shopper to be more discerning. Although the display of objects has similar origins of museums, department stores, and world’s fairs as Neil Harris explained, they have subsequently diverged, only to maybe be brought back together today.<sup>20</sup> Throughout this literature review, I will bring together scholarship written on museology and retail theory, with themes of fashion, environmental design, commerce and culture, and visitor experiences.

### Museology

To look at fashion in the museum, it is important to begin to look at museums more broadly and to understand their importance and role in creating culture today. Museums as institutions have a long and convoluted history dating back to the Library of Alexandria (c.300-200 BCE) to cabinets of curiosities (c. 1600 CE) to the age of the museum (19<sup>th</sup> C).<sup>21</sup> Janet

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<sup>18</sup> Alexandra Palmer, “Untouchable: Creating Desire and Knowledge in Museum Costume and Textile Exhibitions,” *Fashion Theory* 12, no.1 (2008)

<sup>19</sup> Cantor, “Art and Industry,” 332.

<sup>20</sup> Neil Harris “Museums, Merchandising, and Popular Taste: The Struggle for Influence,” in *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, “History of Museums.”

Marstine outlined this evolution by chronicling a brief history of the museum but then articulating its current role in creating culture.<sup>22</sup> Marstine provides an updated overview of museum theory in the twenty first century based on traditional museum studies. She is joined by other contemporary scholars such as Graham Black, Sharon Macdonald, and Gordon Fyfe writing about how museums need to change in the twenty-first century to adapt to changing societies, technologies, and more diverse audiences.<sup>23</sup> Peter Vergo's edited volume *The New Museology*, from 1989, remains a highly influential text including a chapter by Peter Greenhalgh on the "entertainment" of exhibitions<sup>24</sup> and Nick Merriman on visiting museums as an act of culture.<sup>25</sup> Visiting museums is often closely connected with travel and tourism, which allows visitors to learn about other cultures.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, museums often heighten the spectacle of cultures to attract visitors, including tourists, which has proven to be an attractive lure but can also bring a series of problems including false interpretations through spectacle.<sup>27</sup>

Museums exist within a larger knowledge system including academia, archives, and libraries.<sup>28</sup> However, they are separated most distinctly from these other institutions by their reliance on objects and their interpretation—whether those objects are fashion, art, taxidermy,

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<sup>22</sup> Janet Marstine, *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing 2006), 19-20.

<sup>23</sup> Graham Black, *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-First Century*, (New York: Routledge, 2012). And Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe (eds.), *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World*, (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996).

<sup>24</sup> Paul Greenhalgh, "Education, Entertainment and Politics: Lessons from the Great Exhibitions," in *The New Museology*, ed. Peter Vergo, (London: Reaktion Books, 1989).

<sup>25</sup> Nick Merriman, "Museum Visiting as a Cultural Phenomenon," in *The New Museology*, ed. Peter Vergo, (London: Reaktion Books, 1989).

<sup>26</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

<sup>27</sup> Deborah Cherry and Fintan Cullen "Spectacle and Display: Setting the Terms," in *Spectacle and Display*, ed. Deborah Cherry and Fintan Cullen (Malden: Blackwell Publishing 2008). And Ivan Karp and Fred Wilson, "Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums," in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne, (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Kirsten Latham and John Simmons, *Foundations of Museum Studies*, (Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited, 2014).

rocks, artifacts, etc.<sup>29</sup> That is why many museum scholars have devoted literature on objects and their interpretation and display. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill wrote a seminal text on the interpretation of objects in the museum.<sup>30</sup> Visitors bring their own knowledge and lived experiences to make meaning for themselves in museums.<sup>31</sup> Part of the interpretation of objects is the dialogue that exists between objects, and sometimes those objects do not even need to be in the same museum as Malraux's important theoretical text posits.<sup>32</sup> In attempts to help preserve and protect objects, museums often limit the non-visual senses, specifically touch, which can often leave visitors wanting more; Susan Dudley explores the interpretation of different objects within museums using limited senses.<sup>33</sup> Finally, using objects and fashion as an example, museums can be viewed as a type of "contemporary communication media."<sup>34</sup>

Temporary exhibition design is an important part of many contemporary museums, in contrast to permanent static displays. Fashion is generally always displayed in an exhibition format due to its fragility and therefore can only be displayed for limited periods of time for preservation reasons. David Dernie, an exhibition designer and architect, focused on the general aesthetic and sensory design of exhibitions using case studies from a variety of types of museums (art, design, history, science, etc.) in his 2006 book.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, Tom Klobe walks readers through the steps of building an exhibition and things that one needs to consider when

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<sup>29</sup> Latham and Simmons, *Foundations*.

<sup>30</sup> Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>31</sup> Chris Dorsett, "Making Meaning beyond Display," in *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*, ed. Susan Dudley, (London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>32</sup> André Malraux, *Museum without Walls*, trans. Stuart Gilbert and Francis Price, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967).

<sup>33</sup> Susan Dudley, "Museum Materialities: Objects, Sense and Feeling," in *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*, ed. Susan Dudley, (London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>34</sup> Julia Petrov, "Cross Purposes: Museum Display and Material Cultures," *CrossCurents* (June 2012): 219-234.

<sup>35</sup> David Dernie, *Exhibition Design*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006).

designing any exhibition.<sup>36</sup> Other scholars have focused on theoretical models of how exhibitions are constructed for the viewer's experience. The anthology *Thinking through Exhibitions* includes essays on how to integrate viewer interaction, accessibility, and creating meaningful moments for learning in exhibitions from a variety of types of museums.<sup>37</sup> Like any design field, creativity needs to be at the helm to create impactful exhibition design, and Norris and Tisdale's book provides a guidebook for the creative process.<sup>38</sup> As museums exist within the digital age, there is an important dialogue on how properly to include technology in exhibitions so that they enhance the experience.<sup>39</sup>

Contemporary museums have slowly been shifting to not only put objects on display and create exhibitions, but also to consider the audience and the visitor's experience in the museum. Visitor experience is a growing field within museums, and often similar to retail consumer research. Atmospherics, a concept used in retail design and consumer studies of space, can be applied in museums to help design spaces while engaging visitor's senses.<sup>40</sup> Using Gilmore and Pine's influential text, *The Experience Economy*, Radder and Han applied the four realms of the experience economy in attempt to enhance visitor experiences within several South African museums with great success.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, Tiina Roppola developed four processes for impactful museum experiences—framing, resonating, channeling, and broadening.<sup>42</sup> Volker Kirchberg and Martin Tröndle have composed an extensive literature review of previous studies and essays on

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<sup>36</sup> Tom Klobe, *Exhibitions: Concept, Planning and Design*, (Washington, D.C.: The AAM Press, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Reesa Greenberg, Bruce Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne, eds., *Thinking about Exhibitions*, (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>38</sup> Linda Norris and Rainey Tisdale, *Creativity in Museum Practice*, (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2014).

<sup>39</sup> Dziekan, *Virtuality*.

<sup>40</sup> Regan Forrest, "Museum Atmospherics: The Role of the Exhibition Environment in the Visitor Experience," *Visitor Studies* 16, no.2 (2013): 201-216.

<sup>41</sup> Laetitia Radder and Xiliang Han, "An Examination of the Museum Experience Based on Pine and Gilmore's Experience Economy Realms," *The Journal of Applied Research* 31, no.2 (2015): 455-470.

<sup>42</sup> Tiina Roppola, *Designing for the Museum Visitor Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

museum experience with a focus less on the design of the museum but emphasizing the need to study the actual visitor and their unique experience, which is where they highlight a major gap.<sup>43</sup> They argue that when studies are being done on the psychology of environmental design in the museum, the results are infrequently shared directly with those designing the exhibitions and instead held by museum executives.<sup>44</sup> However, since their review of literature, a recent study has been done by consumer behaviourists to study museum-goers' experiences. The focus of the study was to create a way for museums to balance intended versus realized experiences in the museum experience.<sup>45</sup> Taking methods used previously in other fields, such as retail management, has proven to be valuable in studying museum experiences.

To begin to understand fashion museology, it is important to look at the history and evolution of fashion exhibitions, especially given that in their current state they are relatively young. Valerie Steele is one of the leaders of fashion museology and the study of fashion exhibitions. In 2008, she organized a pivotal symposium at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York on the subject along with an accompanying Special Issue of *Fashion Theory* devoted to the subject. Over a decade later in 2019, she would bring back a similar slate of guests to speak at another fashion museology symposium. Included in the 2008 edition is her essay on "The Rise of the Fashion Exhibition," which chronicles its growth; although in the decade since, it has grown even larger.<sup>46</sup> With this rise in the popularity and spectacle of these exhibitions,

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<sup>43</sup> Volker Kirchberg and Martin Tröndle, "Experiencing Exhibitions: A Review of Studies on Visitor Experiences in Museums," *Curator* 55, no.4 (2012): 435-452.

<sup>44</sup> Kirchberg and Tröndle, "Experiencing Exhibitions."

<sup>45</sup> Frederic Ponsignon, Francois Durrieu, and Tatiana Bouzdine-Chameeva, "Customer Experience Design: A Case Study in the Cultural Sector," *Journal of Service Management* 28, no.4 (2017): 763-787.

<sup>46</sup> Steele, "Museum Quality."



there is accompanying criticism that they are purely entertainment.<sup>47</sup> Undoubtedly, The Met and its Costume Institute can be partially credited for the most recent rise in popularity of fashion exhibitions especially through its annual fundraiser partnered with *Vogue* to be one of the largest nights in fashion every May, which has been featured in a full-length documentary.<sup>48</sup> Judith Clark and Amy de la Haye, both fashion curators and scholars, have chronicled the evolution of the fashion exhibition, marking 1971's exhibition at the V&A curated by Cecil Beaton as a turning point for the medium as it set a precedent for extravagant, scenographic exhibitions that Vreeland and others would continue to build on.<sup>49</sup>

While fashion museology continues to grow as a field of research, with scholars dedicated to the field, it has relied heavily on curators and museum professionals to write on the subject. Anne Buck wrote the original landmark text, *Costume: A Handbook for Textile Curators*.<sup>50</sup> Although written 60 years ago and slightly outdated in parts, it is still regarded as an incredible resource for displaying fashion in a museum and commonly still cited in most fashion museology texts. Other texts have followed similar structures of focusing on the practical concerns of collecting fashion, caring for it, and displaying it within museums.<sup>51</sup> These texts are not necessarily critical of fashion exhibitions, instead providing a fundamental practical

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<sup>47</sup> Suleman Anaya, "Are Blockbuster Museum Shows Helping or Hurting Smaller Fashion Exhibitions?" *Business of Fashion* (10 June 2013), <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/are-blockbuster-museum-shows-helping-or-hurting-smaller-fashion-exhibitions>.

<sup>48</sup> Harold Koda and Jessica Glasscock, "The Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: An Evolving History," 21-32; Hamish Bowles, *Vogue & the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute: Parties, Exhibitions, People*, (New York: Abrams, 2014); and *The First Monday in May*, directed by Andrew Rossi (2016; New York: Magnolia Pictures) film.

<sup>49</sup> Judith Clark and Amy de la Haye with Jeff Horsley, *Exhibition Fashion: Before and After 1971* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

<sup>50</sup> Anne Buck, *Costume—A Handbook for Textile Curators*, (London: The Museum Association, 1958).

