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Recognizing the Parallels Between Fashion and Art: The Designs of Elsa Schiaparelli, Yves Saint Laurent and Rei Kawakubo

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Recognizing the Parallels Between Fashion and Art:
The Designs of Elsa Schiaparelli, Yves Saint Laurent and Rei Kawakubo

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Art History
of Bard College

by
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Dedication

For Mom –

With endless love and gratitude for your inspiration, thank you.

I would not be who I am without you.

Acknowledgements

Alex Kitnick

Thank you for helping me shape and structure this project.

Jane Smith

Thank you for reading way too many edits of this project, I am eternally grateful.

Grandma Enid

Thank you for being the first and last person to read through my project and making it make sense!

Nelson

I think this project took a bigger toll on you than it did on me. Thank you.

Thank you, thank you.

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Introduction

I have long been interested in art and fashion. So, it seems natural that my senior project, and my work at college, would culminate in the study of the relationship between fashion and art. I grew up with a grandmother and a great-grandmother who were, and are, wonderful artists. My mother began her career in the fashion world and has been an art collector for as long as I can remember. Growing up in New York City only stimulated my love for fashion. Walking home from school on Madison Avenue, I would admire the shop windows of Chloé, Prada, Tom Ford, Celine and Gucci, just to name a few. I endlessly played dress up in my mother's closet trying on the pieces she collected during her first couple of years working in the world of fashion. I was always most drawn to the pieces in her closet that she had had the longest, the ones that were closest to being described as vintage, because they told a story, there was history ingrained in the fabric. Playing dress up grew into a love for studying the fashions of the past.

My love for fashion and art then took an academic turn. In high school, I took an IB higher-level art class where we were required to write commentaries about various art shows and make visual representations of what inspired us most. I always looked forward to fifth period art after lunch and I mostly looked forward to the “required” art shows we visited with our class, and in our free time. One exhibition that was particularly striking to me was Alexander McQueen's show, *Savage Beauty*, held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2011, as a posthumous celebration of his work (figure 1). What struck me the most about this exhibition was not the clothes themselves, but the sculptural-like structures and their presentation in the high art context of the museum. I loved observing fashion in this way, not only as a spectacle, but also as a way to analyze and become inspired by their designs. Walking through the

exhibition made me desire to know more about McQueen, the way he thought, how he might have wanted his clothing to be represented, or curated in this setting. I wanted to know how and why McQueen had made all the decisions about his garments, and how the museum had decided to display his creations.

All of these influences led me to choosing art history as my major. As my senior project approached, I began to decide that, again, I could combine my two passions and make it my interest and my most important project in college. On a visit to Dia:Beacon last summer, I walked through the Agnes Martin gallery (figure 2) and was overwhelmed by her paintings. Although I had visited Dia:Beacon before, her paintings had never struck me the same way. I felt her soft palette and gentle lines were telling of the fashions of the moment, as her art and the fashions of last summer were the same in color and simplicity. I came to the conclusion that I would write my senior project on the way that Agnes Martin has so vividly influenced the fashion world! Of course, there is no real proof of this either, academically or in popular culture, so I soon gave that idea up and decided to explore the broader idea of how fashion meets art more deeply.

In my research, I was struck by the 20th and 21st century designers, Elsa Schiaparelli (figure 3), Yves Saint Laurent (figure 4) and Rei Kawakubo (figure 5) and their influence on visual culture. These three designers are important in fashion history because they all break the rules and step over the line of fashion, and dip their toes into art. Schiaparelli, Saint Laurent and Kawakubo are creators who transformed and defined the aesthetics of their time by blurring the lines between fashion and art.

I chose Elsa Schiaparelli because of her courageous nature and overwhelming sense of playfulness, sometimes dark humor, which is truly compelling, in a wartime-filled world

between the two World Wars in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Schiaparelli's collaborations with her dear friend Salvador Dalí were particularly enthralling to me because together they were able to create physical manifestations out of pure surrealist images and ideals. Schiaparelli created arts for pleasure and enjoyment to be adorned and appreciated on the body. In the first chapter, I will argue that Schiaparelli utilizes collaboration to make dresses out of surrealist thinking.

I chose Yves Saint Laurent because he was a master of trends, beginning in the 1960s and continuing until his retirement in 2002. He was a leading figure in appropriating the masters of modern art and turning them into the time's most fashionable clothing. Saint Laurent's designs embodied style and grace, and portrayed a woman so beautifully. He was able to appeal to women at all levels in society and create iconic pieces that would last forever. Unlike Schiaparelli, Saint Laurent used the method of appropriation to create his iconic pieces. I will argue that Saint Laurent appropriated masters of high art, including Piet Mondrian and movements, such as Pop Art to create a wearable canvas for his audience.

For my final chapter, I chose Rei Kawakubo because her manifestations are presented as sculptural artistic forms on the body. She is our own contemporary designer, changing the rules of fashion, and taking the industry to the next level by challenging the industry's ideal of beauty. Kawakubo's collections are sculptural displays of her personal beliefs and principles. Kawakubo rejects all the reasons why we *love* fashion: the runway, the glamour, the notion of the Western standard of beauty. Kawakubo challenges all of this and forces her audience to ask; why? She does not shy away or hide her true beliefs. Kawakubo's collections reveal her clothes as conceptual sculpture on their own and embody her fundamental principles. Schiaparelli's designs appealed to the unique person at a special time in history, while Saint Laurent appropriated high

art to be understood by the public and Schiaparelli worked closely with other artists to create her designs. Kawakubo, on the other hand, creates pieces that are not collaborated or appropriated.

Chapter 1: Schiaparelli's Shocking Surrealism

No designers, before or even during Schiaparelli's reign, saw their designs as art. Only Schiaparelli had the vision to go beyond the status quo. Elsa Schiaparelli regarded her work as art, and herself an artist. For Schiaparelli, fashion was as much about making art as it was about making clothes. Along with Coco Chanel, Schiaparelli was one of the leading fashion designers in the 1920s and 1930s; she was part of the fashion world between World War I and World War II. The trend toward more practical clothing during the war and was evident throughout the fashion industry. Wartime forced women to change their roles in society, and, in turn, alter their clothing to meet their new roles, prompting a new vision of style. Women began to dress in workmen jumpsuits, leaving behind their long skirts, and hefty sweaters, no longer being confined by their clothing. Schiaparelli did not follow the trends, but instead offered an outlet for women to express their individual personalities through fashion. Schiaparelli's designs encouraged personal expressions by introducing numerous techniques and styles in the daily fashions. She became the first designer to create zippers in colors that matched the garments, and she was the first designer to embellish her clothes with unique, innovative buttons (figures 6-8).

Schiaparelli, like many modern artists, was rebelling against decades of previous stagnant styles. She felt women were chained to the restrictions and conformity of women's dress code in the preceding years. In the beginning of the 20th century, women's clothing was often ornamented with elaborate trimmings and unnatural lines. Undergarments and several sets of lingerie was the norm and the confining corset was a requisite of the time. The incredible amount of frills and fabric made it especially difficult for women to walk comfortably and with ease, and

often they had to change their clothes many times a day due to the weight of the clothing and density of the fabric.

