

The Museum of Modern Art

THIS FALL, *ITEMS: IS FASHION MODERN?* HIGHLIGHTS 111 INFLUENTIAL GARMENTS AND ACCESSORIES THAT ARE PARAGONS OF DESIGN

The Museum of Modern Art's First Exhibition Dedicated to Fashion Design since 1944

Items: Is Fashion Modern?

October 1, 2017–January 28, 2018

The Steven and Alexandra Cohen Center for Special Exhibitions, sixth floor

Press Preview: Tuesday, September 26, 2017, 9:30–11:30 a.m., with remarks to follow

NEW YORK, July 19, 2017—The Museum of Modern Art presents ***Items: Is Fashion Modern?***, an investigation of 111 garments and accessories that have had a profound effect on the world over the last century, on view October 1, 2017, through January 28, 2018. Filling the entire sixth floor of the Museum, the exhibition explores fashion thematically, displaying 111 powerful and enduring manifestations of the ways in which fashion—a crucial field of design—touches everyone, everywhere. Like other forms of design, fashion exists within a complex system that involves politics and economics as much as it involves style, technology, and culture. The exhibition examines this complex system using each item as a lens. The 111 typologies are presented in the incarnation that made them significant in the last 100 years (the "stereotype") alongside contextual materials—images or videos—that trace each item's history and origins through to its archetypal form. Several concept items (the Little Black Dress, for instance) are represented by more than one example in order to fully underscore the breadth of the concept's impact, bringing the actual total number of objects in the exhibition to around 350. About 30 items will be complemented by a new prototype—a commissioned or loaned piece inspired by advancements in technology, social dynamics, aesthetics, or political awareness. *Items* is organized by Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, and Director of Research and Development; and Michelle Millar Fisher, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design, The Museum of Modern Art.

The title of the exhibition reprises the question that architect and curator Bernard Rudofsky raised with his 1944 MoMA exhibition *Are Clothes Modern?*, which is the only other instance of MoMA fully addressing this field of design. In his exhibition, Rudofsky explored individual and collective relationships with mid-century clothing in the waning moments of WWII, when traditional attitudes still prevailed, women still poured their bodies into uncompromising silhouettes, and menswear still demanded superfluous pockets, buttons, cuffs, and collars. For the *Items* exhibition, Rudofsky's question provides a springboard (and a foil) from which to consider the ways in which fashion is designed, manufactured, marketed, distributed, worn, and disposed of today.

Press Release

11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019

MoMA

“A powerful form of creative and personal expression that can be approached from multiple angles of study, fashion is unquestionably also a form of design, with its pitch struck in negotiations between form and function, means and goals, automated technologies and craftsmanship, standardization and customization, universality and self-expression,” said Antonelli. “Like all physical and digital forms of design, it moves today on a spectrum ranging from post-industrial seriality (from prêt-à-porter to fast fashion) to precious, handcrafted uniqueness (couture). As design, it exists in the service of others. In most cases, it is designed by a human being to dress others—sometimes many, many others—so that they can function in the world, in different arenas.”

The items are loosely grouped throughout the galleries, in order to provide both deliberate and accidental adjacencies as the public moves through the exhibition. The installation begins with an area devoted to the mutating idea of body and silhouette, highlighting issues of size, image, and gender with examples of the Little Black Dress, the Wonderbra, the sari, and Rudi Gernreich’s Unisex Project, among many others. The exhibition then moves into a zone devoted to new technologies and visions of the future, bringing together experiments such as Issey Miyake’s A-POC and Pierre Cardin’s Cosmos Collection along with Gore-Tex, the leotard, and Moon Boot. A middle gallery is devoted to a study of the relationship between emancipation, modesty, introversion, and rebellion, which paradoxically share many common fashion traits. Introduced by the hoodie and the turtleneck, the section includes items as diverse as leather pants, the slip dress, the bikini, the hijab, and kente. Following is a section devoted to items whose foremost function is to deliver a message, whether explicitly—as in a graphic T-shirt, a tattoo, and a bandanna—or implicitly, as in a Birkin bag or a diamond engagement ring.