<sup>51</sup> Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002). And Naomi Tarrant, *Collecting Costume: The Care and Display of Clothes and Accessories*, (London: George Allen, 1983).

background to fashion in museum collections including topics such as display, backdrops, lighting, and textual panels.

These foundational texts have often influenced contemporary essays on fashion collections and the fashion exhibition. Marie Riegels Melchior and Birgitta Svensson's collected anthology on fashion and museums includes similar essays as those previously mentioned that focus on the basic collecting and display of fashion in museums (both historical and contemporary).<sup>52</sup> These essays are complemented by some contemporary issues surrounding the display of fashion including contemporary fashion, gender and class representation, and autobiographical exhibitions.<sup>53</sup> More recently, the discussion of contemporary issues and aspects of displaying fashion continues but from a wider variety of scholars including curators, conservators, and exhibition designers.<sup>54</sup> Given the delicacy and fragility of fashion and textiles, many scholars' focus remains on how to display historical garments, including their preservation, conservation, storage, and general care.<sup>55</sup>

While the field of fashion curation continues to grow, there unfortunately appears to be less emphasis placed on writing about the design of the exhibitions—beyond curation or historical dress mounting. The design of fashion exhibitions is an extremely important part of the experience, yet many fashion museology scholars and practitioners focus on exhibition curation instead. Alexandra Palmer, from the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), writes, however,

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<sup>52</sup> Anne-Sophie Hjemdahl, "Exhibiting the Body, Dress, and Time in Museums: A Historical Perspective," 108-124; and Kristen Toftegaard, "Collecting Practice: Designmuseum Denmark," 139-151, both in Marie Riegels Melchior and Birgitta Svensson, eds., *Fashion and Museums: Theory and Practice* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

<sup>53</sup> Melchior and Svensson, *Fashion and Museums*.

<sup>54</sup> Annamari Vänskä and Hazel Clark, eds., *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond*, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017).

<sup>55</sup> Mary Brooks and Dinah Eastop (eds.), *Refashioning and Redress: Conserving and Displaying Dress*, (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2016). Patricia Cunningham and Sarah Scaturro, "Curating Costume/Exhibiting Fashion," *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture* 2, no.1 (2015): 5-9. And Karen DePauw, *The Care and Display of Historic Clothing*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).

as a curator on the importance of design from her experiences<sup>56</sup> as well as makes a point to include it as an integral part of an exhibition review.<sup>57</sup> Originally an architect, Judith Clark claims to be an exhibition maker as she often both curates and designs her exhibitions and has written on the process of exhibition making for fashion.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Jeffrey Horsley approaches the field from theatre design, and has contributed to the study of the presentation of dress.<sup>59</sup> Rather recently, Julia Petrov also wrote a wonderful text looking not just at curation, but what a fashion exhibition is including its history and its design relating it to both theatre and retail.<sup>60</sup> This segment of fashion museology needs further attention, especially a formal process for studying the design of fashion exhibitions (as opposed to making fashion exhibitions).

Although fashion is found in a variety of types of museums, it continues to be compared and contrasted with traditional “fine arts”. This dialogue exists but is not a focus for my research. One of the immediate examples is the Giorgio Armani exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, which John Potvin chronicles in his essay.<sup>61</sup> The correlation between and influence of fashion and art on each other is also a field that has been explored including works by both Alice Mackrell and Nancy Troy.<sup>62</sup> The subject has been treated by fashion journalists, such as Suzy Menkes, who weighed in on the topic in the *New York Times*, criticizing fashion’s attachment to art.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Palmer, “Untouchable,” 32-33.

<sup>57</sup> Alexandra Palmer, “Reviewing Fashion Exhibitions,” *Fashion Theory* 12, no.1 (2008): 121-26.

<sup>58</sup> Judith Clark, “Props and Other Attributes: Fashion and Exhibition-making,” in Vänskä and Clark, *Fashion Curating*, 91-104.

<sup>59</sup> Horsley, “A Fashion ‘Muséographie’,” 43-66.

<sup>60</sup> Julia Petrov, *Fashion, History, Museums*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

<sup>61</sup> Potvin, “Fashion and the Art Museum.”

<sup>62</sup> Alice Mackrell, *Art and Fashion: The Impact of Art on Fashion and Fashion on Art* (London: Batsford, 2005). And Nancy J. Troy, *Couture Culture: A Study in Modern Art and Fashion* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003).

<sup>63</sup> Suzy Menkes, “Gone Global: Fashion as Art?” *New York Times* (04 July 2011), <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/05/fashion/is-fashion-really-museum-art.html>.

## Culture and Commerce

Adjacent to museum studies (and retail studies), is research on the culture industry or “selling culture.” Theodor Adorno grounds the field with his writing on the culture industry connecting culture with popular entertainment.<sup>64</sup> Within fashion exhibitions, this “entertainment” aspect is often criticized (sometimes justifiably) as exhibitions attempt to create theatrical spectacles to draw crowds without rigorous scholarship or accuracy, as was the case with Diana Vreeland’s exhibitions at The Met.<sup>65</sup> These types of exhibitions could potentially be compared to contemporary exhibition installations designed purely to attract visitors to take pictures for social media.<sup>66</sup> In discussing cultural industries in relation to retail studies, fashion retailers have recognized the importance of mirroring the culture industry ultimately to sell their product whether that is faking a history like Hollister,<sup>67</sup> designing stores to look like museums to increase the value of ordinary products,<sup>68</sup> or selling art in traditional fashion retailers.<sup>69</sup>

Within the culture industry, brand museums need to be examined especially in contrast to both traditional museums and retailers. Ultimately, a brand museum is a tool for any type of brand to share the story that it wants to—part marketing and PR tool, part traditional museum.<sup>70</sup> Brand museums can also transition to flagship brand stores, often without consumers really

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<sup>64</sup> Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, (London: Routledge, 1992). And Adorno and Horkheimer, “The Culture Industry”; and Adorno and Horkheimer, “The Culture Industry,”

<sup>65</sup> Debora Silverman, *Selling Culture: Bloomingdale’s, Diana Vreeland, and the New Aristocracy of Taste in Reagan’s America*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

<sup>66</sup> Sophie Haigney, “The Museums of Instagram” *The New Yorker*, September 16, 2018), <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-museums-of-instagram>.

<sup>67</sup> Dave Eggers, “The Actual Hollister,” *The New Yorker*, (20 July 2015) <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/07/20/the-actual-hollister>.

<sup>68</sup> Joy, *et al.*, “(M)ArtWorlds,” 347-364.

<sup>69</sup> Annette Welkamp, “Would You Like a Painting with Your Trunk, Madam? Why are There Art Galleries in Fashion Stores?” *Clothing Cultures* 2, no.3 (2015): 275-286.

<sup>70</sup> Damien Chaney, Mathilde Pulh, and Rémi Mencarelli, “When the Arts Inspire Businesses: Museums as a Heritage Redefinition Tool of Brands,” *Journal of Business Research* 85 (2018): 452-458.

recognizing the difference, as is the case with the Coca Cola museum in Atlanta, Georgia.<sup>71</sup>

Similar spaces have been created by luxury fashion brands, a sector that often celebrates heritage and reinvention of the past more than others do. Both Salvatore Ferragamo and Gucci have brand museums in Italy that work to sell the image and heritage of the brands, as well as Yves Saint Laurent in Paris (which I visited for this project) and in Marrakech.<sup>72</sup>

## **Retail**

The literature on fashion merchandising is undoubtedly more established given its place in university or college programs with a more technical focus often presented alongside fashion design programs; this inclusion is probably because it is attached closer to business and therefore seems more profitable. Several key introductory texts come from the educational aspect of merchandising and present themselves as textbooks with the basics of the field but lack any real critical analysis of the field. One of the most integral of these is Judith Bell's *Silent Selling: Best Practices and Effective Strategies in Visual Merchandising* which has undergone several updated editions since the 1980s to reflect the changing trends and opinions in visual merchandising.<sup>73</sup> Similar introductory texts highlighting the basics of mannequins, spatial arrangement, lighting, et cetera have been more recently written by James Clark and Virginia Grose and give an overview without any formal critical analysis.<sup>74</sup> Ultimately, the goal of any visual merchandising is not

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<sup>71</sup> Candice Hollenbeck, Cara Peters, and George Zinkhan, "Retail Spectacles and Brand Meaning: Insights from a Brand Museum Case Study," *Journal of Retailing*, 84, no.3 (2008): 334-353.

<sup>72</sup> Giuseppe Bertoli, Bruno Busacca, Maria Carmela Ostillio, and Silvia Di Vito, "Corporate Museums and Brand Authenticity: Explorative Research of the Gucci Museo," *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 7, no.3 (2016): 181-195. And Floriana Iannone and Francesco Izzo, "Salvatore Ferragamo: An Italian Heritage Brand and its Museum," *Placing Branding and Public Diplomacy* 13, no.2 (2017): 163-175.

<sup>73</sup> Judith Bell and Kate Ternus, *Silent Selling: Best Practices and Effective Strategies in Visual Merchandising*, (New York: Fairchild Publications, 2006).

<sup>74</sup> James Clark, *Fashion Merchandising: Principles and Practice*, (London: Palgrave, 2015). And Virginia Grose, *Fashion Merchandising*, (Switzerland: AVA Publishing SA, 2012).

only be attractive but to encourage shopping, which is something that evolves as consumer behaviour changes.<sup>75</sup>

A large portion of the more critical text on the subject focuses on the history and evolution of mannequins and window displays. Using performance studies methods, Sara Schneider chronicles the highly dramatic displays of the 1970s.<sup>76</sup> Schneider also includes an analysis of the history of using mannequins, which is a theme that is continued by other scholars including Gayle Strege and Emily R. Klug.<sup>77</sup> Both examine the relationship of the design of mannequins with ideal beauty standards throughout the twentieth century. Strege's essay is included in Louisa Iarocci's anthology *Visual Merchandising: The Image of Selling*, which includes a useful introduction focusing on the promotion, products, and places (the key themes of the anthology) of visual merchandising through history by combining consumer culture with visual culture.<sup>78</sup>

Not only is the way that fashion is displayed in retail stores important, the space itself that these stores occupy within a city and within larger cultural contexts is as well. This idea has been written about in both a historic and contemporary issue in John Potvin's collected anthology *The Places and Spaces of Fashion: 1800-2007*.<sup>79</sup> Many of the essays focus on the historical aspect of retail spaces in cities;<sup>80</sup> however, his introduction to the book includes a

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<sup>75</sup> Judy Shepard, *New Trends in Visual Merchandising: Retail Display Ideas that Encourage Buying*, (New York: RSD Publications, 2012).

<sup>76</sup> Schneider, *Vital Mummies*.

<sup>77</sup> Gayle Strege, "The Store Mannequin: An Evolving Ideal of Beauty" in *Visual Merchandising: The Image of Selling*, ed. by Louisa Iarocci, (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013). And Emily R. Klug, "Allure of the Silent Beauties: Mannequins and Display in America, 1935-70," in *The Places and Spaces of Fashion: 1800-2007*, ed. John Potvin, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 200.

<sup>78</sup> Louisa Iarocci, "'The Art of Draping': Window Dressing," in *Visual Merchandising: The Image of Selling*, ed. Louisa Iarocci, (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013).