During this interwar period, advances in technology allowed for the creation of synthetic fabrics, which were lighter and more supple. Schiaparelli, herself, embraced these new synthetic fabrics and added her own inspired and unconventional ideals. The new fabrics freed women from heavy and bulky garments, and at the same time, opened a market for mass production. At first, many of the major and most popular fashion designers did not understand the advantages and potential of the new technology. Designers such as Coco Chanel and Madeleine Vionnet feared that these new technologies would mean the end of fashion.

To understand why Schiaparelli was independent, and came to be her own stimulating person, it is important to understand her background. Schiaparelli was born into an aristocratic, scholarly Italian family. Her father was a Dean of the University of Rome in the early part of the 20th century, an expert in the Islamic world and Middle Ages. Schiaparelli's great uncle, Giovanni, discovered the canals on Mars. Schiaparelli herself studied philosophy, publishing a poetry book that was so sensual that she was sent to a convent by her parents where she went on a hunger strike. Escaping from the convent, Schiaparelli worked as a nanny in London until she married her former teacher, a theologian named Count William de Wendt de Kerloer. In 1916, the couple moved to New York where their daughter Maria Luisa Yvonne Radha de Wendt de Kerloer was born in 1920. Not long afterward, Schiaparelli's husband left her and her new baby alone in New York City.

Schiaparelli, or Schiap as those around her knew her, worked during her time in New York specializing in French fashions. From the beginning of her career she surrounded herself with artists. While in New York, Schiaparelli worked with Gaby Picabia, the ex-wife of French

Dada artist Francis Picabia, who gave Schiaparelli her first job in fashion. Schiaparelli's new job was very untraditional, selling a French couture collection designed by the sister of Paul Poiret, a leading French fashion designer at the time, out of a hotel room. Through Gaby Picabia, Schiaparelli became close to artists like Marcel Duchamp, Jean Cocteau, Salvador Dalí and Man Ray. When her marriage came to an end, due to her unfaithful husband, Schiaparelli decided to follow her new friends to Paris in 1922. In 1927, her life changed completely. She began to design her own clothes in Paris and subsequently opened her business.

Artists in the surrealist movement heavily influenced Schiaparelli, which is evident in her daring and shocking designs. Shocking, a word Schiaparelli commonly affiliated herself with, describes the majority of her designs and collaborations. Surrealism began in the early 1920s as a cultural movement growing out of the Dada movement, aiming to release the unconscious mind, in order to facilitate self-expression. The surrealist movement trusted the psyche to have the power to expose irrationality in everyday life and promote mindful disorder. André Breton, who founded surrealism in 1924, believed and proposed that surrealist artists should omit reason and rationality by accessing their unconscious minds. Surrealist artists implemented fantasy and dream-like imagery to unlock their unconscious in stimulating and significant ways, and then transform these images into a visual language. Surrealist works, similar to most of Schiaparelli's designs, implement a shocking quality, with unexpected pairings. Her distinctive silhouettes and extraordinary garments imitated a modern canvas. She was influenced by surrealists and took from them their playful qualities and their dark sense of humor. Schiaparelli pushed these playful qualities and surrealist themes into new spaces and new relationships with the body.

The *Trompe L'oeil* Jumper

Schiaparelli continued to move forward, and a couple of years later, in 1927; she created a line of comfortable sweaters and wool cardigan jackets. The sweaters and jackets were no lofty hefty and heavyweight, but thinner and more comfortable for women to wear. Schiaparelli's debut collection in 1927 showcased the beginning of her art-meets-clothing career with her Cravat Jumper (figure 9). An American friend came to see Schiaparelli one day and was wearing a sweater that caught her attention. The sweater was hand-knit and had what Schiaparelli described as a “steady look.”¹ She said that “this sweater which intrigued me was definitely ugly in colour and shape, and though it was a bit elastic it did not stretch like other sweaters,” and so, her inspiration for her debut *trompe l'oeil* collection was born. She writes in her autobiography, *Shocking Life*, that when she was designing the jumper she “drew a large butterfly bow in front, like a scarf round the neck – the primitive drawing of a child in prehistoric times. I said: ‘The bow must be white against a black background, and there will be white underneath.’”² The result was the Cravat Jumper, a black sweater with a white *trompe l'oeil* scarf at the neck. The bowknot style of her *trompe l'oeil* sweaters cemented Schiaparelli's fame in fashion history. The collection included a series of sweaters (figure 10) featuring surrealist *trompe l'oeil* images, which soon became Schiaparelli's trademark when it was noticed by *French Vogue* and in turn, the fashion world at large.

Trompe l'oeil translates to “deceive the eye,” a technique used by artists to create an optical illusion that the depicted object or scene occurs in three dimensions. Many surrealist artists also used the *trompe l'oeil* technique. For instance, René Magritte, an innovative Belgian

¹ Schiaparelli, Elsa. *Shocking Life; The Autobiography of Elsa Schiaparelli*. (South Kensington, London: V&A Publications, 2007)., 43.

² Ibid., 43.

Surrealist painter, commonly portrayed ordinary objects in extraordinary ways. Magritte's *The Human Condition* (figure 11), painted in 1935, shows a room with a window overlooking the ocean, a black ball, and an easel portraying a painting of the ocean. The easel is placed in front of a window overlooking the ocean, while the easel also portrays the same ocean view. The window and easel are merged into one plane. It is difficult to decipher where the window ends and the easel begins. Perhaps this illusion of one single plane blurs the fine line between reality and perception, a common characteristic of *trompe l'oeil* and an ongoing theme of surrealist art. *The Human Condition* is a representational yet illusionistic painting. The painting uses the *trompe l'oeil* technique by deceiving the onlooker's eye through an optical illusion of sorts.

The *trompe l'oeil* Cravat Jumper was captioned by *Vogue* as an “artistic masterpiece” and “a triumph of colour blending” in the 1927 December issue of the magazine.³ Perhaps *Vogue* chose the word “masterpiece” to describe the sweater because it was the first popular example of the surrealist use of the *trompe l'oeil* technique, translated into a physical article of clothing. In this sweater, surrealist art was able to transcend the visual field into a physical one. In Schiaparelli's hands, “the sweater had become much more than a purely utilitarian piece of clothing worn to keep out the damp chill of French winters,” writes Blum in her book, *Shocking! The Art and Fashion of Elsa Schiaparelli*.⁴ Sweaters of the 1920s and 1930s were usually a single color with little or no design, but Schiaparelli made sweaters chic. The design and *trompe l'oeil* technique of the sweater looked modern, fresh, and unique for its wearer, a new type of modern woman.

³ Dilys E. Blum. *Shocking! The Art and Fashion of Elsa Schiaparelli* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2004), 13.

⁴ Ibid., 13.

