

Ways of Perceiving (ADDA4023)

Exhibition Essay

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The past in the future

The exhibition demonstrates how fashion from past eras continues to influence and re-emerge in modern styles, anticipating a fascinating resurgence of future trends. It highlights the cyclical nature of fashion; wherein past styles frequently re-emerge in modern design. The main theme of this exhibition is knight armour, which has served as inspiration for contemporary designers.

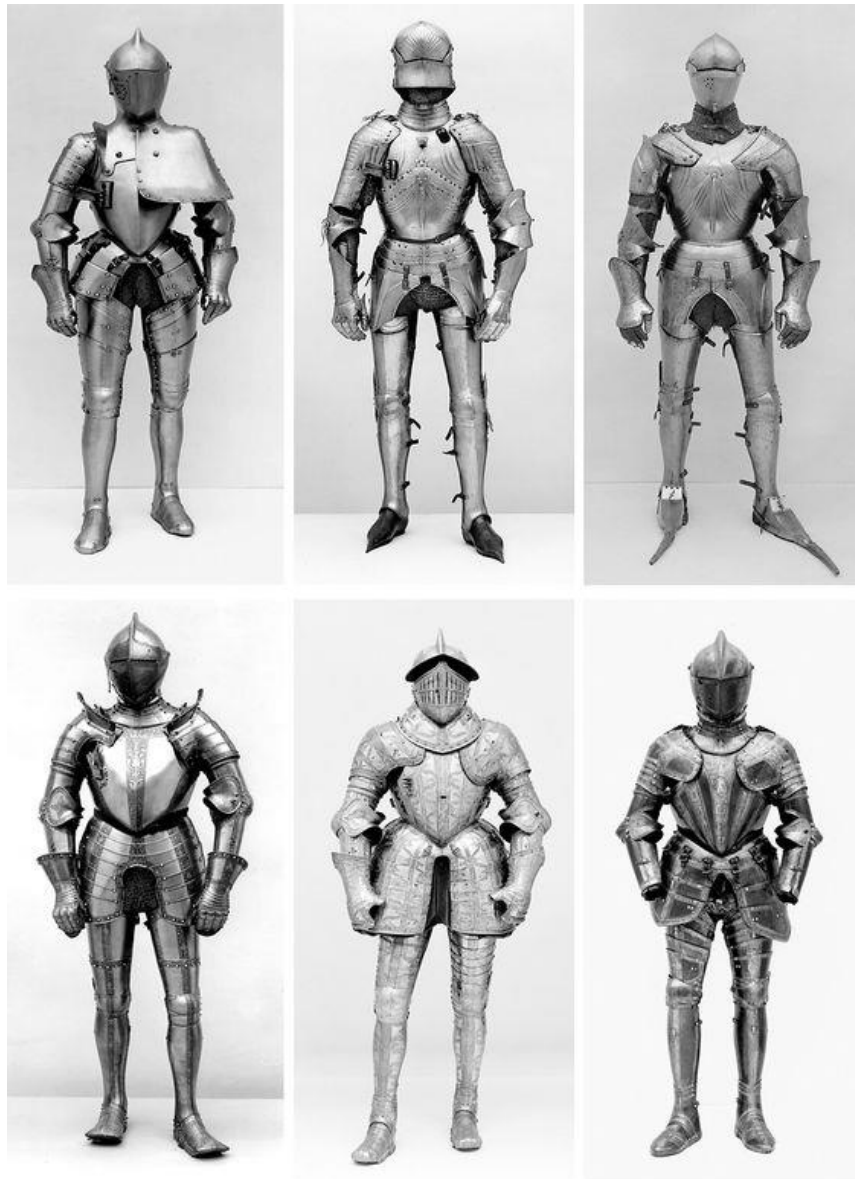


Fig. 1 Different armour design from 15th-16th century

Historically, armor evolved over centuries, becoming technologically advanced to better protect its wearer. Plate armour developed in Europe during the late Middle Ages and was used during tournaments, battles, and crusades. From simple designs providing basic defense to richly adorned suits symbolizing status and identity, armor now transcends its original utilitarian purposes to influence modern fashion, including designs seen in video games.