A section dedicated to the myriad ways fashion and athleticism have intersected over the past century includes sports jerseys, streetwear staples like the polo shirt, classics like Converse All Stars, and revered high-fashion collaborations like Yohji Yamamoto’s Y-3. From there, the exhibition flows into a section dedicated to everyday uniforms, featuring such humble masterpieces as the Breton shirt and Levi’s 501s, professional attire such as the pencil skirt and loafers, and applications of the multipurpose Dutch wax. Finally, the exhibition’s conclusion interrogates the concept of power with, among others, a selection of suits, Donna Karan’s Seven Easy Pieces, stilettos, and the pearl necklace. At the close of the exhibition will be a data visualization by the information designer and Accurat founder Giorgia Lupi—in collaboration with Glasgow Caledonian University in New York’s Fair Fashion Center—which will reveal hidden connections and patterns within the 111 items and will show the macro- and micro-level role of the viewer in the systems of fashion and sustainability.

As part of the exhibition, some designers, artists, scientists, engineers, and manufacturers have been invited to respond to some of these “indispensable items” with pioneering materials, approaches, and design revisions—extending this conversation into the near and distant future, and connecting the history of these garments with their present recombination and use. These prototype designers include both emerging and established figures in the fields of fashion, design, science, and technology. A few (nine individuals or studios) have provided pre-existing work, but the majority (19) have been commissioned to create for *Items*

original work that engages a future need, speculation, or desire that fashion might fulfill. Participants include Laduma Ngxokolo (South African) with the Aran sweater; Verbal and Yoon (Korean, lives in Japan) with the Cartier Love Bracelet; Pia Interlandi (Australian) with the Little Black Dress; Unmade (British) with the Breton shirt; Kerby Jean-Raymond of Pyer Moss (American) with Pierre Cardin's Cosmos Collection; Chen Zhi (Chinese) with the pencil skirt; and Lucy Jones (Welsh) with tights.

FULL LIST OF THE 111 ITEMS

Followed by the stereotype(s)—and in some cases the prototype—representing each in the exhibition

501 Jeans (Levi's)

1947 example from the company archive

A-POC Queen Textile (Issey Miyake)

Example from MoMA's collection

Adidas Superstars

1983 pair from the company archive

Air Force 1s (Nike)

Three 1980s pairs, from the Nike company archive and from a private lender

Aran sweater

*1942 example from the National Museum of Ireland
Prototype commission by Laduma Ngxokolo*

Aviator sunglasses

1970s pair from Ray Ban's archive

Backpack

A 1980s Prada Vela backpack from the company archive

Balaclava

Purchase

Ballet flats

Examples by Repetto (2010, Bata Shoe Museum), Valentina (1940s, Museum of the City of New York), Claire McCardell (1940s, The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute)

Bandanna

Six midcentury examples from the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

Baseball cap

Two examples from New Era, c. 1950 and 1996

Beret

Examples from Boinas Elósegui, Laulhère

Biker jacket

*1950s Schott One-Star Perfecto from the company archive
Prototype commission by Asher Levine*

Bikini

1970s example from the Blue Man archive

Birkin bag

*Jane Birkin's Hermès lent by Catherine Benier
Prototype by Mary Ping, lent by Collection Galeries Lafayette*

Body Meets Dress—Dress Meets Body dress (Comme des Garçons)

*One example from the s/s 1997 collection, lent by the Indianapolis Museum of Art
Prototype on loan from Brandon Wen and Laura Zwanziger*

Breton shirt

*1960s example from Orcival's company archive
Prototype commission by Unmade*

Briefs (Y-Front)