In the 1920s, the sweater in general was an important garment for this new modern woman who was now taking a new and active role in society. She would rather play a game of tennis than sit in a parlor. This unique version of the sweater was such a success that Schiaparelli's Cravat Jumper became a great demand. The sweater was worn not only by the Parisian elite and the most fashionable women, but also ordinary women as well because the American wholesale market was able to mass-produce the sweater. One day, Schiaparelli wore her new design to a luncheon where a buyer from Lord and Taylor was present and ordered 40 copies on the spot.⁵ Like the Cravat Jumper, Schiaparelli's later outrageous creations would reach a broad market and become a huge success with the masses. She was so innovative and ahead of her time that her sweaters, as are most of her designs, are comparable to the contemporary wave of present day surrealist fashion designers, including Alexander McQueen, Maison Martin Margiela, or even Rei Kawakubo.

1931 marked the year that Schiaparelli began making eveningwear and at the time relocated her shop to 21 Place Vendome, which generally became known as the Schiap Shop. Schiaparelli's clothes were worn by some of the world's most famous women, including famed actress, Greta Garbo. These women were drawn to Schiaparelli's evening designs, which combined unusual materials, bold colors and unique patterns that embodied the modernist elegance of the time period. She quickly gained a reputation for her courageous and unique eveningwear. Around 1937, ten years after Schiaparelli's sweater success, she hired one of her closest friends, Salvador Dalí, to design fabric for her fashion house. As will be discussed later in the chapter, Dalí would design the fabric and together they created the Tear Dress of 1938.

⁵ Schiaparelli, *Shocking Life; The Autobiography*, 43.

Schiaparelli's Surrealism

Dalí and other surrealists were attracted to haute couture fashion because it allowed for the creation of practical garments made out of ordinary objects from daily life. René Magritte, one of the leaders of the movement, introduced Dalí to surrealism. Dalí's paintings display a classical technique, influenced by Renaissance artists, which is evident in his paintings of the human body. Although his subjects and themes were often strange and unreal, the portrayals of his dream-like images are meticulous to the eye. Dalí's 1931 painting *The Persistence of Memory* (figure 12), portrays melting clocks in a landscape setting. Dalí often referred to his paintings as "hand painted dream photographs" and based his landscapes on the cliffs in Catalonia, Spain, his home region.⁶ The painting lives in a dreamlike world where Dalí places ants and melting clocks in a strange context. In the middle of the painting there is a large light pink creature with long eyelashes that also appears to be melting. The theme of the painting evokes a feeling of time. Dalí is blurring the lines of reality by placing melting watches and the swarm of ants together, implying decay. This painting transcends the real world and explores the unconscious mind through the depiction of a hallucinatory landscape.

Together, Schiaparelli and Dalí would create, not only fabric, but also outrageous and original designs. Their unique collaborations blurred the lines of art and fashion. Schiaparelli was able to animate and bring surrealist art to life, while Dalí respected the ways Schiaparelli was able to give a physical manifestation to the fantasies of the unconscious mind. Dalí understood the significance and function of fashion during this time period and appreciated Schiaparelli's connection with the Paris avant-garde movement.⁷

⁶ "MoMA Learning," *MoMA*, accessed March 7, 2016.

⁷ Blum. *Shocking! The Art and Fashion*, 121.

August 1936 marks the first, of many, official collaborations between Schiaparelli and Dalí. The pair's first formal partnership produced a series of suits and coats with pockets that mimicked miniature drawers (figure 13). The collaboration was clearly surrealist in nature and was touching on Dalí's painting, *Anthropomorphic Cabinet* (figure 14) from 1936. As the title suggests, the painting shows a disfigured female figure that has taken the shape of a cabinet. The figure is reclining on her right side; the body is upright on the left panel of the painting, while her legs extend along the bottom half of the image, merging onto the right panel. The figure's torso is disguised by a chest of drawers, each one open. The figure's head, which is completely masked by her hair, is leaning over the top open drawer of the torso. The surrealist nature of the painting instills shock and surprise in the onlooker. The audience is caught off-guard by this disguised female body, which is an unlikely combination and exemplifies amazing creativity.

Schiaparelli and Dalí's 1936 collection is directly reminiscent of Dalí's painting, *Anthropomorphic Cabinet*. The woman's suit consists of a jacket and a skirt. The suit is conservative in appearance, but is strange because of its surreal qualities. The jacket is made up of pockets imitating drawers, with animated, dangling handles as buttons. The jacket does not resemble that of a man's suit jacket, but instead has a military feel. The fitted garment is closed from the neck to the waist. The skirt of the suit is plain, and matches the jacket in both material and color, ending around the mid-calf.

Lobster Inspiration

In the summer/fall collection of 1937, the duo created Evening Dress with Lobster Print (figure 15). The full-length evening dress is made of white and red silk organza, with an oversized lobster on the front of the skirt, painted by Dalí himself. The dress was not only

shocking, but the bold and oversized lobster was strange and out of place on the feminine and romantic silhouette of the dress. The cold hard shell of the lobster creates a tension with the relative softness of the human body. The sleeveless, white silk, A-line dress has a conservative crew neck style. Its crimson waistband, which highlights the curves of the mid-body, emphasizes the femininity of the wearer. The skirt begins above the waistline, similar in appearance to the empire style, and extends to the floor. The dress is overtly feminine; the light, silk organza, flows with the body, underlining grace and comfort. The silk is very sheer, and at the same time strong and durable. The dress is over-laid with a flat and smooth fabric.

Dalí had been exploring lobsters in his art for many years prior to this collaboration. His sculpture, *Lobster Telephone* (figure 16) of 1937, foreshadows his use of lobsters in the evening gown designed by Schiaparelli. Dalí liked to make everyday objects bizarre and fantastical to create a startling reaction from his viewer. This gown achieves the same effect; the surprising contrasting image between an evening gown and a sea creature was not an accident, but an intentional shocking and humorous pairing. The dress soon became famous when it was shown in *Vogue*, modeled by Wallis Warfield Simpson, the Duchess of Windsor, in a series of photographs that were taken by Cecil Beaton at the Château de Candé shortly before her marriage to Edward VIII (figure 17). Simpson's modeling of the dress was an enigma because her personal fashion was more conservative, and it would have been unlikely to see her wearing such an outrageous design. So the story goes, the Duke of Windsor urged her to wear the Lobster Dress in her photo-shoot, as a way to make her more likeable and acceptable to the public.

A Hat in The Shape of a Shoe

Not only did Schiaparelli design clothing; she also designed accessories that played an important role in her collections. Schiaparelli aimed to design for the whole woman. She designed shoes, hats, and gloves, in an array of unusual materials while implementing everyday objects into her creations. With this new trend, Schiaparelli was able to add her own quirky set of ideals, such as buttons in the shape of tiny snails (figure 18), and collars made from feathers. She also played with exaggerating different features of the body, i.e. adding padding to shoulders in jackets and coats. In the winter of 1937-1938, Schiaparelli created her Shoe Hat (figure 19) and stirred up the fashion industry.⁸ The Shoe Hat was designed by Dalí who was inspired by a photograph of himself wearing his wife's shoe on his head. Made of black wool felt with a shocking pink heel, the hat takes the shape of a woman's high-heeled shoe. The heel of the shoe is standing straight up and the toe is tilting over the wearer's forehead (figure 20). At first glance, the Shoe Hat is one of Schiaparelli's most amusing and comical designs, but it is loaded with significant sexual charge. The heel of the hat imitates a phallic image on top of a woman's head. The penis-shaped heel is derived from the unconscious, in which an ordinary object becomes something else.