Fig. 2 Armor Garniture of George Clifford (1558–1605), Third Earl of Cumberland



Fig. 3 Game MMORPG “AION” armour set



Fig. 4 Actress Zendaya wearing Armour dress made by Versace to the Met Gala 2018

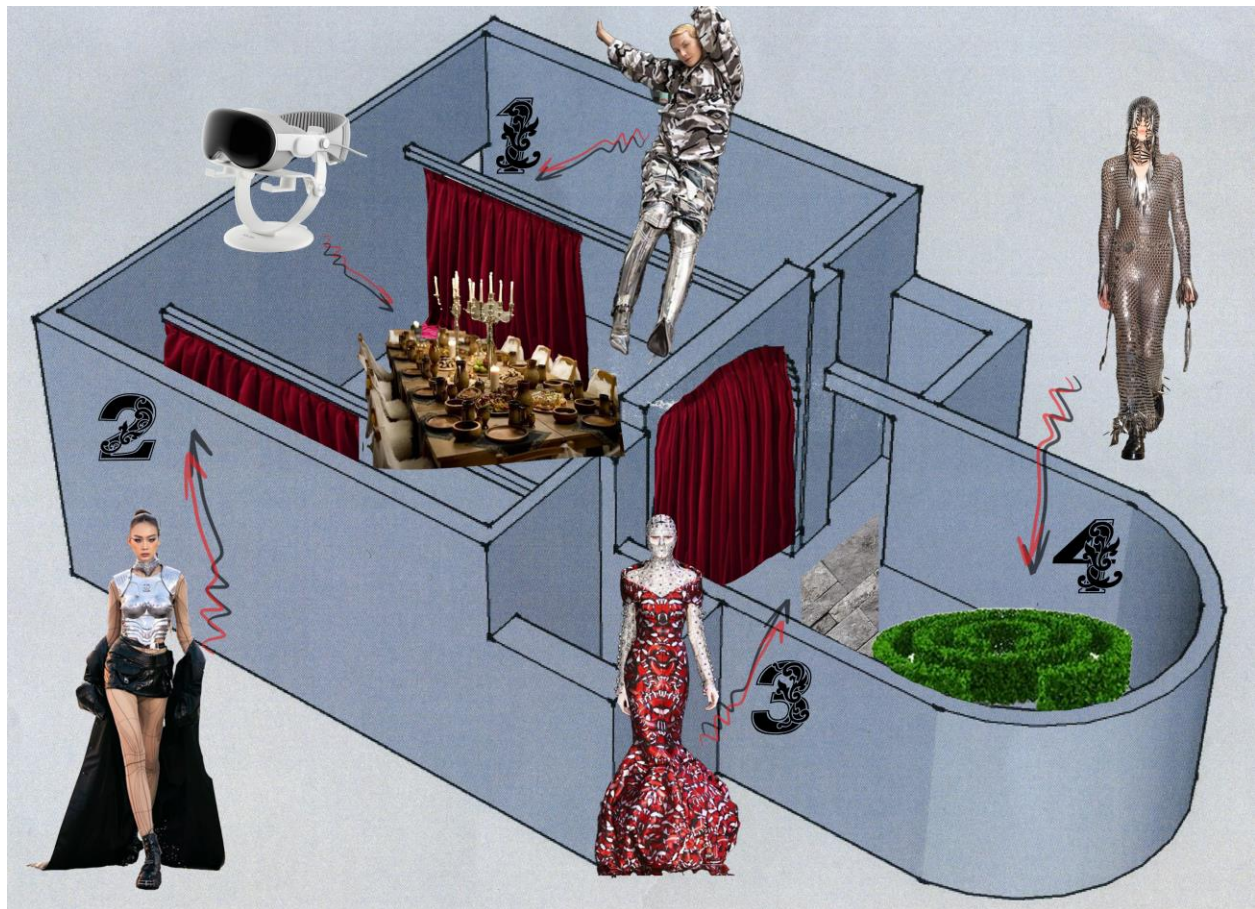
A central element of this exhibition is the strategic use of virtual reality technology (**VR**), *“which portray the role of VR as a mass-communication device that changes consumers’ lives in the future.”* (Jung, Ko, Seo, Yu, 2021, p.2). Mannequins displaying garments will no longer be just passive exhibits; through the use of augmented reality (**AR**) *“users can experience the virtual world and remain to see the real world”* (Fang Wu, Young Kim, 2022, p.2). thereby viewers will be able to *“imagining fashion as something other than object”* (Smitheram, 2015, p. 2).