<sup>79</sup> John Potvin (ed.), *The Places and Spaces of Fashion: 1800-2007*, (New York: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>80</sup> Francesca Muscau, "The City Boutique: Milan and the Spaces of Fashion," 139-153; Louisa Iarocci, "Dressing Rooms: Women, Fashion, and the Department Store," 169-185; Elyssa Dimant, "From 'Paradise' to Cyberspace: The Revival of the Bourgeois Marketplace," 232-246; and John Potvin, "Armani/Architecture: The Timeless and

pivotal groundwork for defining spaces of fashion. He writes: “place and space are fluid, transformed by subjects and objects.”<sup>81</sup> This definition indicates that although fashion spaces are physical spaces, they are also created socially, a concept that human geographer Louise Crewe has examined. Crewe’s work focuses more specifically on luxury fashion spaces within a larger cultural geography lens with topics including architecture, consumption, social spaces, and displaying luxury fashion.<sup>82</sup>

There is inherently a connection between the physical space and architecture of fashion retailers and the social space within a culture as indicated throughout Jane Rendell’s many writings on the subject.<sup>83</sup> Brands in major fashion cities have hired top architects and designers such as Frank Gehry (Issey Miyake Tribeca), Rem Koolhaas (Prada Epicenter, LA), and Renzo Piano (Maison Hermes, Toyko) to create attractive and innovative spaces in attempts to lure customers with the space.<sup>84</sup> In fact, architecture can be used in creating the brand and the experiences that the brand is trying to sell.<sup>85</sup> Ultimately, the goal of any brand investing in innovative architecture is to encourage more shopping, which is part of the experience of the aura of the retail architecture.<sup>86</sup>

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Texture of Space,” 247-264; all in *The Places and Spaces of Fashion: 1800-2007*, ed. John Potvin, (New York: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>81</sup> John Potvin, “Introduction,” in *The Places and Spaces of Fashion: 1800-2007*, ed. John Potvin, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 5.

<sup>82</sup> Louise Crewe, “Geographies of Retailing and Consumption,” *Progress in Human Geography* 24, no.2 (2000): 275-290. Louise Crewe, “Placing Fashion: Art, Space, Display and the Building of Luxury Fashion Markets through Retail Design,” *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no.4 (2016): 511-529. Louise Crewe, “Wear:where? The Convergent Geographies of Architecture and Fashion,” *Environment and Planning* 42 (2010): 2093-2108. Louise Crewe and Jonathan Beaverstock, “Fashioning the City: Cultures of Consumption in Contemporary Urban Spaces,” *Geoforum* 29, no.3 (1998): 297-308.

<sup>83</sup> Jane Rendell, “Between Architecture, Fashion, and Identity,” in *Fashion + Architecture*, ed. Helen Castle, *Architectural Design* 70, no.6 (2000): 8-11. And Iain Borden, Jane Rendell, Joe Kerr, and Alicia Pivaro, “Things, Flows, Filters, Tactics,” in *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space*, eds. Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, and Jane Rendell, with Alicia Pivaro, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001).

<sup>84</sup> Raul A. Barreneche, *New Retail*, (London: Phaidon, 2005).

<sup>85</sup> Anna Klingmann, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007).

<sup>86</sup> Ian Luna, *Retail: Architecture and Shopping* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005).

The study of the effects of retail design on consumer experience are commonly rooted in psychology-based and consumer behaviour studies.<sup>87</sup> These studies often are used for marketing purposes, which is not necessarily the focus that I intend in my work. However, this discipline has developed the concept of *atmospherics* or the environmental psychology of marketing in retail spaces.<sup>88</sup> This concept was further developed by scholars such as Julie Baker who examined the design of retail's physical environment not as much from a psychology perspective but by breaking down the components of the designed spaces including ambient, design and social factors.<sup>89</sup> These concepts have even more recently moved into the museum and cultural world in the work of Regan Forrest, a museum visitor experience specialist, who applied them to museum and exhibition environmental experiences.<sup>90</sup> The authors of *The Experience Economy*, Pine II and Gilmore, have, since writing their original text, gone on to apply the “experience economy” theory to fashion retail spaces.<sup>91</sup> Pine II has written texts with themes such as “Shoppers Need a Reason to Go to Your Store — Other Than Buying Stuff”<sup>92</sup> and “What If Stores Charged Admission?”<sup>93</sup> While the titles may seem radical, they challenge the traditional

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<sup>87</sup> Maria Pecoraro and Outi Uusitalo, “Exploring the Everyday Retail Experience: The Discourses of Style and Design,” *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 13, no.6 (2014): 429-441. And Chris Hackley, “Autoethnography in Consumer Research,” in *Qualitative Research Methods in Consumer Psychology: Ethnography and Culture*, ed. Paul Hackett, (New York: Routledge, 2016): 105-117.

<sup>88</sup> P. Kotler, “Atmospherics as a Marketing Tool,” *Journal of Retailing* 49, no.4 (1974): 48–64

<sup>89</sup> Julie Baker, “The Role of the Environment in Marketing Services: The Consumer Perspective,” in *The Services Challenge: Integrating for Competitive Advantage*, eds. John A. Czepiel, Carole A. Congram, and James Shanaham, (Chicago: American Marketing Association, 1987).

<sup>90</sup> Forrest, “Museum Atmospherics.”

<sup>91</sup> B. Joseph Pine II, “Shoppers Need a Reason to Go to Your Store — Other Than Buying Stuff,” *Harvard Business Review* (07 December 2017) <https://hbr.org/2017/12/shoppers-need-a-reason-to-go-to-your-store-other-than-buying-stuff>. B. Joseph Pine II, “Stage Experiences of Go Extinct,” *Business of Fashion*, (13 July 2016) <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/opinion/op-ed-stage-experiences-or-go-extinct>. B. Joseph Pine II, “What If Stores Charged Admission?” *Business of Fashion*, (15 August 2017) <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/opinion/op-ed-what-if-stores-charged-admission>. B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore, “Distinctive Experiences,” *Journal of Shopper Research*, (Spring 2017): 60-65, <http://www.journalofshopperresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/JSR-Iss1-V1-Gilmore-Pine.pdf>.

<sup>92</sup> Pine II, “Shoppers Need a Reason.”

<sup>93</sup> Pine II, “What If Stores.”



retail model of simply selling goods by engaging in creating experiences for consumers. The example of Hollister's retail concept may seem counterintuitive to traditional experience design and visual merchandising given their maze-like stores, dim lighting, and loud music; but it is the challenge and reward of customers' tribulations in the stores that create lasting experience, which has resulted in financial success for Hollister.<sup>94</sup> Understanding shopping and why people shop is furthermore a necessity in retail experience design.<sup>95</sup>

While there is an abundance of literature surrounding the research and work that I am doing, there is nothing directly looking at the intersection of fashion exhibitions and retailers. Instead, my work is able to combine these different theories and approaches, and create new work and understanding of how we consume objects and spaces that house objects.

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<sup>94</sup> Stephen Brown, Lorna Stevens, and Pauline Maclaran, "Epic Aspects of Retail Encounters: The Illiad of Hollister," *Journal of Retailing* 94, no.1 (2018): 58-72.

<sup>95</sup> Chuihua Judy Chung, Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, and Sze Tsung Leong (eds.), *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*, (Cambridge: Harvard Design School, 2001). And Paco Underhill, *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

### Chapter 3: Methodology

Retail environments and museum exhibitions are not necessarily studied using the same methodological approaches. The focus of studying retail is often to improve sales and retain customers (to make more sales).<sup>96</sup> On the contrary, exhibitions are often only studied through the form of exhibition reviews, which often focus on the successful sharing of knowledge and information while being deeply rooted in traditional academia. Alternatively, they are written about by the curators/makers and are reflective of the process, the thesis of the exhibition, or maybe the basic arrangement of objects (similar/dissimilar objects placed together, arranged chronologically or thematically, etc.).<sup>97</sup> With no already existing methodology for studying these spaces, in the creative experiential design approach that I sought, I consequently attempted to amalgamate several methodologies and approaches to study both types of spaces.

To begin my process, it was important for me to visit as many types of spaces as possible. Specifically for this project, I visited over eighty-five spaces in four major fashion capitals — Toronto (ongoing 2018-2019), New York (January and September 2018), London (February 2018), and Paris (February 2018).<sup>98</sup> Given the natural ratio of retail stores compared to fashion exhibitions, I visited approximately 23 fashion exhibitions (see Appendix A)<sup>99</sup> and nearly three times the number of retailers (65) (see Appendix B).

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<sup>96</sup> Paul Hackett, "Introduction: What is Consumer Ethnography?" in *Qualitative Research Methods in Consumer Psychology: Ethnography and Culture*, ed. Paul Hackett (New York: Routledge, 2016), xi-xii.

<sup>97</sup> Palmer, "Reviewing," 122.

<sup>98</sup> It also should be noted that there may be some influence on my work and opinions from before this project began; specifically, I have been shopping/visiting retail environments for as long as I can remember in addition to visiting other fashion museums and exhibitions more recently.

<sup>99</sup> These include exhibitions with a substantial percentage of fashion objects on display, while fashion may not be the primary focus/thesis; fashion exhibitions proper; as well as museums with fashion on semi-permanent display without necessarily a specific exhibition.

Visiting both types of spaces, I tried to treat them as the same and not bring different approaches to each space. As mentioned, Palmer provided guidelines for how to write a proper fashion exhibition review, which includes a critical analysis of the exhibition including “what was encountered in the exhibition—what the visitor sees. This includes the placement and order of the display, and an assessment of the choice. Does this add or detract from the thesis of the exhibition?”<sup>100</sup> Given the public nature of an exhibition, Palmer argues, the review can be written by anyone who attended the exhibition.<sup>101</sup> While I obviously did not write reviews for every exhibition that I saw, I made field notes as if I were, highlighting elements that Palmer mentioned. I used this same method in looking at the retail spaces that I visited. Moreover, I also utilized Julie Baker’s framework for studying physical retail environments and atmospherics.<sup>102</sup> Baker breaks down a retail environment into three major components: 1) ambient factors (factors that are not necessarily immediately recognized, eg. air quality, noise, scent); 2) design factors (factors that are immediately recognized, eg. architecture, materials, layout, comfort); 3) social factors (other people, eg. other audience members’ and service personnel’s appearance, behaviour and number).<sup>103</sup> This simple categorization of factors will allow a clearer comparison between these two types of spaces as I reflect back on my personal experiences within each space.

Consequently, my research ended up being auto-ethnographical in nature, due to my personal reflections of my embodied experiences within these retail and exhibition spaces. Ethnography is not uncommon for studying consumer behaviours and is commonly done through

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<sup>100</sup> Palmer, “Reviewing,” 124.

<sup>101</sup> Palmer, “Reviewing,” 123.

<sup>102</sup> Baker, “The Role,” 79-80.

<sup>103</sup> Baker, “The Role,” 79-80.

methods such as interviews of consumers based on their experiences in a given store.<sup>104</sup>

Although I could have done this (for both exhibitions and retail), for the scope of this project it would have been too extensive since I wanted a wide variety of both exhibitions and retailers. Instead, by self-reflecting on my own personal experiences, I followed methods from auto-ethnography, “using a researcher’s personal experiences to describe and critique cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences.”<sup>105</sup> As Anderson and Glass-Coffin describe, auto-ethnographers often “experiment and improvise” with methods that work for them for a specific project, which is exactly what I did throughout my research visits.<sup>106</sup> Given that I was visiting multiple museum exhibitions and retailers by myself, my own personal experiences seemed to be the best way to analyze each space. In consumer research, Chris Hackley argues that auto-ethnography “stands in direct contrast to the conventions of third-person objectivity, positivistic reductionism, and statistical generalization more familiar to readers of business, management, and organization research studies.”<sup>107</sup> Since my research was not concerned with statistics of consumers purchasing or traffic patterns in spaces, reflecting on personal experiences was more beneficial than other consumer research studies methods. Embodying the experience of these spaces and reflecting on them has brought to life the literature that I previously brought together as well as lay the groundwork for my project as I move forward.