The Shoe Hat establishes a rich interpretation of gender fetishism, or the specific qualities that define a male or female and the sexual attractions to these qualities in surrealist fashion. Here is an example of a fetish for both men and women. For men, the masculine desire of women in heels is due to the elongation of the leg of the women wearing them, and the attention the heel puts on the buttocks. For women, the high-heeled shoe instills a sense of power and

⁸ Sabina Stent, "Fetishizing the Feminine: The Surreal Fashion of Elsa Schiaparelli," *Nottingham French Studies* 50, no. 3 (Autumn 2011).

dominance. Schiaparelli's Shoe Hat produces a considerable sexual charge; the shoe evokes fantasies for both men and women. In an article titled *Fetishizing the Feminine: The Surreal Fashion of Elsa Schiaparelli*, the author, Sabina Stent, writes about how the high-heel of the Shoe Hat is representative of the penis while the wearer takes pride by placing the hat upon her head and the phallic image is unmistakable. A penis placed on a head is supposed to be playful and amusing, connecting the design to surrealism by unlocking the inner mind and by juxtaposing unexpected and shocking pairs. By Dalí placing the shoe on his head, he is letting his thoughts play out without any constrictions. The surrealist approach allows for fluidity of thought and for crossing the boundaries of gender.

Circus Collaboration

Dalí and Schiaparelli also collaborated on the Skeleton Dress (figure 21) and the Tear Dress (figure 22) in 1938 for her Circus Collection. The high-neck Skeleton Dress covers the entire body. The design's detail accentuates both the body's internal and external structure. The dress is incredibly provocative; it is tight to the body, while elevating the outline of the ribs, backbone and pelvic bone by using a raised synthetic fabric and designs that mimics the skeleton. The dress is completely black, emphasizing the beauty of the exquisite female form. This dress epitomizes the power of suggestion: the dress replicates a skeletal structure eluding the layers of what lies underneath, with grim and dark undertones.

The Tear Dress, on the other hand, was conceived from a painting by Dalí himself. The painting, *Three Young Surrealist Women Holding In Their Arms the Skins of an Orchestra* (figure 23), painted in 1936 shows three women on the shores of Catalonia holding instruments in typical Dalí style. The instruments appear to be melting, while the women take on fantastical

forms. The women appear to be nude, or alluding to the nude, and their faces reflect flower-like auras. The woman on the left is closest to the viewer and therefore biggest in size. She is holding a melting piano, which bleeds into the right side of the painting. There is also a tuba in front of her on the left side of the image. Two women are on the right side of the painting, one with her right arm up in a waving pose, and the other, holding a melting cello. The women are placed in a vast open space, where only they and the musical instruments reside. It is evident that the woman centered in the middle most influenced Schiaparelli. She wears a white sheet that enfolds her entire body. Her body is fused between a feminine figure and a drape of white material. The tears are strikingly similar to Schiaparelli's Tear Dress, discussed below. The head of the woman is hidden by an overlay of pink flowers, while the hands are the only true realistic sense of the flesh of a human body. Although the shape of the figure's body is that of a human female, the hands are particularly lifelike, similar to the hands of the other two figures in the painting.

Schiaparelli's Tear Dress also exhibits the *trompe l'oeil* or illusionistic "Tears" print on the fabric (figure 24), which was designed by Dalí himself and can be seen in *Three Young Surrealist Women Holding in Their Arms the Skins of an Orchestra*. The violent rips and tears that cover the lean evening gown and head-veil are printed in Schiaparelli's signature "shocking-pink" color. She coined the word, and created the color "shocking-pink" and has effortlessly made it a forever-fashionable color, embodying both style and originality. She described shocking-pink as "life-giving, like all the light and the birds and the fish in the world put together, a color of China and Peru but not of the West."⁹ The rips are meant to mimic torn flesh, which again, resembles the torn body in Dalí's painting. The sleeveless dress is delicate in its design and is highly feminine. The neckline is diagonal across the chest and remains very close

⁹ "Elsa Schiaparelli: Shocking-Pink," Lisa's History Room, last modified August 12, 2009, accessed April 27, 2016, <https://lisawallerrogers.com/tag/schiaparelli-and-the-lobster-dress/>.

to the body. The fabric closely follows the line of the body, accentuates the waist, and protrudes slightly as it reaches the ankles of the body. The dress is made of a delicate viscose rayon and silk blend, which allows the fabric to flow in a graceful manner. It has a small train, shorter in the front and longer in the back.

The veil has the same pattern as the dress, but is carefully cut out and lined with Schiaparelli's signature shocking pink color, creating a 3D effect as opposed to the *trompe l'oeil* technique on the dress. There's a contradiction between the delicate femininity of the dress and the design of the print. Similar to the Evening Gown with Lobster Print, the audience is drawn to the tension between the theme and the shape of the dress. The veil and train of the dress mimic a typical design of a wedding dress, but the pattern of the dress speaks of violence. The strips of fabric peeled back on the veil reveal the pink under-color. One can interpret this as Schiaparelli's comment on violence towards women. It might also reflect her own feelings towards men, as Schiaparelli was abandoned by her husband after the birth of her daughter, and was never heard from again. With this history, it is interesting to note that Schiaparelli created a dress with violent implications, perhaps shadowing her personal feelings of violation. Although, the dress is beautifully crafted, fits the body well and shows a gracious neckline and headpiece, it is juxtaposed with an alarmingly audacious fabric, creating the feeling of a violated female body.

Schiaparelli's Eternal Paradox

Schiaparelli's designs are more often than not commenting on bigger ideas, namely gender, sexuality and fetish. Some of her designs can also infer violation and dark humor of portraying internal feelings, externally. Schiaparelli's designs are theatrical and striking, yet feminine and sexual. One is compelled to admire and respect the wearer of her designs for

having the confidence to wear them. “Schiaparelli created fashion that was playful and inoffensive to its wearer, allowing a woman to accentuate her assets while remaining comfortable, confident, sexual and feminine.”¹⁰ Schiaparelli was able to bring attention to a woman and make her feel comfortable in her clothes, and with themselves. The wearer is also almost aggressively demanding attention by wearing the sometimes-outrageous designs. On the other hand, Schiaparelli’s garments allow the female wearer to flaunt her femininity in previously unexplored ways. For example, the individual wearer can become an uninhibited sexual being even while keeping her clothes on her body, instead of exposing her flesh and bones. Schiaparelli’s designs offered a safe way to reveal the female form without exposing skin, to be sensual, without being highly sexualized.