In this exhibition, virtual reality (**VR**) headsets are utilized to animate mannequins, simulating the dynamics of garments in motion to enhance visitor visualization of their appearance and characteristics. The realistic movement depicted in the animation was achieved through a comprehensive research process. Initially, *“a fashion model was motion-captured while walking, to record a specific range of human movement. Then a character was rigged on the model’s tracked movement and 3D-modelled into a new form. Building the character rigging onto the model’s motion-captured skeleton gave a more natural feel to the animation, as the dynamics of the model’s idiosyncratic walk determined an organic flow and movement of the virtual cloth.”* (Smitheram, 2015, p. 7).

By blending historical elements with modern technology, the exhibition not only revisits the past but also revitalizes it, making historical fashion relevant in today's digital world. Visitors are invited to explore the practical and aesthetic aspects of knight armour through a contemporary lens, fostering a deeper appreciation for how historical designs shape modern fashion. Moreover, the use of VR and AR technologies in the exhibition serves a dual purpose. It not only enhances the visitor experience by making it more interactive and engaging but also positions the exhibition at the forefront of technological integration in fashion.

dimension of the fashion world. Behind the table a curtained, arched passage leads to the semi-oval annex, the core of the exhibition. Here, participants will see the third exhibition before entering the hedge maze that will lead them to the final and main presentation.

The exhibition design is strategically segmented by curtains and architectural features, isolating each display to allow visitors to concentrate on individual garments without distraction. This design aims to foster a deeper, more personal connection with the exhibits, as it can significantly enhance visitor engagement and understanding. It invites visitors to engage fully—visually, emotionally, and intellectually—into a realm where the past and future merge, showcasing the lasting influence of medieval aesthetics on upcoming trends. This blend of historical and modern innovation captures the essence of the exhibition, positioning the medieval past within a futuristic context and making it the ideal location for "The Past in the Future."



Fig, 6 Exhibition visualization

Exhibit 1 - Balenciaga Heeled Chevalier Boots



Fig. 7 Afterworld: The Age of Tomorrow; avatar model from video game

Balenciaga's Fall 2021 fashion collection presents a visionary outlook on the future of fashion, blending art, history, and innovation. Transporting viewers to the year 2031 through a captivating virtual reality game, the collection challenges traditional perceptions and proposes a new, enduring future for fashion. Among its standout features are boots inspired by armor, reinterpreting 400-year-old steel knight's armor in a modern lacquered material. These boots

seamlessly combine ancient craftsmanship with futuristic aesthetics, peeking from beneath tailored coats and denim skirts. Exclusive and collectible, the collection was available only through VIP request made 18 months in advance, with a price tag of [£39,408.00 GBP](#). Balenciaga's collection serves as a testament to the brand's commitment to pushing the boundaries of fashion innovation. By immersing viewers in a virtual reality experience and challenging conventional norms, Balenciaga explores the intersection of art, history, and technology while provoking thought about the future of fashion.