Following these visits and the auto-ethnography field notes of my experiences in them, my research methodology has shifted to using this knowledge as a creative practice to sort through this information and understand of some of the implications that occur as a result. This

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<sup>104</sup> Hackett, “Introduction,” xi-xii.

<sup>105</sup> Stacy Holman Jones, Tony E. Adams, and Carolyn Ellis “Introduction: Coming to Know Autoethnography as More Than a Method,” in *The Handbook of Autoethnography*, ed. Stacy Holman Jones, Tony E. Adams, and Carolyn Ellis, (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2015): 22.

<sup>106</sup> Leon Anderson and Bonnie Glass-Coffin, “I Learn by Going: Autoethnographic Modes of Inquiry,” in Jones, *et al.*, *The Handbook*, 64.

<sup>107</sup> Hackley, “Autoethnography,” 109.

method is following Cole and Knowle's arts-informed methodology, beginning with an abundance of quantitative data and exploring how to create artistic work through that information. They define the purpose of arts-informed research as "enhance[ing] understanding of the human condition through alternative (to conventional) processes and representational forms of inquiry, and to reach multiple audiences by making scholarship more accessible."<sup>108</sup> As a result, I turned my experiences in these spaces into a space of my own through a small creative installation (Figures 2-8). If my thesis is that these spaces are scenographically similar and blurring the lines, I want to question further whether the line can be fully eliminated. This idea is not necessarily in an attempt to prophesy that in the future there will be no difference; but rather it is a way to challenge how we treat both the museum and retail experience, what the implications are for this blurring, and what each industry can learn from the other. Creating a physical manifestation of this data allows the perfect vessel for exploring these boundaries.

This installation took place in a small "traditional" art gallery space in Toronto's hip West end. Although the space normally displays art, it definitely passes as a small storefront with street access, large front window display, and white walls with hardwood floors. The area houses other small gallery spaces, local fashion retailers' boutiques, as well as an assortment of restaurants, microbreweries, and cafes.<sup>109</sup> This ambiguity of space helped further challenge the visitor's experience with what kind of space they are in. Within the installation, there was an assortment of objects that one can buy and objects that are being exhibited; objects that are allowed to be touched and objects that are not allowed to be touched. Although initially, I

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<sup>108</sup> Ardra L. Cole and J. Garry Knowles, "Arts-informed Research," in *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research*, eds. J. Gary Knowles and Ardra L. Cole, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2008), 59.

<sup>109</sup> Carolyn Ireland, "Toronto's once scruffy neighbourhoods are newly cool," *The Globe and Mail*, 13 February 2014, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/torontos-once-scruffy-neighbourhoods-are-newly-cool/article16860102/>.

thought I was going to collaborate with other artisans and designers to make products, I opted to do the physical making of objects myself. Given the small nature of the space, I knew I would be able to do it in the given timeline.

Although it would be easy to say that I “curated” the space/experience, I have decisively chosen to never refer to myself as the curator or the installation as being curated. This is partly in defiance of the word and its appropriation by other sectors to give value (curating menus, music playlists, travel experiences, etc.),<sup>110</sup> as well as the inherent connection that it has with the art and museum worlds. Instead, I have always referred to myself as the creator. I have also chosen to call it an installation, which does have a slight art connection; however, is more unclear of a term than exhibition or retail. Although subtle, my choices in language hopefully add to the ambiguity of the space.

In avoidance of the word curate, there definitely were still obvious creative choices made in terms of what was on display and how (see Appendix D for a full list of elements included). I was originally prompted by Elizabeth Wilson’s opening sentiments from her seminal, *Adorned in Dreams*, text, in which she shares her disapproval for fashion exhibitions since it is creepy, to her, to see dress/fashion on non-living bodies.<sup>111</sup> While she has a valid argument throughout her book, why is it not creepy for Wilson when she enters a retailer and sees clothes on mannequins or on hangers? The display of fashion in both spaces is rarely, if ever, on real human bodies.<sup>112</sup> Therefore, I was initially inspired to challenge this idea of body and displaying fashion. The initial pieces that I intended to make attempted to exclude the body, and remain pieces of

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<sup>110</sup> David Balzer, *Curationism: How Curating Took over the Art World and Everything Else*, (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2014).

<sup>111</sup> Wilson, *Adorned*, 1.

<sup>112</sup> In accordance with the International Council of Museum (ICOM) standards since 1987, fashion should never be worn by a living person. And with the exception of an in-store fashion show or sales associates wearing merchandise, there rarely are instances of retailers regularly using live models in stores.

“fashion” but not things that had to be sized/tried on. These were both silk scarves featuring a digital print of images I captured in my research (Figure 1) and tote bags with short phrases about consuming fashion. The obvious correlation also was that these are probably two of the most common items for sale within museum gift shops, which is an adjacent topic that unfortunately is not covered within my MRP but one that has some interesting opinions attached to it.<sup>113</sup> In addition, a previous project to be included looks at displaying fashion without the object and only an artificial body through projection mapping as well as augmented reality (AR), which unfortunately did not cooperate during this installation. Other fashion included was a series of shirts produced in a gradient range of sizes as a note on the issues of sizing and body, as well as numbering them from 1-10 gives reference to artist prints/series. Finally, as any good retailer, the front window display was extremely valuable real estate, and although this window is not an ideal full-length window, it allows space to create a vignette looking at high/low fashion, art/fashion, and both within each space.

These items of display were mixed with other design tactics found within both museums and retailers in hopes to enhance and blur the visitor experience. One of my intentions was to playfully challenge the visitor’s desire to touch. On every object, I attached a sales tag with many alternating saying “Please Touch” or “Please Do Not Touch,” strategically placing some tags counter to what one’s natural instinct might be. These sales tags also included more traditional information that would be found in a museum, which allowed consumers to take home the information with the product; this text was also included on the wall mirroring a museum (for text, see Appendix F). One aspect that was important for me was to try to engage all the senses as well to truly create an atmospheric experience. The clothing on display was

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<sup>113</sup> Chung, *et al.*, *Harvard*, 144-49.

evidently the visual component, but supplemented also by some framed collages that arguably acted as the most traditional fine art element of the space given their flat and framed nature, yet I chose not to give them any label making them neutral decor (Figures 9-11). As mentioned, there were labels encouraging/discouraging touch, yet I never actually reprimanded people for touching objects. Throughout the entire installation, I chose to burn a candle to give a beautiful aroma, with many people commenting how inviting the scent was; all the objects for sale were also slightly sprayed with perfume. During the reception, I had some light refreshments available for visitors to have. Finally, some gentle music played to round out the room in a non-offensive way.

While my initial research began with a fairly traditional evaluation of spatial and experiential design, manifesting this research into an ephemeral installation has opened new ways of thinking for myself as well as visitors. One of the obvious benefits of arts-based research is that it allows me to share my research with a larger audience who may not otherwise have read an essay. It also allows me to be able to reflect upon the experiences of these visitors and examine what worked and what did not. The process of making has also taught me valuable skills that I otherwise would not have garnered if I had not created this installation.



## Chapter 4: Discussion

Through both my visits to museum fashion exhibitions and fashion retailers and the creation of a research installation, some similarities (and differences) became more apparent. More importantly, the consequences and potential implications of the similarities in the scenography of these spaces began to unfold. This chapter covers these similarities, differences, and the consequences with thought on the potential future for both spaces.

### Similarities

*The Body* (or artificial body) was the obvious beginning point for this research project. Prompted by Elizabeth Wilson's quote criticizing the lifeless fashion on bodies in museums; it became evident that there is a criticism of bodies in museums, yet there is not within retailers.<sup>114</sup> With few exceptions, living bodies are not found in either space to display fashion.<sup>115</sup> As a result, both turn to artificial bodies or mounts to display fashion. Initially, they may appear to be the same type of mount in both spaces, museums also have to consider conservation-grade materials in the mounts they use.<sup>116</sup> Also unlike retailers, museums generally always need to adapt mounts through padding (Figure 12) or cutting away to precisely match the garment's shape, which could be historical or a difficult contemporary shape.<sup>117</sup> The most popular form remains the full body mannequin, often with all limbs and a head. These mannequins are diverse

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<sup>114</sup> Wilson, *Adorned*, 1.

<sup>115</sup> Evident exceptions might include sales associates who are made to wear the company's clothing, small fashion shows within retailers, or fashion shows within museums such as the V&A's "Fashion in Motion" events (<https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion-in-motion>). For more details on the relationship of living bodies and displaying fashion in a museum, see Ingrid Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," *Dress* 41:1 (2015), 37-51.

<sup>116</sup> Lara Flecker, *A Practical Guide to Costume Mounting*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2007:41-43.

<sup>117</sup> Sarah Scaturro and Joyce Fung, "A Delicate Balance: Ethics and Aesthetics at the Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York," in Mary M. Brooks and Dinah D. Eastop (eds.), *Refashioning and Redress: Conserving and Displaying Dress*, Los Angeles: The Getty Institute, 2016: 159-70.

with abstract, stylized, realistic, non-existent or even specific faces<sup>118</sup> giving them more or less life-like qualities. Accessories such as wigs, makeup, or even eyelashes have been utilized by both spaces depending on the overall aesthetic. However, recently, there has been a shift away from overly styled or idealized mannequins, leaving them more neutral in appearance.<sup>119</sup> Dress forms (or Judys) give the aesthetic of industrial or hand-made artisan-quality goods (whether that is actually the case is not always necessarily true) (Figure 14). Invisible and partial forms, although more commonly found within museums, give the illusion that the garment is floating when actually the form is just hidden under the garment (Figure 15). Hanging clothing on hangers is obviously a technique stemming from retail and giving the subtlest illusion of curved shoulders to hold a garment up (Figure 16); they seldom appear in museums but can be found occasionally.<sup>120</sup> Flat lays also remain a standard convention in both spaces. They can be either laid horizontally (on a table, plinth, shelf, etc.) (Figure 17) or vertically (less common, but against a wall or divider) (Figure 19). Evidently, in retailers, this is the easiest method of displaying garments as things can be folded neatly on a table or shelf; whereas in museums, this technique is preferred for more delicate garments that may not be stable enough to hang or simply for the aesthetic choice. Regardless of these chosen methods, the physical garment needs to be displayed in some manner, and attempts are generally made to make it look like it is being worn by a “body.”

*The Theatrics* of displaying fashion in both spaces is integral. Like any performance, telling the story is the priority. That story is generally how to wear clothes or how clothes were worn. In a retailer, that story could be you need to buy bright pink florals for this spring or

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<sup>118</sup> The Met’s *Heavenly Bodies* exhibition featured mannequins with angelic looking faces slightly downcast and solemn. See Figure 13.

<sup>119</sup> Petrov, *Fashion, History, Museums*, 151-60.