As the inter-war period ended and World War II was in motion, the general public was reverting back to their old ways and what they knew. These were not creative or happy times in world history, but faced with an overwhelming sense of uncertainty. The public no longer wanted to experiment with fashion, take risks or explore their inner minds. They wanted to revert back to their secure habits. Schiaparelli’s first postwar collection in 1945 remained true to Schiaparelli designs, but the public had changed and her collection was not as well received. People wanted an old kind of beauty that would not confront or amuse; they wanted to revert to an overtly feminine style and place women and men where they “belonged.” In the wake of the postwar culture, Schiaparelli suffered.

Schiaparelli moved back to New York when France declared war on Germany in 1939, but returned to Paris when the war ended. On her return, Schiaparelli discovered that fashion had changed and Dior’s New Look (figure 25) was now in-style. In 1947, Dior created an

¹⁰ Stent, "Fetishizing the Feminine: The Surreal".

international success with his “New Look.” Dior’s New Look was undoubtedly feminine and old world. Women no longer wanted to be noticed, and instead wanted to fit in. The “look” was a longer, full-bodied, pleated skirt, accentuating the hips with a jacket that also emphasized the hips by tapering at the waist. These factors changed back to the past, which was what Schiaparelli, along with her contemporary Coco Chanel, had aimed to abolish. Even though her designs no longer spoke to these times, she kept working in fashion. Schiaparelli closed her business in 1954, but kept designing accessories and wigs for various commissions and enterprises. The same year she closed her business she released her autobiography, *Shocking Life*, published by V&A publications.

Schiaparelli intentionally used “shock” in her designs to stay relevant and upbeat; designs that were normally thought of as unattractive, but instead she transformed them into the zenith of style, as in her Cravat Jumper, Evening Dress with Lobster Print, and Tear Dress, to name a few.

“A dress cannot just hang like a painting on the wall, or like a book remain intact and live a long and sheltered life. A dress has no life of its own unless it is worn, and as soon as this happens another personality takes over from you and animates it, or tries to, glorifies or destroys it, or makes it into a song of beauty. More often it becomes an indifferent object, or even a pitiful caricature of what you wanted it to be – a dream, an expression.”¹¹

What was most important to Schiaparelli as a designer was the act of creation, and the vision it required to do this; creating a personality and taking a person to a new level of expression. She claimed that her clothes came to life by being worn on the body. Schiaparelli never gave up on her signature style. She persisted until she died in 1973 with her modern, daring and shocking fashion. She utilized unusual combinations of color, decoration, texture and placement to create her designs. Schiaparelli translated the essential components of modern art, effortless,

¹¹ Schiaparelli, *Shocking Life; The Autobiography*, 42.

permanence and difference into wearable art. Schiaparelli chose to transform the idea of a hat or a dress as the surrealist's transformed ideas of painting and sculpture.

Chapter 2: Saint Laurent's Design Through Appropriation

Yves Saint Laurent was significantly different in his approach to fashion design. Saint Laurent's relationship with art is equally as important, but different from Schiaparelli's. While Schiaparelli was able to transcend the fashion world by delving deep into surrealism, Saint Laurent translated the artist's canvas into a garment of clothing. Unlike Schiaparelli who collaborated with artists, Saint Laurent appropriated art and turned it into clothing. In contrast, Schiaparelli physically created her own pure art form, Saint Laurent appreciated art and aimed to translate the art intact with its main intentions continuously going back to view his inspiration, bowing down to the masters with respect. While Schiaparelli took a more active role, creating fashion with artists of her own time, Saint Laurent looked back in history for inspiration. Saint Laurent seized the opportunity to translate his vision of appropriation into physical form, while his designs, and the canvas they embody, remain to be art appreciated in a gallery or museum setting. Both Saint Laurent and Schiaparelli created exquisite wearable garments, radical and revolutionary for their time.

Saint Laurent was innovative in his idea of appropriating art. He was able to take the artists creation for or his own use, without consent of the artist, to design his clothing. Saint Laurent appropriated the ideas and turned them into garments. The act of appropriating does not discredit Saint Laurent's genius, because he was one of the first to transform high art into high fashion. Saint Laurent also continued this approach throughout his entire career, remaining a figure at the forefront of leading trends in the world of fashion.

Saint Laurent was a revolutionary French designer, creating new perspectives during a time of cultural change and expression. He is not only recognized for creating "ready-to-wear,"

but also for making a tuxedo for women (figure 26), empowering women to have the confidence to express themselves through their fashion choices. He introduced masculine norms to women's fashion, including the pantsuit (figure 27), the trench coat (figure 28), and the safari jacket (figure 29), making these customary for women. He created these classic staples in fashion history that were new and progressive at the time. It is hard to name anyone who has had such a lasting influence and has been copied as much as Yves Saint Laurent. Saint Laurent designed his brand from 1961 until he retired in 2002. The 1960s marked a major change in fashion. There was a new attitude in the 1960s that allowed women to express themselves through the miniskirt and the shift or sack dress presented by many designers at the time.

Works of art, artists, and art movements often inspired Saint Laurent. The cultural references in his creations are countless. He was not only influenced by artists such as Piet Mondrian, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, and Andy Warhol, but also by Van Gogh's sunflowers and George Braque's birds. The Renaissance and Pop Art also had an effect on him. Saint Laurent was not only stimulated by art, but also by writers such as Apollinaire, Cocteau, Rimbaud and Proust. Similarly to Schiaparelli, Saint Laurent greatly admired Jean Cocteau because for him, Cocteau was the ideal artist. Cocteau was a French novelist, poet, artist and filmmaker who was mostly active in the first half of the 20th century. Cocteau was able to do anything he wanted, a multifaceted artist who was able to jump from one medium to another while still remaining popular; this was Saint Laurent's overarching intention. A great amount of his inspiration also came from his home in Morocco called Villa Oasis, where he often traveled between seasons, taking a break from his busy world.¹²

¹² Alice Rawsthorn, *Yves Saint Laurent: A Biography* (New York, NY: Nan A. Talese, 1996).

Mondrian and His Ceaseless Influence

One of the artists that most influenced Saint Laurent was Piet Mondrian. Mondrian was born in 1872 and died in 1944. His most famous work was done between the years of 1919 and 1938. As the art historian Theodor Wolffe discusses in his book, *The Many Masks of Modern Art*, Mondrian's approach to art was minimalist and pure in its design. His work was noteworthy for its ideal of reduction or minimalist technique and was highly concerned with "codifying reality." Through this "codifying reality," Mondrian's art was boiled down to the very minimum and escaped any rendering of a physical reality.¹³ Mondrian's painting *Broadway Boogie-Woogie* (figure 30), from 1942/1943, showcases his concern with abstracting reality into non-representational forms. The title of the painting clearly suggests a lively street, whereas the painting is made up of purely abstract geometrical forms, composed on a grid of lines and color. Mondrian's intention is to escape the natural world through his placement of abstract colors.