Vintage examples by Calvin Klein and Jockey

Bucket hat

Examples by Kangol, ATA

Burkini

Example by Ahiida

Caftan

Two 1970s exemplars by Thea Porter from private lenders

Capri pants

Two 1940s pairs by Sonja de Lennart from her own archive

Cartier Love Bracelet

*Lent by Cartier Collection
Prototype commission by Verbal and Yoon*

Chanel No. 5

1924 Chanel No. 5 bottle from the company archive

Cheongsam

Two 1930s examples from the Museum of Chinese in America, New York

Chino

1990s Dockers from Levi's company archives
Prototype commission by Sartists

Converse All Stars

c.1950 pair from the Converse archive

Clogs

1970s pair from OlofDaughters archive, Sweden

Coppola

Contemporary item from La Coppola Storta, Italy

Dashiki

Examples from New Breed (c. 1968), Lagos Balogun Market (contemporary)

Diamond engagement ring

Contemporary example by Tiffany & Co.
Prototype commission by Revital Cohen and Tuur Van Balen

Diamond stud

Contemporary example by Jacob & Company

Door-knocker earrings

Purchase

Down jacket

Examples by Moncler, Norma Kamali

Dr. Martens

1970s pair from the Victoria & Albert Museum

Dutch wax

Two contemporary ensembles designed for Vlisco by Loza Maléombho and Stylista

Espadrilles

1977 Yves Saint Laurent x Castañer from the Victoria & Albert Museum, London

Fanny pack

1996 Vivienne Westwood x Louis Vuitton, 1990s Spark Pretty MTV

Fitbit

Contemporary Fitbit Flex
Prototype loan by Rogers Research Lab, Northwestern University

Fleece

1980s fleece from Patagonia's archive

Flip-flops

Example from Havaianas

Fur Coat

A loan from PETA's archives

Gore-Tex

Marmot, Early Winters, from the Gore-Tex archives

Graphic T-shirt

A range of graphic T-shirts
Prototype commission by Modern Meadow

Guayabera

Contemporary example from Ramón Puig, Miami
Prototype commission by Ryohei Kawanishi

Harem pants

1933–35 Paul Poiret from the Kobe Fashion Museum
Prototype commission by Miguel Mesa Posada

Headphones

1979 Sony Walkman from MoMA's Collection

Head wrap

Three examples--gele, doek, turban

Hijab

Examples from Haute Hijab, Uniqlo x Hana Tajima, Capsters, Al-Amira style example

Hoodie

1980s example from Champion's archive

Jumpsuit

c. 1974 Stephen Burrows example from The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute
Prototype commission by Richard Malone

Keffiyeh

Purchase from Hirbawi Factory
Prototype loan by Salim al-Kadi

Kente cloth

Late 1960s example by Julie "Chez Julie" Norteye lent by the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL
Prototype commission by Tewobaabi master weaver, Ghana

Kilt

A look from the A/W 1994 Anglomania collection specially remade by Vivienne Westwood

Kippah

A range of purchased and borrowed kippot

Lapel pin

AIDS ribbon, remembrance poppy, peace sign, American flag (MoMA collection and purchases)

Little Black Dress

Examples by Chanel (c.1926, FIDM Museum at the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising), Christian Dior (c.1950, the Indianapolis Museum of Art), Givenchy (1968, The Museum at FIT), Thierry Mugler (1981, The Indianapolis Museum of Art), Rick Owens (2014, designer's archive), Nervous System (2013, MoMA collection), Arnold Scaasi (c.1966, The Robert and Penny Fox Historic Costume Collection, Drexel University), Wolford (1990s, purchase), Versace (1994, Phoenix Art Museum), and a Utility Dress (1940s, Victoria & Albert Museum) Prototype commission by Pia Interlandi

Le Smoking

Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche (1966), lent by Maison Anouschka, Paris

Leather pants

1989 Mr. Leather pair from Guy Baldwin's archive in the Leather Archives and Museum

Leotard

1976 example by Bonnie August x Danskin, from The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute

Loafer

1970s pair by Bass, from the Wilton Home and Farm Museum, Maine

Manicure

Nail art sets by Chieko Nakayama (lent by The Kyoto Costume Institute) and Bernadette Thompson (purchase)

Mao jacket

1970s example from the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
Prototype commission by Francesco Risso of Marni

Miniskirt

1967 Dispo paper skirt (Meyersohn & Silverstein Ltd)

Monogram

1980s Dapper Dan Alpo Coat, from Dapper Dan's archive

Moon boot

1970s example from Tecnica's archive
Prototype commission by Liz Ciokajlo with Maurizio Montalti

Oxford cloth button-down shirt

1950s example from Brooks Brothers
Prototype loan by MagnaReady

Panama hat

Contemporary example by Domingo Carranza, Ecuador

Pearl necklace

Choker lent by Mikimoto

Pencil skirt

Example by Janie Bryant for Mad Men
Prototype commission by i-am-chen

Plaid flannel shirt

1980s example by Woolrich, from the company's archive

Platforms

Examples by Biba (1973, Victoria & Albert Museum), Buckler & Price (1993, Victoria & Albert Museum), Buffalo (1997, Bata Shoe Museum), Delman (1940s, purchase), Noritaka Tatehana (2010, The Museum at FIT), Vivienne Westwood (1987, The Museum at FIT), Alexander McQueen (2010, private archive), unknown designers from the 1930s, 40s, and 60s (Bata Shoe Museum and Museum of the City of New York), and a pair of Elton John's stage platforms (1974, Bata Shoe Museum)

Polo shirt

Examples by Ralph Lauren, Lacoste, Fred Perry, from the companies' archives

Premaman

1950s examples (purchases)
Prototype commission by Wei Hung Chen

Red lipstick

1952 Revlon Fire and Ice, purchase

Rolex watch

1970s Rolex Datejust, private lender

Safari suit

1970s Yves Saint Laurent his/hers, from private lender and The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute

Safety pin

1977/78 McLaren/Westwood/Reid "God Save the Queen" shirt from private lender

Sari

Vintage banarasi, contemporary khadi by Rta Kapur Chishti, contemporary Raw Mango, and vintage "grandmother" sari, lent by Malika Verma Kashyap