<sup>120</sup> DePauw, *The Care*, 117.

industrial, handmade quality workwear is the thing missing from your wardrobe. In museums, it the clothing often tells a story from the past. Narratives, therefore, are often achieved with groupings of mannequins with similar/dissimilar garments. Palmer explains it as “creating ‘conversations’ between the mannequins.”<sup>121</sup> However, this is not always the only way to achieve story-telling, as in the shoe department at Nordstrom, the mannequin is playfully lounging on the table demonstrating the fun that could be had while wearing those shoes (Figure 18). In contrast, sometimes an anti-narrative is the narrative, as was the case in the Museum of Modern Art’s (MoMA) *ITEMS: Is Fashion Modern?* exhibition that gave focus on each object as a piece of design and not telling a specific story (Figure 19). To help tell the story, designers often enhance it with the *mise en scène*, including the set, props, backdrop, and lighting. Lively and interesting displays are more attractive to consumers to encourage purchases, and potentially informative for museum-goers. At the V&A’s *Ocean Liners* exhibition, instead of simply placing static mannequins with various swimwear, the designers chose to show mannequins lounging by the pool and even one diving in (Figure 20). Louis Vuitton’s *Volez Voguez Voyagez* exhibition included immersive rooms such as train carriage to illustrate how Vuitton luggage and clothing was used in various modes of travels (Figure 21). The possibilities for the *mise en scène* are endless with the addition of animatronics, turntables, plants, furniture, fake animals, or anything that helps tell the story.

As a counter to telling narratives, *Minimalism* is a tactic that appears in both spaces. This style of displays originates in art galleries that use a “white-cube” so as not to detract from the artwork on the walls.<sup>122</sup> Since this is a standard museum design technique, it obviously can be found in some fashion exhibitions. Within fashion exhibitions, minimalism includes simpler

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<sup>121</sup> Palmer, “Untouchable,” 46.

<sup>122</sup> Crewe, “Wear:where?,” 2098.

rows or displays of mannequins and objects (Figures 19 and 22), as well as what information is provided. While some museums such as science centres or children's museums often provide ample text, art museums believe less is more and rely on the viewer to bring their own opinions on the art and this can be reflected in fashion exhibitions especially fashion exhibitions found within more traditional art and decorative art museums (such as The Met, MoMA, V&A, etc.).<sup>123</sup> On the other hand, many retailers adopt this style presumably to emulate museums and the value placed on museum objects.<sup>124</sup> Examples could include the traditional white walls of the gallery, limited stock on display (one size of each garment), and lots of empty space on the walls and in the space. Under the new creative direction of Hedi Slimane, Celine has joined this trend of minimalist white-cube aesthetic for its new retail stores (Figure 23).<sup>125</sup> Minimalism can often only be found in luxury stores with some mid-level and boutique stores attempting to emulate it as well given that fast-fashion retailers are trying to push more stock.

*The Flow* of each space is integral to the design and visitor experiences. While there is no one precedent, it is an integral aspect of both that designers think about especially with the goal of getting consumers to either buy something(s) or to learn something(s). The size of the room or rooms will probably determine that flow. The first example is just a natural wandering around the space moving freely either in a circle or zig-zag pattern. This flow works well in small spaces where it is harder to control people's attention, but that also serves as its downfall as you can plan a linear experience for every visitor.<sup>126</sup> The alternative to meandering then is a prescribed flow. Within larger stores or exhibition spaces, this technique is often done by

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<sup>123</sup> Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*, Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 1996: xiii.

<sup>124</sup> Crewe, "Wear:where?," 2098.

<sup>125</sup> Matt Sebra, "Hedi Slimane's New Celine Store Is the Coolest Art Gallery You Can Shop In," *GQ*, 18 Feb. 2019, <https://www.gq.com/story/hedi-slimane-new-celine-store?verso=true>.

<sup>126</sup> For my installation, this was the flow of the space because it was so small. People moved generally around the exterior walls in a circle; however could easily go in reverse or jump around and get a similar experience.

creating rooms, which can easily divide different departments, sections, or themes. Within more medium-size spaces, this can be achieved with barriers such as dividers, display units, mannequins, partial barriers, etc. Way-finding is also an integral aspect of controlling the flow and sometimes signage is used or more implied conventions that we are able to follow (text on a wall).

*Furniture* is an easy method in both spaces to enhance the experience for consumers. Predominately, this takes the form of including benches, couches, ottomans, or chairs for people to sit down and rest while taking it all in (Figure 24). These can be positioned as points of contemplation about purchasing something or taking in new knowledge; or probably more commonly, places for uninterested parties to sit and rest (while someone else shops or basks in the exhibition). Once again, the size of the space is a key factor in whether furniture/seating is provided. In some cases, such as the Toronto Eaton Centre, it may intentionally be omitted to not allow people to stop shopping.

Similarly, *Food Services* are found within both spaces and especially larger spaces. These can be simple coffee shops, bars, or full-service restaurants. These services potentially enhance the experience by offering complimentary (or paid) refreshments such as water in many luxury retailers or as in new Aritzia stores in New York, free specialty coffees (Figure 26) (the new Aritzia store on Bloor Street in Toronto also offers a coffee bar, but it is not complimentary). Although like furniture, they can a place for rest; they also can be destinations in and of themselves such as the Flora Bar at The Met Breuer or Fred's in Barneys (both spots I visited during my research). When I visited Fred's, there was a special to correspond with launch Thom Browne's collection at Barney's (Figure 27). The hope then is that by attracting visitors to these spots, they will also visit the museum or make purchases. "A successful

restaurant won't save a struggling department store chain unless diners hit the shoe floor afterwards."<sup>127</sup>

*Other Sensory Experiences* can often be forgotten or overlooked, but can often be overlooked or under-utilized. Scent is generally completely forgotten in both spaces today, beyond the perfume counter in a department store.<sup>128</sup> Yet, places like Abercrombie and Fitch use to make employees go around spraying their intoxicating perfume around the store regularly. Within exhibitions, in my research, I did not experience any space that had added scent; but in Cecil Beaton's 1971 exhibition at the V&A, he sprayed a collection of perfumes around the exhibition.<sup>129</sup> Sound also can make or break the space. It is often only really bad music that is remembered; yet it can enhance the experience by transporting visitors to another world or merely filling out the empty sounds of the room.

*Publications* remain an interesting connection between both of these spaces. Once again, the size of the fashion space plays a role; many small exhibitions are unable to produce publications (due to resources, budget, etc.) and the same with many smaller retailers.<sup>130</sup> However, publications exist as a piece of ephemera and marketing other than the physical garments of an exhibition or a season's collection of fashion. Many museums chose to produce exhibition catalogues with images of all or most of the garments as well as critical or creative essays on the exhibition. These are often not that different from a retailer or fashion brand's

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<sup>127</sup> Lauren Sherman, "The Pitfalls of Investing in Experiential Retail," *Business of Fashion*, 05 Feb. 2019, <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/how-to-stage-experiences-that-drive-sales>

<sup>128</sup> This is probably due to increased "sensitivities" to artificial scents and "scent free policies."

<sup>129</sup> Amy de la Haye, "Fashion: An Anthology by Cecil Beaton 1971" in Clark and Haye with Horsley, *Exhibiting Fashion*, 72.

<sup>130</sup> Due to rising print and postage costs, this is potentially changing; for example, long time catalogue producers, J.Crew opted to cease its catalogue in 2017 due to low sales, but this decision may not have been the right one. Lauren Sherman, "The Challenging Emotional Remaking of J.Crew," *Business of Fashion*, (29 August 2018) <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/professional/the-challenging-emotional-remaking-of-j-crew>

magazine or look-book. The big difference is often that retailers/fashion brands frequently choose to use living models to show the fashions; whereas, museums are unable to do so. Rare exceptions can be made though as in the case of The Met's *Rei Kawakubo / Comme des Garçons* exhibition catalogue that featured living models.<sup>131</sup> Especially for exhibition catalogues, these publications are objects in and of themselves for people who may not be able to attend the exhibitions or even purchase the clothes.<sup>132</sup>

*Two-Dimensional Works* often supplement the focus of physical fashion objects in retailers and exhibitions. These can take many forms such as traditional paintings/prints found within retailers and even exhibitions in attempts to make the space more like a traditional gallery. In thematic exhibitions, 2-D works are often points of contrast with the garments such as in *Heavenly Bodies*, which showed thematic fashion with non-fashion artworks and objects (Figure 28).<sup>133</sup> Alternatively, original (or reproduction) sketches are sometimes shown alongside the physical objects (Figure 29). Sometimes these 2-D works are less artistic and more commercial in nature, showing graphic design or campaign photo shoots of models wearing the garments. The purpose of any of these works is to simply help elevate the fashion that is on display and provide a richer experience and display of objects.

*Digital Integration* is a major area of exploration for both spaces in contemporary digital society. At its simplest, for several decades now, video (projection or screened) has been a way to show fashion in movement—something that mannequins cannot easily do. Therefore, retailers

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<sup>131</sup> Laird Borrelli-Persson, "How 10 Photographers Captured Rei Kawakubo's Genius for the New Met Catalog," *Vogue*, 10 Apr. 2017, <https://www.vogue.com/article/met-gala-2017-comme-des-garcons-rei-kawakubo-andrew-bolton-costume-institute>. And Andrew Bolton, *Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between*, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017).

<sup>132</sup> I personally own twelve out of the last fifteen catalogues produced to accompany the Met's spring/summer exhibitions; yet I have only two of the exhibitions in person.

<sup>133</sup> These other objects could be considered "props" or have the same purpose, but since they are also artworks or objects in a museum collection, they should be treated differently.

will often show video of the current collection runways, while exhibitions might show past fashion shows or even historic or contemporary films showcasing the fashions being worn. As both spaces look to the future, explorations are being made with AR/VR as well as iPads with information and point-of-sales (POS), 3D printing, AI, and many other forms. With rapid increases to technology and many failed attempts, it is difficult to predict what technologies are feasible long-term for either space.

Finally, the *Temporality of Displays* is something to note in their similarity. These spaces are forever changing, which is what gives them the ability to continually redesign and bring in new tactics and ways of display. Exhibitions obviously have clear life-spans—often 4-6 months depending on the project; six months is generally the maximum amount of time for conservation purposes.<sup>134</sup> This, unfortunately, is not always the case within institutions, as some keep displays up longer. Similarly, as the fashion seasons change, so do fashion retailers. While a “pop-up” style retailer might have more in common in terms of set dates of being open; every retailer is consistently bringing in new stock and is changing their displays constantly even if the changes are minimal.

## Differences

While the similarities abound, and have been the focus of the project, it is worth noting some of the key differences between each space. Each space has its own goals—the consumption of objects (retailers) versus the consumption of knowledge (exhibitions). The museum gift shop cannot be ignored statistically they are able to sell upwards of seven times more per square foot than an average mall retailer.<sup>135</sup> Museums need to make money somehow too.

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<sup>134</sup> Palmer, “Untouchable,” 38.

<sup>135</sup> Chung, *et al.*, *Harvard*, 145.



Besides shopping, touching is a major difference and also criticism between the two spaces. The ability to touch the fabric, feel the weight, and even try on are all things that many wish were possible in museums, but for conservation reasons are prohibited.<sup>136</sup> Museums often attempt to create tactical experiences in exhibitions; for example, the ROM's *Iris van Herpen/Philip Beesley* exhibition provided some materials to touch (Figure 30), the V&A's *Balenciaga* exhibition provided a multipurpose skirt/cape to try on, and the *Louis Vuitton Time Capsule* exhibition featured live demonstrations with a craftsperson working on a bag that visitors could handle (Figure 31). On a smaller scale, Phillip Sparks recently exhibited design work in Toronto with the intention of allowing people to try on an embody misfit clothing (Figure 32). Part of this lack of touch is created through a physical divide between the visitor and object through glasses cases or distance. This is a technique that is also not uncommon in retailers (although less obvious). For example, more valuable objects might be placed behind sales counters or on higher shelves, requiring the assistance of an associate, in small display classes (commonly accessories and jewellery), even some large displays as found in Uniqlo (Figure 33), or in a window displays. This separation via a pane of glass creates a sense of enticement and desire yet frustration because of the lack of touch.