Mondrian was a part of the De Stijl movement, which took place from 1917 to 1931. De Stijl, meaning "the style" in Dutch, is a movement that embraced an abstract, uncluttered aesthetic concentrated in simple elements, such as the geometric forms and primary colors which are visible in Mondrian's paintings. The De Stijl movement came as a reaction against Art Deco, which is characterized by a very eclectic and busy aesthetic style. In reaction to Art Deco, De Stijl emphasized a minimalist elegance that also focused on form and function. De Stijl, as an applied art, reached beyond fine art and manifested in industrial design, topography, literature, music, furniture and architecture. In visual terms, the movement's principle of absolute abstraction removed any reference to objects in nature.

¹³ Theodore F. Wolff, *The Many Masks of Modern Art* (Boston, MA: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1989).

Mondrian's principle systems of rules were characterized by a color palette where only primary colors were used, such as red, blue, and yellow to contrast with shades of grey, black, and white. Mondrian's color planes were always placed asymmetrically because he did not want a traditional compositional structure, but instead aimed to "transcend reality" to express this "new imagery."¹⁴ This "new imagery" started to become known as a pure, self-contained visual language described as neo-plasticism. Mondrian believed that through this visual language a purer image of reality was reached by a geometric abstraction.¹⁵

Interestingly, in 1930 Mondrian wrote a short commentary on fashion in which he outlined style as "one of the most direct plastic expressions of human culture."¹⁶ Although Mondrian's writing on fashion was not published at the time, the art historian Nancy Troy, an art historian, writes, in her book, *The Afterlife of Piet Mondrian*, that according to Harry Holtzman, an American artist and founder of the American Abstract Artists group, Mondrian had a longstanding interest in women's dress. Troy also notes that Mondrian "regarded fashion as a sphere of modern life experience in which it was possible to 'create more equilibrated relationships'."¹⁷ Perhaps Mondrian is alluding to the interrelationship of fashion and modern life. In order to be apart of the elite or bourgeois culture, who often supported high art, you had to be fashionable. Although Mondrian had commented on fashion, he had no intention of influencing the industry itself. In the wake of Mondrian's popularity in the 1960s, his paintings became a staple trend in popular fashion. But, as Troy points out, this is not to say Mondrian's work was not appreciated, or was unable to be appreciated on its own. There were, and are,

¹⁴ Frederique Van Reij, "Wearing Mondrian Yves Saint Laurent's Translation from High Art to Haute Couture," *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 60, no. 4 (2012): 351.

¹⁵ Ibid., 351.

¹⁶ Ibid., 184.

¹⁷ Ibid.

spaces solely devoted to Mondrian through an art perspective. On the other hand, Mondrian's highly regarded work has had a lasting effect on design and visual culture. Today, if someone has never heard of the artist Mondrian, it is likely that she or he has encountered his influential design in a museum gift shop or a side-table they are unaware of.

Mondrian's style, similar to the De Stijl movement itself, impacted not only the high art world, including contemporary painters and designers, but also the trendy and popular realm in the 1960s. Mondrian's influence was mirrored in architecture, design and fashion, which were all mass distributed. Troy recalls that there were even jigsaw puzzles and underwear bearing images of his work in the 1960s.¹⁸ Mondrian's style was popular in the 1960s because the modernity offered a change in the usual overdone frilly and gathered garments that the public was accustomed to.

Mondrian's influence also reached other artists as well, not just the fashion world. Troy writes, "These two cultures [fashion and art] converged in the mid 1960s when the appropriation of Mondrian's style such pop artists as Tom Wesselmann and Roy Lichtenstein, on one hand, and by French courtier Yves Saint Laurent, on the other, demonstrated that Mondrian's paintings arguably functioned less as individual works of fine art than as widely reproduced and instantly recognizable images--iconic examples of what might be described as the Mondrian brand."¹⁹ Wesselmann and Lichtenstein were artists from the Pop Art movement who aimed to appeal to the masses, creating popular art, rather than high art. These alternative outlets strengthened the appeal of Mondrian's work in popular culture, as opposed to having the inverse effect. It is also interesting to note that while Wesselmann and Lichtenstein, similar to Saint Laurent, were appropriating Mondrian, Saint Laurent was also about to appropriate Wesselmann and

¹⁸ Ibid., 204.

¹⁹ Ibid., 7.

Lichtenstein himself in his 1966 Pop Art collection. These appropriations also emphasize the cyclical nature of adopting influences for designers and artists. Although Saint Laurent was soon to appropriate the contemporary artists of the 1960s, they too were drawing inspiration from Mondrian and other past high art artists. Wesselmann refers to Mondrian in his *Still Life #20* (figure 31) from 1962, where the bright colors and geometric shapes are exhibited and reflected through the scene of the kitchen. Lichtenstein comments on Mondrian as an icon of popular culture in his *Non Objective I* (figure 32) and in *Non Objective II* (figure 33) of 1964.

Lichtenstein “stresses the pervasiveness of Mondrian’s imagery, and its proliferation throughout every level of visual culture,” writes Troy.²⁰ Lichtenstein is commenting on the popularity of Mondrian’s paintings long after his work was produced. In *Non Objective I* and *Non Objective II* the composition is a classic example of Lichtenstein’s style. Lichtenstein, similar to Saint Laurent, is bluntly appropriating Mondrian. Lichtenstein’s technique is reproducing the exact replica of Mondrian’s found image, and therefore commenting on what is fashionable in popular culture at the time. In this manner, Mondrian’s paintings can be considered as having appealing qualities in the realm of popular art, and therefore creating a stereotype for the type of people who would collect Mondrian or wear Saint Laurent’s Mondrian collection.

Ready-to-Wear and Haute Couture as Modern Art Forms

Saint Laurent’s first ready-to-wear collection, or “pret-a-porter” as the French call it, was sold in September of 1966 in the company’s first Rive Gauche store in Paris. It was the first time a designer had put as much thought into his ready-to-wear line as he did haute couture. Haute couture garments are made to fit the body of the wearer, specifically designed for the wearer’s

²⁰ Nancy J. Troy, *The Afterlife of Piet Mondrian* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 204.

personal measurements. Couture is defined as high fashion, clothing that employs expensive materials and demands very intense labor. This realm of fashion necessitates both the design ideas and the fabric selections; designers also have fabrics made specifically for their own designs.²¹ Haute couture is not only made to order, but designers must get official permission from the Syndical Chamber de la Haute Couture, a French organization which controls all things haute couture, to make these extremely desirable pieces. Haute couture can also be considered its own modern art form, as a model for creations that would be exposed to boundless appropriation opportunities for other designers.²² In this respect, haute couture pieces are the original design at the point of production, opening them up for an opportunity of reproduction, mimicking Mondrian's paintings that were to be appropriated by Saint Laurent.