Seven Easy Pieces

Seven 1980s pieces from the Donna Karan archive

Salwar kameez

Contemporary high school uniform from Pakistan, purchase

- Shawl**
Three contemporary examples from Kashmir Loom, India
- Shift dress**
Examples by Anne Klein (c. 1960, purchase), Helmut Lang (1994, MAK Vienna), Marimekko (1966, Design Museum Finland), Lilly Pulitzer (1960s, purchase), Paco Rabanne (1968, Kobe Fashion Museum), Phelan (2016, from the designer) Prototype commission by Bolt Threads + Stella McCartney
- Shirt dress**
c. 1974 Halston, lent by The Robert and Penny Fox Historic Costume Collection, Drexel University
- Silk scarf**
c. 1960 Hermès, lent by Catherine Bernier
- Slip dress**
Examples by Calvin Klein, 1994 and 1995, lent by the PVH Archive Prototype commission by Richard Nicholl and XO
- Snugli**
A 1971 Snugli babycarrier from Ann and Mike Moore
- Space Age (Pierre Cardin)**
Two 1967 examples from Cardin's Cosmos Collection from the Victoria & Albert Museum Prototype commission by Pyer Moss
- Spanx**
Purchase
- Speedo**
Team USA 1968 men's suit (Powerhouse Museum, Sydney) and Team Canada 1976 women's suit (purchase)
- Sports jersey**
Colin Kaepernick's, Pelé's, Lisa Leslie's
- Stiletto**
Stereotypes by Roger Vivier (Bata Shoe Museum, 1954), Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo, Christian Louboutin (contemporary examples from the company archives)
- Suit**
Examples from the archives of Anderson & Sheppard (2017), Thom Browne (2017), Yohji Yamamoto (2004), Carlo Brandelli (2001–08), Giorgio Armani (men's and women's suits from the 1990s), Bill Blass (1970, lent by the Philadelphia Museum of Art), Burton's (1945–54, lent by Leeds City Museum), and a Zoot Suit (1940–42, lent by Los Angeles County Museum of Art)
- Sunscreen**
Bain de Soleil/Coppertone, purchase
- Surgical mask**
Contemporary samples purchased in Tokyo Prototype loan by Zhijun Wang
- Swatch**
1980s and 1990s examples from the Swatch archive
- Tabi boot**
Five examples (dating 1989–2008) from Maison Martin Margiela, MoMu Antwerp, and a private lender
- Tattoo**
A selection of global tattoo designs
- Teva**
c.1988 example from the company's archive
- Tie**
Examples lent by Marinella (contemporary), Van Heusen, and Arrow (purchased, midcentury)
- Tights/pantyhose**
c.1959 Glen Raven Prototype commissions by Somarta and Lucy Jones
- Tracksuit**
A special remake of Bruce Lee's 1971–72 Longstreet tracksuit, from the Bruce Lee Foundation
- Trench coat**
Contemporary Burberry Westminster Heritage Trench Prototype loan by Anne van Galen
- Turtleneck**
1980 example by Issey Miyake
- Unisex Project (Rudi Gernreich)**
Two 1970 bodysuits from FIDM Museum at the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising and The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute
- White T-shirt**
Contemporary Hanes example
- Wonderbra**
An early 1990s example, purchase
- Wrap dress (Diane von Furstenberg)**
1974 from the designer's archive
- Y-3 (Yohji Yamamoto)**
Examples from the 2001 and 2003 collections, lent by The Kyoto Costume Institute
- Yoga pants**

1998 Lululemon “Boogie” pant
YSL Touche Éclat

Purchase

Also part of the installation are four sculptures by Costantino Nivola, commissioned by Bernard Rudofsky in 1944 for the MoMA show *Are Clothes Modern?* (lent by the Brooklyn Museum.)

Special thanks to the Items Advisory Council: Imran Amed, The Business of Fashion; Omoyemi Akerele, Lagos Fashion and Design Week; Mickey Boardman, PAPER magazine; Julie Gilhart; Kim Hastreiter, PAPER magazine; Sofia Hedman and Serge Martynov, Museea; Malika Verma Kashyap, Border & Fall; Gene Krell, Japanese editions of Vogue and GQ, Korean editions of Vogue, Vogue Girl, and W; Linda Loppa, Polimoda; Penny Martin, The Gentlewoman; Shayne Oliver, Helmut Lang; Michael Preysman, Everlane; Valerie Steele, The Museum at FIT; and Bandana Tewari, Vogue India.

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EXHIBITION HASHTAG:

#ItemsMoMA

MoMA invites the public to share their experience of the exhibition—and their own “in the wild” sightings of any of the 111 items on the checklist—using #ItemsMoMA.

PUBLICATION:

Items: Is Fashion Modern? presents 111 items of clothing and accessories that have had a profound impact on global culture in the 20th and 21st centuries. An essay by Paola Antonelli opens the volume, highlighting the Museum’s unique perspective on fashion and exploring fashion’s role in the changing international landscape of design. The 111 short essays that follow trace the history of each item in relation to cultural forces past and present, touching on labor, marketing, technology, religion, politics, aesthetics, and popular culture, among others. Arranged encyclopedia-style, in alphabetical order, these brief essays present compelling new scholarship and judiciously collated historical material, richly illustrated with a lively mix of archival images, fashion photography, film stills, and documentary shots. Punctuating the book are newly commissioned portfolios by five international contemporary photographers—Omar Victor Diop, Bobby Doherty, Catherine Losing, Monika Mogi, and Kristin-Lee Moolman—each of whom was assigned to represent the objects in one alphabetically ordered section of the book. Their diverse responses bring a vibrant creative energy to the project.