Additionally, the transferring and transparency of knowledge and information in both spaces is potentially a major difference. The purpose of museums is the transferring of knowledge through objects, and as a result, most visitors (blindly?) trust what is presented to them in a museum, assuming there is academic scholarship behind the display (something that may or may not be true). Palmer wrote: "Museums are expected to offer educational and intellectual perspectives, but costume and textile exhibits often do not do this and can still be

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<sup>136</sup> Palmer, "Untouchable," 40.

well received by the public as a pure visual experience.”<sup>137</sup> As she points out, fashion exhibitions can be scenographic spectacles that attract people, but still need to keep the mission of the museum. Conversely, in retail, there is a lack of information or knowledge presented openly to the consumer. Often sales associates are the only point of reference for information about a specific object. However, with the access to basic information online, maybe the purpose of both of these spaces is shifting away from learning about objects and towards a showroom or an experience that is unable to exist in the digital world (talking with a human about the fit of a garment or seeing the intricate detail of the construction of a garment, as possible alternatives).

### **Consequences**

With these similarities (and few key differences) in mind, the important question remains what are the consequences of these two fashion spaces blurring? While my installation may have been questioning whether these spaces can become one, it obviously is still important to view them as separate entities.

For the museum, the major problem remains: does the commercialization of the space detract from the scholarship and ability to share knowledge?<sup>138</sup> This problem stems from the idea there can be one single source of knowledge and that it is the role of the curator/museum to pass this on as an authoritative source. However, this way of thinking is changing with the understanding that each visitor brings their own unique experience to the museum, and this collective creation of knowledge could be integrated into a retail environment.<sup>139</sup> If fashion exhibitions are going to remain in museums, and museums become more commercial in nature;

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<sup>137</sup> Palmer, “Untouchable” 35.

<sup>138</sup> In the past, there has been concern of this specifically with the Armani exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum (see Potvin, “Fashion and the Art Museum”) or Prada’s *Waist Down* exhibition held in Prada stores around the world (see Palmer, “Untouchable,” 24).

<sup>139</sup> Dorsett, “Making Meaning.”

what exactly does this look like? Is the future space going to look like my installation or the Whitney's *Eckhaus Latta: Possessed* exhibition where visitors could purchase the garments on display? Or instead of going to the gift shop to purchase a print or a mug of the *Mona Lisa*, visitor might buy it directly in the same gallery space. Moreover, if fashion exhibitions continue to resemble fashion retailers, it is only going to attract even more visitors since they are already familiar with retail spaces, which can be seen as a positive benefit.

Conversely, for retailers, replicating a museum experience, as previously mentioned and explored in other literature, elevates the objects on display. It is a tactic more easily adapted by luxury retailers who do not need to sell as many products to turn a profit as fast-fashion retailers do.<sup>140</sup> Learning is also something that is not necessarily foreign to a retailer, but something not necessarily on a consumer's mind when visiting stores. Using text-based information like museums and educating associates to be like museum docents could allow consumers to learn about the products that they are purchasing. Stores then become like showrooms. Creating a story and sharing that with consumers will potentially help sell objects—whether that is a transparent story of the worker who made the garment/textile, the design of the object, or the intended purpose. Retailer's histories can also be shown side by side with garments that are for sale. Retailers like Hollister have already discovered that brand heritage can be used successfully as an in-store marketing tool (even if it is a false history, which is a different problem).<sup>141</sup> Instead of fashion brands opening designated brand museums (such as Saint Laurent, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, etc.), the possibility of displaying these histories directly in their stores should be explored further. This integration of both spaces allows for interesting displays

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<sup>140</sup> Joy, *et al.*, "M(Art)Worlds," 347-364.

<sup>141</sup> Eggers, "The Actual Hollister."

because many designers in these fashion houses are consistently looking back on the house's archives for inspiration—why not show them side by side?

Both spaces are needing to continue to adapt in what Gilmore and Pine coined the “experience economy” given that consumers no longer just seek goods or services, but the perfect experience of visiting a coffee shop or amusement park, or fashion exhibition or fashion retailer.<sup>142</sup> In part due to the digital revolution, this experience economy has greatly increased. For fashion retailers and exhibitions, the digital age has resulted in a glut of information and access to goods on the internet. To go to a store or museum, you need an experience other than just purchasing an object or learning some facts (both can be done on Amazon or Wikipedia). In some cases, the extravagant scenography of each fashion space can be enough of an experience to lure people in; however, they often need something more. This trend has resulted in many retailers bringing in experiential marketing personnel to create activations in stores other than just purchasing goods. These experiences can be activities such as private parties, personal customization opportunities, yoga or workout classes, and the list goes on endlessly. These are experiences and potentially products that consumers cannot get from shopping online. Part of the goal is obviously to create more sales (hopefully), but the other part is a strategy of giving consumers the opportunity to share their experience on social media, specifically Instagram. Consequently, special experiential installations often called “Instagram museums” have temporarily opened up giving consumers a playground to take images for their Instagram.<sup>143</sup> Museums have responded to these trends, also attempting to give consumers perfect Instagram backdrops to take photos against (Figure 34). In my visit to the Louis Vuitton exhibition in New York, one of the last rooms was filled with people taking posed photos, presumably for social

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<sup>142</sup> Pine II and Gilmore, *The Experience Economy*.

<sup>143</sup> Haigney, “The Museums of Instagram.”

media (Figure 35). Beyond these Instagram moments, museums, like retailers, are investing heavily into what they refer to as public programming which can also include after-hour parties in the museum, guided tours, exhibition related activities and crafts, yoga or other workout classes, as well as more traditional talks and lectures. These activations in both spaces are ways to attract visitors into the space who may not otherwise be willing to go in hopes that they will return.

The biggest consequence and concern for these spaces is their future sustainability. Stores are closing at a high rate that cannot be ignored, especially given what type of stores are closing. Low to mid-level retailers are closing their doors and are unable to invest in the experience economy. Lower-income consumers do not necessarily want to pay more for the experience when they know they can get a product cheaper online through Amazon (or other e-commerce sites). Moreover, there appears to be an urban and rural divide connected to the economics. Many e-commerce retailers who have built brick-and-mortar stores are located within urban centres, not rural areas. Likewise, fashion exhibitions and museums are more likely found in larger metropolises because there is the financial and social backing to keep them running. For example, mid-level retailer, Club Monaco, a leader in experiential marketing and in-store activations with stores across North America, frequently only do their activations within their two flagship stores, one in Toronto and one in New York. In 2017, Kit and Ace, once praised for its in-store events and full coffee bar, closed fifty out of sixty stores because it could not sustain them all.<sup>144</sup> Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a one-size-fits-all fix to including experiences in retail environments.<sup>145</sup> Travelling pop-up shops and exhibitions are an attractive option but come at a steep cost. Alternatively, one could celebrate the uniqueness of a

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<sup>144</sup> Sherman, "The Pitfalls."

<sup>145</sup> Sherman, "The Pitfalls."

local retailer and adapt them to the experience economy; that is if there are any that are still surviving. Consequently, this experiential model of retailers and exhibitions and potentially as a single space works in urban centres with higher level incomes, but will not survive in rural or areas of less concentrated wealth.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

“Displaying Fashion” was a project exploring the relationship between the spaces of fashion exhibitions and retailers. By asking how they are similar and how can they be similar, I found more possible questions for their future as they adapt in the changing world. One solution may be for them to completely merge together as a new type of space for fashion to exist—a space of consuming goods and knowledge. Grounded in an extensive survey of literature including exhibition and retail design, museological theory, consumer behaviour, and some fashion theory as well as auto-ethnographic, embodied visits to nearly one hundred fashion exhibitions and retailers, I then made a creative installation of my own of this potential third type of space that explicitly combines methods from both into one.

Creating this installation, gave me new meaning and understanding of the process of making each type of space (exhibition design and visual merchandising) as well as additional information and knowledge that I otherwise would not have gained. As I created, I realized why many fashion museology theory writers are practicing professionals and often reflect on their own projects.<sup>146</sup> If not, the writing remains museology criticism, which has its own place and effectiveness (something that needs to happen as well). While I could have written a list of similarities before the installation based on my fieldwork, the act of creating opened up new correlations. For example, I knew that I wanted to include tags (sale tags with informative exhibition text) on each garment to give a tactility and retail aesthetic (Figure 36). In creating them, I chose to include a barcode to make it resemble a sales tag even more, and when selecting eleven digits to include in the barcode, I realized the similarity of retail barcodes with museum accession numbers. Consequently, I gave each object a unique barcode and accession number

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<sup>146</sup> See Clark, de la Haye, Horsley, Palmer, Petrov, Steele.

using the traditional tripartite system. While I cannot confirm that museums necessarily use barcodes on objects, it is a possibility and can be found frequently within other collections such as archives and libraries. I am confident that I never would have unearthed this correlation without the arts-informed research.

My installation also allowed me to share my research with the general public. It was open for three days; during which time, I had approximately 75 visitors attend with a good mix of people I knew and people passing by on the street. I had one individual enter, whom I did not know, that exclaimed while still in the doorway, “I thought this was an art gallery?!” As those words were uttered, I knew my project was a success. Frankly as well, I much preferred speaking and interacting with visitors whom I did not know, as they were often more willing to engage in critical discussion because they had no bias towards me or preconceived ideas on my project. People were generally uncomfortable in this new type of space and were apprehensive about whether they could/could not touch things and how/if they could buy things.

Ultimately, this project concludes with more questions for the future. What is the future of both of these spaces? The retail apocalypse is occurring and retail is trying to adapt before it folds under. It was only a few weeks before my installation that the most expensive mall complex in history opened up in New York City combining shopping, art gallery/art space, condos, offices, and more into one large complex—The Hudson Yards.<sup>147</sup> Maybe this integrated space is the future for urban living in general. Likewise, in their annual recap of the attendance number in global art museums for 2018, *The Art Newspaper* suggested the need for fashion to make a successful exhibition, given The Met’s outstanding and record-breaking success with *Heavenly*

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<sup>147</sup> Cathleen Chen, “Why Hudson Yards Is High Stakes for Fashion,” *Business of Fashion*, 08 March 2019, <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/professional/why-hudson-yards-is-high-stakes-for-fashion>.



*Bodies* attracting nearly 1.7 million visitors making it the most visited exhibition of the entire art world in 2018 as well as in The Met's history.<sup>148</sup>

Undoubtedly both spaces need to adapt and change to remain culturally relevant. Retailers, unlike museums, are a little more used to change, but times for retailers have never seemed more dire. Likewise, museums around the world are struggling to stay afloat. Is the combined museum retailer a perfect solution for both sectors? Maybe, or maybe not. But it is a solution that attempts to look at the future of both, and how to integrate the consumer experience given the current experience economy that we are living in. Andy Warhol may have predicted this resemblance decades ago when he gave the quote that opened this paper. As long as both spaces are willing to change and keep the consumer at the forefront, they are bound to succeed.