In contrast, ready-to-wear is clothing made in standard sizes and for the general public, unlike haute couture, which is made with wildly expensive materials, meant for elite consumption.²³ Ready-to-wear collections are meant to appeal to, and gratify the demands of the public. The material and intensity of labor is much less extreme than couture, and the pieces are more practical, designed to be worn in daily life. Ready-to-wear provides a large source of income for most designers as it is much quicker to design and manufacture, has a greater volume, and costs much less to produce, making it more affordable than couture. Compared to haute couture, ready-to-wear prices are much more affordable to the public and has become its own type of a modern art form.²⁴

²¹ Nancy J. Troy, *Couture Culture; A Study in Modern Art and Fashion* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003), 21.

²² Ibid., 21.

²³ Hidi, "Haute Couture vs Pret-a-Porter (Ready-to-Wear)," *Lingerissimi* (blog), entry posted October 15, 2010, accessed November 19, 2015, <https://lingerissimi.wordpress.com/2010/10/15/haute-couture-vs-pret-a-porter/>.

²⁴ Ibid.

Saint Laurent was referencing high art by producing it in fashion to be understood and observed by a new, broader audience. Pierre Bergé, Saint Laurent's lifetime professional and intimate partner, co-authored *Saint Laurent Rive Gauche: Fashion Revolution*. The book discusses Saint Laurent's first ready-to-wear collection and the first Rive Gauche store, as well as the impact of these revolutionary moments on today's French fashion world.²⁵ An article in *The Huffington Post* titled "Saint Laurent Rive Gauche: Fashion Revolution, Pierre Berge Explores YSL's Legacy In New Book and Exhibit" pulls a quote from Berge's book writing, "In 1966, no one could have predicated that September [26th] would have become a key date in the history of fashion... By opening a boutique separate from his fashion house, Saint Laurent was actually performing a revolutionary act, moving away from aesthetics into a social arena. It was a manifesto."²⁶ Despite this revolutionary act, Saint Laurent received much criticism for being a part of bourgeois culture. He opened up the Rive Gauche store as a way to democratize fashion, a way to give a greater importance to fashion by attempting to make his clothing accessible to all. Ready-to-wear in its inception became its own modern art form because it enveloped a new approach to art-making.

Each garment in Saint Laurent's collections can be seen as a representation of a new visual language, each unique and telling of its time. A 1965 article in the *New York Times* titled *I hate Mondrian Now, St Laurent Says* discusses in depth the potential Saint Laurent gave himself by designing a line for larger production: the author writes that, "Running a couture house is far from amusing, he [Saint Laurent] said, but with the boutique he can let go and do bathing suits,

²⁵ Sarah Leon, "'Saint Laurent Rive Gauche: Fashion Revolution,' Pierre Berge Explores YSL's Legacy In New Book and Exhibit," Huffpost Style, last modified April 5, 2012, accessed December 6, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/05/saint-laurent-rive-gauche_n_1403517.html.

²⁶ Ibid.

ski clothes and dresses with very short skirts.”²⁷ It was a chance for Saint Laurent to move away from high fashion. Additionally, pret-a-porter allowed Saint Laurent to create on a much freer scale. By viewing ready-to-wear as a modern art form, we are able to understand that this revolutionary idea manifests itself in new ways compared to the past. Ready-to-wear gave space for the public to make personal fashion choices. The public was now able to become more in control of what they wanted and were able dictate popular trends. Without the Rive Gauche boutique, the larger population was merely able to view haute couture from a distance. With the opening of the shop, there was more accessibility, allowing the public to have a stronger role in the evolution of fashion trends.

Stella Brownie Did it First

It is important to note that Mondrian’s work reached the broad and diverse audience of women’s fashion in a wider lens than just Saint Laurent’s Mondrian collection. A fashion designer by the name of Stella Brownie “did” Mondrian before Saint Laurent twenty years earlier, in the mid 1940s. Brownie had also been inspired by the painter, but took a more Schiaparelli approach. Brownie took inspiration from Mondrian’s geometry and abstraction, but appropriated them into her own original designs (figure 34). Brownie declared that she studied not only Mondrian’s work, but also utilized his “principles” in order to produce “a collection of clothes comparable to a lesson in art. Brownie’s designs embodied “blocked patterns and crisscross lines” in perfect harmony.”²⁸

Brownie’s blatant reconstruction of Mondrian, as well as Saint Laurent’s, associated the “flat planes, orthogonal relationships, and primary colors of his paintings with the diagonal

²⁷ Angela Taylor, "I Hate Mondrian Now, St. Laurent Says," *The New York Times*, November 12, 1965, 53.

²⁸ Nancy J. Troy, *The Afterlife of Piet*, 174.

bands, secondary colors, and ‘third-dimensional feeling’ of her [and his] outfits.”²⁹ Brownie's clothes not only became widely known in a short period of time, but her clothes began to be recognized as “modern” in their association with Mondrian. The 1945 March cover of *ARTnews* (figure 35) was graced by Brownie’s designs from her fall collection, “whose lines, color, and even basic structure were inspired by the dynamic parallelograms of this artist.”³⁰

In August of 1945, *ARTnews* featured an article titled “Mondrian Makes the Mode,” that mentions the way Brownie’s collection recognized Mondrian’s art and contributed to his popularity. The article also celebrates Brownie’s interpretation of Mondrian. It is interesting to note that this article was produced in the same year as Mondrian’s Memorial Exhibition at the MoMA in 1945. Brownie’s approach precedes Saint Laurent’s in his Pop Art collection. Brownie, similar to the Pop Art collection, attempts to take a contemporary artist of her time, and make him bigger, rather than building upon the old and making it new again. Perhaps Mondrian was made popular again by Brownie, along with her other contemporaries, or Brownie was taking from her contemporary poplar culture. Brownie, among other designers, took inspiration from Mondrian’s designs during this time. Unlike Saint Laurent, she did not stay true to the primary colors exhibited in Mondrian’s work and ventured to other colors. For example, the use of purple is significant in her fashions. Perhaps Mondrian would have been fine knowing that people were making these changes, but the very color of purple, which Brownie uses in her designs, defeats the underlying principles of Mondrian’s art, which emphasized only primary colors in his grid paintings. By making the most general reference to those characteristics of Mondrian’s art, Brownie’s clothes embodied modernity by using Mondrian as an inspiration and also helped distinguish her designs from her contemporaries.

²⁹ Ibid., 176.

³⁰ Ibid., 171.

Brownie's mid-1940 designs were a success, signifying the expansive range of Mondrian's name after his death. Saint Laurent took a more literal approach by realizing Mondrian's colors, which is where Brownie and Saint Laurent differ. Brownie's relationship with Mondrian comes from more of an aesthetic influence, rather than understanding the painter's ideology and intention. Saint Laurent, on the other hand, aimed to emphasize a reconstructed Mondrian embodying his signature colors, asymmetrical influence, and geometric abstraction.

Saint Laurent's Mondrian Collection

Twenty years later, in the 1960s, Saint Laurent received a book for Christmas one year from his mother that sparked his initial interest in Mondrian. Saint Laurent's Mondrian collection (figure 36), which was presented as pret-a-porter, embodied not only the artists' aesthetic, but also the time period's modernist dress. The Mondrian collection is debatably one of the most famous and iconic pieces of art-meets-fashion in history. As Saint Laurent was designing his 1965 autumn/winter collection, he wanted to step away from traditional fashion and create a new modern ideal. He was reacting to previously synched waists and long hemlines that were fashionable of the 1950s.