Edited by Paola Antonelli and Michelle Millar Fisher, with texts by Luke Baker, Anna Burckhardt, Stephanie Kramer, Mei Mei Rado, and Jennifer Tobias. 288 pages, 500 illustrations. Hardcover, \$45. ISBN: 978-1-63345-036-3. Distributed to the trade through ARTBOOK|D.A.P. in the United States and Canada. Distributed outside the United States and Canada by Thames & Hudson.

FASHION AS DESIGN ONLINE COURSE:

In conjunction with *Items: Is Fashion Modern?* MoMA offers Fashion as Design, a free massive open online course (MOOC) available on Coursera. Through videos, audio, and a variety of

other resources, learners will explore intersections between fashion, design, and everyday life through the lens of specific garments and accessories. Learners will develop critical tools to appreciate and contextualize fashion and design histories and aesthetics from new and unexpected perspectives. By investigating garments through a variety of lenses—sustainability, technology, modernity, individual and collective identities, supply chain, labor practices, and more—the course aims to foster a better understanding of the choices we make about fashion. Course sessions begin in October at coursera.org/learn/fashion.

AUDIO TOUR:

The accompanying audio tour features interviews with a variety of designers, fashion scholars, and historians, photographers, and wearers, including Leila Ahmed, Guy Baldwin, Carlo Brandelli, Janie Bryant, Revital Cohen and Tuur Van Balen, David Godlis, Francesca Granata, Kerby Jean-Raymond, Linda Loppa, Richard Malone, Emma McClendon, Hari Nef, Christopher Richards, Jessica Rosenkrantz and Jesse Louis-Rosenberg (Nervous System), Valerie Steele, and Tom Gould, as well as commentary from Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, and Director of Research and Development; Michelle Fisher, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design; and Stephanie Kramer, Research Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design.

MoMA Audio is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

PUBLIC PROGRAM:

Fashion Is Kale: A one-day event celebrating fashion's hidden heroes

October 19, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

In conjunction with *Items: Is Fashion Modern?*, this symposium will feature presenters from a diverse range of professional and personal perspectives whose often-hidden roles are critical in shaping the contemporary fashion system. The title is inspired by Elizabeth Hawes's book *Fashion Is Spinach*, an insider's critique of the fashion scene, which was published in 1938, just a few years before Bernard Rudofsky's seminal MoMA exhibition *Are Clothes Modern?* probed similar topics. This program will provide insight into the ways in which fashion items are designed, manufactured, marketed, distributed, worn, and disposed of today, by listening to—and engaging with—professionals whose roles are often hidden, but are no less important. A reception and an opportunity to see the exhibition will follow the program.

ARTISTS EXPERIMENT: EMILY SPIVACK

Artists Experiment is an annual initiative in the department of Education that brings contemporary artists together in dialogue with MoMA educators to develop ideas for innovative and experimental public interactions. As part of this year's program for Artists Experiment, the Museum has invited Emily Spivack—whose work draws from contemporary culture, fashion and history—to develop a project that will complement *Items: Is Fashion Modern?* and invite Museum visitors to think about their clothing and the stories they carry in a thoughtful, participatory way.

MoMA DESIGN STORE:

MoMA Design Store has developed a unique range of limited-edition products inspired by some of the iconic designs featured in *Items: Is Fashion Modern?* Hand-picked by the MoMA team, products ranging from apparel to accessories will be available for a limited time only in MoMA Design Store locations and online at store.moma.org. In addition, an edited selection of products will be available for purchase in the Items Store concept shop on the sixth floor of the Museum, outside the exhibition. While a full product assortment will be available at the second-floor Museum Store and at MoMA's Design Stores, the sixth-floor space will spotlight a changing cycle of featured products, with some limited versions only available in the sixth-floor store.

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For downloadable high-resolution images, register at [moma.org/press](https://momablog.moma.org/press).