These fields and their intersection is key for thinking of the future possibilities and sustainability for each space; and there remains plenty of areas of exploration. When I first had the idea of doing this project 1.5 years ago, I was discouraged about why no one was focusing in any depth on these parallel ways of display fashion and the position that these spaces held within the larger culture. I assumed this ignorance was because many academics and museum workers do not want to admit to the commercialization of museums even though museums need to make money to survive. While I still partly believe this, I am also glad to see other similar projects and research appear. Another installation—*Eckhaus Latta: Possessed* (Whitney Museum of American Art), similar to my own installation, was a retail environment housed within a traditional art museum. Julia Petrov's book, *Fashion, History, Museums*, published a few months ago in early 2019 also dedicates some space to these parallel ways of displaying fashion.

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<sup>148</sup> Emily Sharpe, "A dash of fashion and a pinch of gratis: the perfect recipe for a sell-out show," *The Art Newspaper*, 27 March 2019, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/blog/a-dash-of-fashion-and-a-pinch-of-gratis-the-perfect-recipe-for-a-sell-out-show>.

If I were to do this project again, there would have to be more focus. For me specifically, I have become more interested in brand museums and how they can become incorporated into retail spaces because I truly believe this is the future and the perfect example. Further methods should also be developed in studying the aesthetic design of fashion exhibitions. Unlike traditional art exhibitions, fashion exhibitions integrate so much more scenography and potential for research, analysis and criticism; and this, unfortunately, does not happen enough.

Even if my project did not come to any decisive conclusion as to what the future of retailers and exhibitions looks like, it has raised questions and provided a potential solution for these spaces. Fashion is such an integral part of society and these spaces are where fashion is able to manifest. We begin our experiences with fashion in the retailer—feeling the fabric, trying it on, matching it to make outfits—and eventually, some of our clothes will end up in museums. It is the cycle of clothing, and maybe we can bring that cycle closer together through the display of fashion.

## Figures

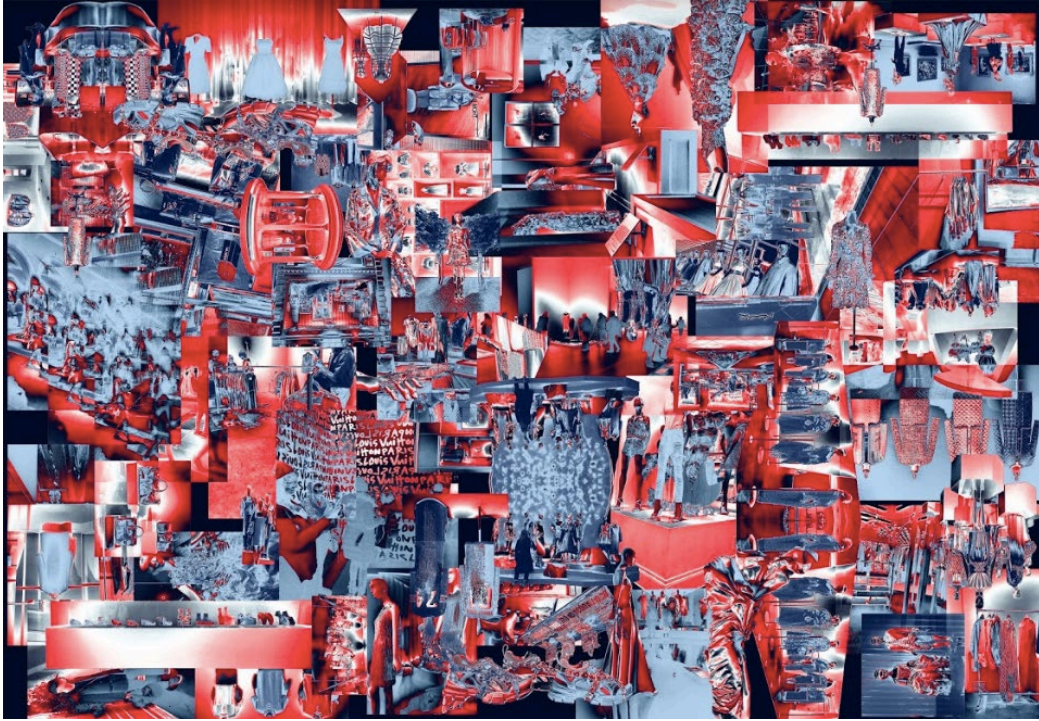


Figure 1: Digital collage of retail and museum images of fashion. Author's own work.



Figure 2: Exterior image, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.





Figure 3: Interior image with title wall, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 4: West wall display, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 5: East wall display, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 6: Interior image, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 7: Sales counter with front display, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 8: Rear alcove, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.





Figure 9: Framed Collage I, 28 x 35.5 cm, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019.  
Author's own Figure.



Figure 10: Framed Collage II, 28 x 35.5 cm, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019.  
Author's own image.



Figure 11: Large Framed Collage, 63.5 x 53.3 cm, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 12: Padding a mannequin before dressing, @metcostumeinstitute, Instagram, 06 Dec. 2017, <https://www.instagram.com/p/BcX8HsKlO8N/>





Figure 13: Mannequin from *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Sept. 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 14: Judy style mannequins, Aritzia, Toronto Eaton Centre, Toronto ON, March 2019. Author's own image.



Figure 15: Invisible mannequin from Yves Saint Laurent Museum, Paris, February 2018.  
Author's own image.



Figure 16: Hanger display, A.P.C., New York, September 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 17: Flat lay display, Prada Epicentre, New York, September 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 18: Shoe display, Nordstrom, Toronto Eaton Centre, Toronto ON, January 2019.  
Author's own image.

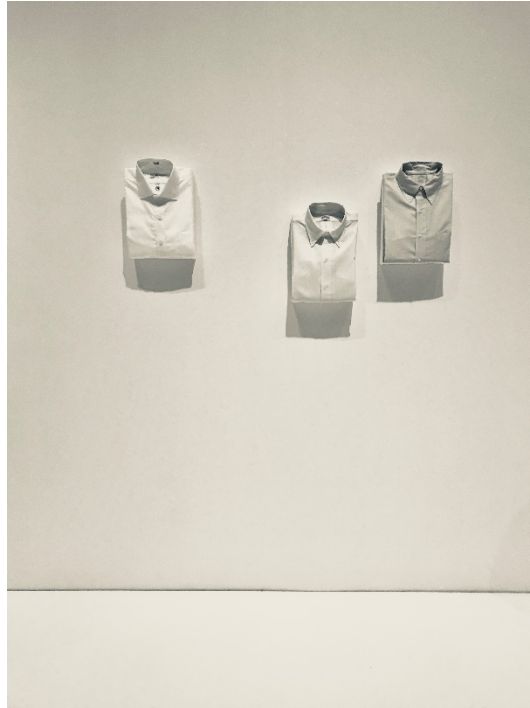


Figure 19: Minimalist display from *ITEMS: Is Fashion Modern?*, Museum of Modern Art, New York City, January 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 20: Swimming pool display from *Ocean Liners*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, February 2018. Author's own image.





Figure 21: Train travel display from *Volez Volez Voyagez: Louis Vuitton*, New York City, January 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 22: Minimalist display from *Balenciaga*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, February 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 23: Celine store interior, 650 Madison Ave., New York City, February 2018, <https://www.gq.com/story/hedi-slimane-new-celine-store?verso=true>.



Figure 24: Retail lounge area at Aritzia, SoHo, New York City, September 2018. Author's own image.



*"I like this painting because it has a bench."*

Figure 25: "I like this painting because it has a bench" cartoon from *The New Yorker*.  
 @newyorkercartons, Instagram, 07 April 2019. [https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv9cByujmcf/?utm\\_source=ig\\_share\\_sheet&igshid=lcxtsfs58ze4](https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv9cByujmcf/?utm_source=ig_share_sheet&igshid=lcxtsfs58ze4)



Figure 26: Retail coffee bar at Aritzia, SoHo, New York City, September 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 27: Thom Browne special at Fred's, Barney's Downtown, New York City, September 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 28: Contrast of dress to stained glass window from *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*, Metropolitan Museum of Art (Cloisters), New York City, September 2018. Author's own image.





Figure 29: Shoe and original sketch from *Manolo Blahnik*, Bata Shoe Museum, Toronto ON, November 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 30: Interactive touch from *Iris van Herpen/Philip Beesley*, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto ON, August 2018. Author's own image.

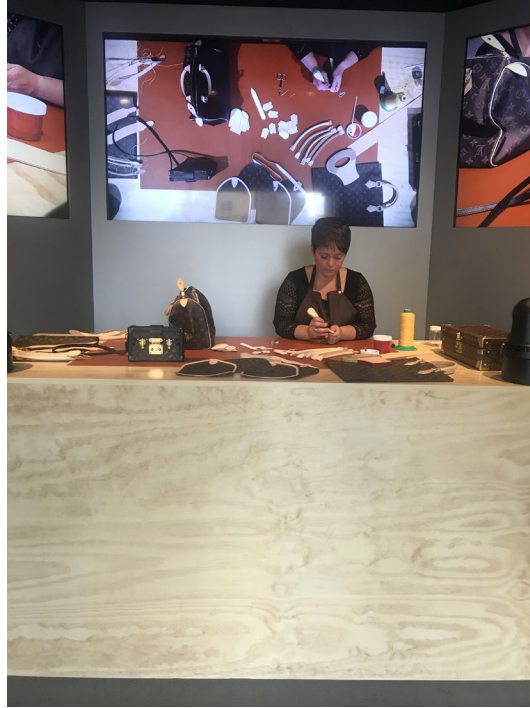


Figure 31: Craftsperson constructing a bag at *Louis Vuitton Time Capsule*, Toronto ON, September 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 32: Author trying on a garment from *Fashion Misfit: Philip Sparks*, Narwhal Gallery, Toronto ON, January 2019. Author's own image (unknown photographer).



Figure 33: In-store glass cases at Uniqlo, SoHo, New York City, September 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 34: Author posing in *Eckhaus Latta: Possessed*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, September 2018. Author's own image (Annie Robinson, photographer).

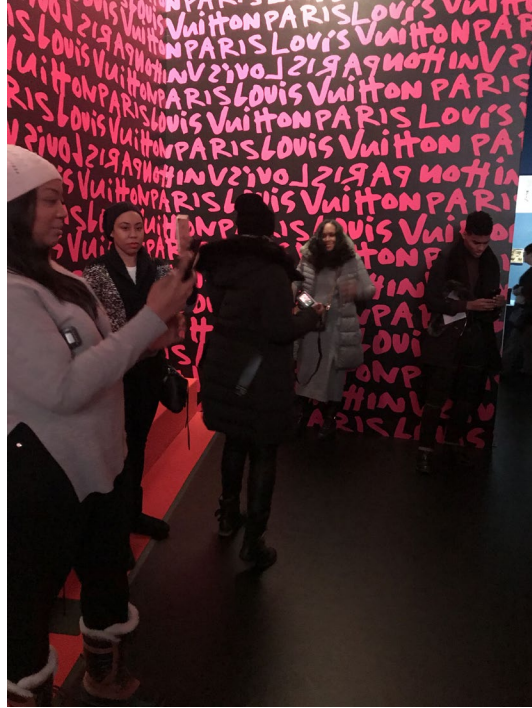


Figure 35: Visitors posing for pictures at *Volez Voguez Voyagez: Louis Vuitton*, New York City, January 2018. Author's own image.