Fig. 8 Near future fashion visualization

Exhibit 2 – Chung Thanh Phong CTP No.22



Fig. 8 Model Bao Ngoc during fashion show Voyage NO.5 2023

The Fashion Pre-Fall 2023 Voyage NO.5 collection by Chung Thanh Phong serves as a testament to the forefront of futuristic fashion and technological artistry. The collection dazzles

with metallic dresses featuring splash effects and paracord buckles, emphasizing a youthful, vibrant personality. These garments skillfully incorporate advanced color printing techniques, breathing new life into familiar metallic textures. The palette mixes metallic main colors with shades of white, black, and blue, exploring materials like metal, grid textures, denim, and glossy skin.

Highlighting innovation, the designs include tufted dresses crafted from pressed elastic and 3D foam, creating an ethereal floating effect. The collection additionally showcases accessories and armor made using FDM 3D printing technology, highlighting a perfect fusion of metal's durability with the lightness needed for wearable fashion. The use of various techniques in fashion employing technology demonstrates how we can greatly revitalize and rejuvenate old styles, creating modern interpretations and perpetuating the legacy of previous eras within the context of the contemporary fashion world.



Fig. 9 Side of the garment

Exhibit 3 – Alexander McQueen The Yashmak



Fig. 10 Yashmak bodysuit

The Yashmak bodysuit, designed by Shaun Leane for Alexander McQueen's Spring/Summer 2000 collection, constitutes a significant exploration of cultural and aesthetic boundaries. Re-editioned in 2017, it was prominently featured in the exhibition "Jewelry: The Body Transformed" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art from November 2018, to February 2019.

Crafted from aluminum plates linked by chains and adorned with red Swarovski crystals, the Yashmak combines metal strength with crystal sparkle. It challenges Western fashion norms while delving into the cultural significance of Middle Eastern attire. The design, involving

aluminum cast from molds, transforms traditional jewelry concepts, challenging conventional notions of femininity and beauty.

Shaun Leane, known for innovative jewelry designs, created this piece, considered one of the top twenty most spectacular in McQueen's body of work. It represents a bold endeavor in modern jewelry, aiming to challenge and redefine glamour and allure. The Yashmak symbolizes power, resistance, and artistry, delineating the boundaries between desire and revulsion, the sublime and the grotesque, encapsulating the essence of body transformation through jewelry.



Fig. 11 The Yashmak bodysuit with dress during fashion show Fall/Winter 2009

Exhibit 4 - Paco Rabanne Chainmail Dress



Fig. 12 Model during Paris Fashion Week Fall 2020

Paco Rabanne's Fall 2020 collection, designed by creative director Julien Dossena, explores historical and religious symbolism through innovative craftsmanship and luxurious

materials. The collection features a blend of medieval and Victorian influences, with a focus on chain mail and metal mesh garments.

Addressing themes of femininity, power, spirituality, and historical symbolism, the collection delves into the intersection of fashion and history. Through a modern lens, it reinterprets medieval and religious imagery, offering a fresh perspective on traditional motifs. Furthermore, the garments pay homage to Paco Rabanne's retro-futuristic aesthetic, drawing inspiration from the fashion house's heritage while infusing it with contemporary allure.



Fig.13 Garment detail

Conclusion

Exhibition serves as a profound exploration of how deeply historical motifs are embedded within contemporary fashion, and how these elements can be envisioned within a futuristic context. This exhibit not only showcases the cyclical nature of fashion, where ancient designs are reinterpreted with modern twists, but also illustrates how technological advancements can bridge the gap between historical aesthetics and future possibilities.

"The Past in the Future" serves as a testament to the enduring interplay between tradition and innovation, illustrating the perpetual evolution of fashion. It challenges viewers to reconceptualize historical elements, such as armor, not simply as relics of the past but as active inspirations for future fashion innovations.

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Fig. 5 Personal ideas map; own invention (Created on 16 April 2024)

Fig. 6 Exhibition visualization, own invention (Created on 29 April 2024)

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