Figure 36: Installation sales tag with bar code, *Displaying Fashion* installation, March 2019. Author's own image.



## Appendix A

### List of Visited Exhibitions:

#### Toronto (ongoing 2018-2019):

1. *All About Shoes: Footwear Through the Ages* (Bata Shoe Museum, permanent collection)
2. *Dior* (Royal Ontario Museum)
3. *Fashion Misfit: Philip Spark* (Narwhal Gallery)
4. *Iris van Herpen/Philip Beasley* (Royal Ontario Museum)
5. *Louis Vuitton Toronto Capsule Exhibition* (Louis Vuitton)
6. *Manolo Blahnik* (Bata Shoe Museum)
7. *The Gold Standard: Glittering Footwear from Around the World* (Bata Shoe Museum)
8. *Want: Desire, Design, and Depression Era Footwear* (Bata Shoe Museum)

#### New York City (January and September 2018):

9. *Downton Abbey: The Exhibition* (Carnival Film and Television)
10. *Expedition: Fashion at the Extreme* (The Museum at FIT)
11. *Fashion Unraveled* (The Museum at FIT)
12. *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination* (Metropolitan Museum of Art)
13. *ITEMS: Is Fashion Modern?* (Museum of Modern Art)
14. *Mod New York: Fashion Takes a Trip* (Museum of the City of New York)
15. *Pink: The History of a Punk, Pretty, Powerful Color* (The Museum at FIT)
16. *Possessed: Eckhaus Latta* (Whitney Museum of American Art)
17. *The Body: Fashion and Physique* (The Museum at FIT)
18. *Volez Voguez Voyagez* (Louis Vuitton)

#### London (February 2018):

19. *Balenciaga* (Victoria and Albert Museum)
20. *Ocean Liners* (Victoria and Albert Museum)
21. *Super Sharp* (Fashion Space Gallery, London College of Fashion)
22. Victoria and Albert Museum costume court

#### Paris (February 2018):

23. *Inaugural Display* (Yves Saint Laurent Museum)

## Appendix B

### List of Visited Retailers:

#### Toronto (ongoing 2018-2019):

1. Anthropologie
2. Aritzia
3. Canada Goose
4. Club Monaco
5. Comrags
6. Cos
7. Gap
8. Gravity Pope
9. Gucci
10. Harry Rosen
11. Holt Renfrew
12. Hudson's Bay Company
13. H&M
14. J.Crew
15. Levi's
16. Louis Vuitton
17. Lululemon
18. Nike
19. Nordstrom
20. Old Navy
21. OVO
22. Saint Laurent
23. Saks Fifth Avenue
24. Uncle Otis
25. Uniqlo
26. Value Village
27. Want Apothecary
28. Zara

#### New York City (January and September 2018):

29. Acne
30. A.P.C.
31. Aritzia
32. BAPE
33. Barneys
34. Bergdorf Goodmans
35. Brooks Brothers
36. Burberry
37. Club Monaco
38. Comme des Garcons

39. Drakes
40. Dover Street Market
41. Everlane
42. Fendi
43. Galeria Melissa
44. H&M
45. Issey Miyake
46. J.Crew
47. Jimmy Choo
48. Louis Vuitton
49. Macy's
50. Mansur Gavriel
51. Noah NY
52. Off-White
53. Opening Ceremony
54. Prada Epicentre
55. Ralph Lauren
56. Topshop/Topman
57. Uniqlo
58. Want Apothecary
59. Zara

London (February 2018):

60. Burberry
61. Harrods
62. Liberty and Co
63. Selfridges
64. Topshop/Topman

Paris (February 2018):

65. Galeries LaFayette
66. Le Bon Marché
67. Saint Laurent

## Appendix C

*Displaying Fashion* Installation Poster:





## Appendix D

### List of Works in Installation:

#### Titled Works:

1. Scarf
2. Tote Bag I
3. Tote Bag II
4. Clarice's Dress (on loan from the Dan School of Drama and Music, Queen's University)
5. New Display
6. Shirt
7. Ready-made (purchased from Zara)
8. Custom-made

#### Non-titled works

1. Two small framed collages
2. One large framed collage
3. Mobile

Other elements/objects in space included: bathroom/storage room, sales counter, fresh flowers, dying plants (x3), Le Labo Laurier 62 candle burning, Le Labo Santal 33 perfume (sprayed on objects for sale), vertical wall mirror, chair, gallery plinths (x2) (covered), small circular table, clothing rack with wooden hangers, wall hooks (3x black; 2x gold), digital collage printed on paper, custom sales tags, custom sales receipts, signed shopping bags, Sonos sound system playing "Chill Tracks" playlist from Spotify, and during the opening reception: La Marca prosecco, San Pellegrino water, Grolsch beer, assorted meat, cheese, and crackers. In addition, the creator, Parker O'Connor was always present.

## Appendix E

Installation Title and Wall Text:

Displaying Fashion  
an installation by Parker O'Connor

Displaying Fashion is an installation challenging the convergence of fashion retail and exhibition spaces. In the 2019 experience economy, both museums and retailers are increasingly similar in their design in attempts of attracting consumers. Is it okay that both of these spaces are becoming indistinguishable? What are the consequences of these similarities in design?

The space was initially inspired by the paradox of displaying fashion without real human bodies in exhibitions and retails. While criticized in museums for lifeless display of clothing; it is accepted within retailers. Yet in both spaces there is an impossibility of displaying on living bodies as fashion is originally intended. The objects included in this space play with these conventions of display whether they are able to be displayed without a body, displayed without an object, or a contrast of museum and retail display.

Feel free to explore the space, and consume what is available to be purchased and learned.

Is it a fashion exhibition? Is it a fashion retailer? Can it be both?

Displaying Fashion is an installation by Parker O'Connor as part of his Major Research Project for a Master of Arts in the School of Fashion at Ryerson University.

## Appendix F

Installation Labels (same text was used on both wall labels and sales tags):

*Scarf*, 2019

Parker O'Connor

Silk

90cm x 90cm

2019.01.01.001-010

40\$

Since ancient times, scarves have been worn for a variety of aesthetic and functional reasons. More recently, luxury fashion houses such as Hermès as well as museum gift shops profit off the sale of silk scarves in a variety of patterns. This scarf features a custom print of collaged photos of ambiguous examples of fashion on display in both museum exhibitions and retailers.

*Tote Bag I*, 2019

Parker O'Connor

Cotton, with paint

32cm x 50cm

2019.01.02.001-005

30\$

Tote bags remain one of the most common types of bags given its versatility of uses. With the rising environmental concerns of disposable bags, many consumers and retailers have opted to use tote bags as an alternative. Museum gift shops also are often filled with these types of bags given the perfect space to include their branding or works from their collection. The sizes and designs of tote bags seem as abundant as its uses.

*Tote Bag II*, 2019

Parker O'Connor

Cotton, with paint

42cm x 35cm

2019.01.03.001-005

30\$

Tote bags remain one of the most common types of bags given its versatility of uses. With the rising environmental concerns of disposable bags, many consumers and retailers have opted to use tote bags as an alternative. Museum gift shops also are often filled with these types of bags given the perfect space to include their branding or works from their collection. The sizes and designs of tote bags seem as abundant as its uses.

*Shirt, 2019*

Parker O'Connor

Cotton, with paint

Numbered 1-10

2019.01.04.001-010

30\$

T-shirts are the most common and ubiquitous type of clothing given their ability to fit any and all bodies regardless of gender, age, race, height, width. Originally underwear, today t-shirts are staples and worn as outerwear often with a graphic print or sometimes plain. These shirts are hung on hangers (void of a body, artificial or living) in a row showing the gradient spectrum of living bodies and instead of traditional sizes are given numbers like serial artworks.

*Clarice's Dress, 2016*

Parker O'Connor (designer), with Marianna Thomlison et. al

Polyester, Synthetic Chiffon, Sequins, and Plastic drinking straws

On loan from the Dan School of Drama and Music, Queen's University

Not for sale

This dress was originally worn in a production of *The Servant of Two Masters* for the role of Clarice and inspired by a dress in a fashion exhibition. The costumes all featured unusual materials in a *trompe-l'oeil* effect to give the illusion of an exaggerated, kitsch, 1920s reference. Hanging perfectly on a mannequin, this dress when worn creates a remarkable noise and movement as well as a very humorous effect when the wearer attempts to sit.

*Ready-made, 2019*

Zara, Purchased by Parker O'Connor

Polyester

Small

2019.01.07

Not for sale

Since the Industrial Revolution, the production of fashion has grown more and more rapidly allowing consumers to purchase garments cheaply and more frequently. Today, "fast fashion" remains a concern as consumers purchase low-quality, mass-produced garments at low costs, often wearing them only a few times before disposing of them. Although ubiquitous on the street, many museums would not collect or exhibit such an object.

*Custom-made*, 2019

Parker O'Connor

Various synthetic materials

No size

2019.01.08

Not for sale

One of a kind garments have undoubtedly given way to mass-produced fashions. Even within luxury fashion houses, haute couture fashions are decreasing to make room for profitable pret-a-porter fashions. While this dress is not couture by any means; it does create a unique look that could not be easily found within fast-fashion retailers. The “designer” quality and dramatic style are also more commonly featured within museums.

*New Display*, 2018

Parker O'Connor

Video projection, with Augmented Reality

Not for sale.

Sometimes it does not make sense to display objects, whether they are museum pieces that are extremely delicate or in poor condition, or the retail display demands a variety of looks displayed without physical space for that many mannequins. Projection mapping onto mannequins is a creative solution for both sectors. In this example, several fun party dresses were selected from different resources—some museum, some retail. Activate using Augmented Reality technology to learn more.

Activate with AR

To learn more about each dress, use the iPad to activate AR.

1. Simply turn on the iPad with the home button (on front screen) or the power button (on top). There is no passcode.
2. AR app should open automatically. If not, select the “AR” logo at the bottom of the home screen.
3. Point the iPad camera towards the mannequin/projection, and tap the screen to scan.
4. Follow prompts on screen.
5. When done, return iPad to its holder.

## Appendix G

### Steps of Experiences:

#### Museums

1. Approach museum — Acknowledge type of museum (fashion, history, art, design, anthropology, other)
2. Enter building
3. Purchase entrance tickets (maybe), or at get greeted
4. Proceed to exhibition space
5. Enter exhibition space (sometimes show ticket specific for exhibition)
6. See initial object/display/visual
7. Read title and/or curatorial text (make assumption of what kind of exhibition)
8. Begin exhibition — wander/follow flow of room, look at objects, read text, etc.
  1. Sub-divided into themes/sections/parts/rooms
  2. Assisted by guides/docents/attendants, ask questions, explain things
9. Any in-gallery activation ?
10. Leave exhibition space
11. Visit gift shop (either at exit of exhibition or at exit of museum or both)
12. Leave museum

#### Retailers

1. Approach store/store complex
2. See window/front display — make assumptions about the type of store (gender, style, price, etc.)
3. Enter store
4. See initial display/design in the store
5. Greeted by associate
6. Move around space either freely, by natural flow, or prescribed flow: look at objects, see different rooms/departments/sections
  1. Associate assists you — find size/colour, give info., etc.
7. Any in-store activations ?
8. Try clothing on in designated change rooms (back of store)
9. Purchase clothing
10. Leave store and/or store complex

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