It is also interesting to note that Mondrian died in 1944, and had been dead for over two decades by the time that Saint Laurent's Mondrian dresses captured the public imagination. Troy writes, "The question that inevitably comes to mind is why Mondrian's work was seen as newly relevant at this point in his posthumous career. Why did the style of his paintings suddenly become youthful as well as widely fashionable so long after the style itself had been

launched?”³¹ Perhaps Mondrian was suddenly becoming relevant in the 1960s due to Saint Laurent’s appropriation and bringing the artist into the realm of high fashion. Mondrian’s aesthetic was clean and simple, very modern in essence, which greatly appealed to the youth culture of the 1960s. Mondrian’s style became universally recognized after Saint Laurent’s collection, which may have made Mondrian’s paintings more valuable. At the same time that the dresses were becoming more circulated and popular, Mondrian’s paintings were also becoming more and more sought after by high-end collectors of fine art.

The Mondrian collection pays tribute to the work of Piet Mondrian and features six cocktail dresses inspired by the artist’s paintings. The dresses (figure 37-39) were regarded as the dresses of tomorrow. They present a simple A-line and tidy shift silhouette typical of the mid-60s, while the designs reflect an important artist from the 20s and 30s. The dresses are sleeveless, knee-length shift garbs with a round neck. Each knee-length dress is made of wool-jersey and a silk lining and has a length of 37 inches, and all derive from the same model. The material ensures that the dress falls straight from the bust and conceals any curves of the female body. Although the dresses deny the curves of the body, Saint Laurent’s clothes were designed to flatter and flatten the figure, making the silhouette likeable to all types of women. The black lines on the dress are meant to act as markers for feminine contours in a strict silhouette. The texture of the jersey wool is thick, but soft to the touch. The dress is meant to be sack-like. The purpose of the dress is to make the wearer more comfortable through the loose fit, which, emphasizes ease. The use of color block and bright, saturated primary colors draws in the viewer. A dress not meant to emphasize the curves of the body, but instead to make the body feel more comfortable in its fabric. Although this effect was most successfully achieved on thinner bodies

³¹ Ibid., 212

where curves were not so apparent, it also worked on other types of bodies of women as well. The thinner, more boy-like bodies were now the ideal feminine form. Twiggy, an icon of the 1960s is an example of this body type.

Like Mondrian's paintings, the material is printed in five different colors—red, blue, yellow, black, and white. The lining of the dress and the black rectangular lines exhibited on the garment are a silk fabric, contrasting with the wool jersey and creating a display of different textures on the dress. This aspect of incorporating different textures adds to the notion of this dress as a modern art piece. The texture gives the dress a three-dimensional feel, as opposed to being completely flat as on a painting. Similar to Mondrian's paintings, where he painted a grid of horizontal and vertical black lines, the dress illustrates a color block pattern marked by the black silk rectangular forms that are used to distinguish between each color panel on the dress. Each block of color is sewn together beneath the black lines creating a grid of seams that are hidden from the viewer, giving the dress a seam-free appearance. By hiding the seams of the dress, the color of the garment conceals the construction and lines of the body. The garment is very plain in decoration and the pattern is only represented through the very flat colors of the dress.

Mondrian's basic principal theories are explored in Saint Laurent's collection. Boxy silhouettes with color-block areas contrasting with black and white make up both Saint Laurent's dress and Mondrian's paintings. The clear proportions of the color-block technique are accentuated by uneven spaces throughout the planes on the dress. This color-block technique is as striking on the dress as on the canvas, perhaps mimicking the dress as a canvas itself.³²

³² Reij, "Wearing Mondrian Yves Saint," 351.

Although Saint Laurent never explicitly declares which exact Mondrian painting he is influenced by, he is clearly referencing Mondrian's neoplasticist style.

Although Saint Laurent maintained Mondrian's aesthetic influence, he departed from Mondrian's principal system of rules by placing symmetrical lines on his garments, Saint Laurent's Mondrian collection exemplifies some asymmetrical aspects, but for the most part is an even more minimalistic approach to Mondrian's geometric abstraction. Perhaps this is where Saint Laurent's instinct to flatter the body comes into play. His black lines were purposely placed to contour to the curves of the body, and if he had implemented Mondrian's style more precisely, he would not have been able to achieve this effect.

The dresses not only fitted Twiggy-like figures, but average figures could wear it as well because it created a slimming effect. The Mondrian collection was "a something for everyone collection—provided, of course, you are young, thin as a post, and have ravishing legs," as Georgina Howell writes in her article in *The Observer*, "Georgina Howell on Real Paris People and Latest Collection." Although Saint Laurent faced some criticism for the slenderness of the dress, he was mostly met with praise. Troy quotes Saint Laurent saying "The geometry that was taken from Mondrian's paintings created a slimming effect on the wearer because the lines pointed in either direction emphasizing a flatness that is hiding the bends of the body. Saint Laurent said, "Contrary to what one might expect, the rigorous lines of the paintings applied very well to the female body; the shoes were lower with silver buckles, and I shortened the hems radically: the ensemble provoked a shock."³³ There was a flush of modernity taking over, focusing on the new, the outlandish, and the unexpected.

³³ Troy, *Couture Culture: A Study*, 207.

The modernity of the dress created a surprise, enabling the public to view the wearer of the dress in awe and appreciation of the design. By the mid-1960s, the value of modernity was closely linked with the fashion styles and that included Saint Laurent's Mondrian collection. Troy argues that "Mondrian's geometry, primary colors, and bold asymmetrical compositions included youthfulness, modernity, and the collapse of traditions that together formed the rhetorical tropes of fashion discourse at the time."³⁴ Saint Laurent's appropriation of Mondrian was a true success in creating a modern article of clothing that was widely understood and acceptable to the wider public. Women from all social classes could buy copies of the dresses, allowing these women to embody a radical new style of modernity. The popularity of Saint Laurent's dresses created a niche in the market for an overwhelmingly large number of copies at an array of consumer prices. Troy states that these knock-offs took over a large portion of the garment industry in the seasons following the Mondrian collection in 1965.

The Mondrian collection was met with great success. There are numerous articles from the time declaring the triumph of the line and how far the collection's achievement reached. Saint Laurent is quoted telling *Women's Wear Daily* journalist Carol Bjorkman on the day of his 1965 fall/winter design presentation that he had changed his total concept and that everything in this new collection was "young, young, young."³⁵ An article titled "Mondrian Madness" from the *Chicago Tribune* in August of 1965 says, "The race is on. Some call it 'Mondrian' –some call it 'Mandarin' but whatever the name – everyone's got the message. St. Laurent really started something ... That's the Mondrian... New York Style ... It's here ... it's sweeping the world of fashion. Price is not the point ... They call it a fad ... they call it fashion ... many say it's been

³⁴ Troy, *The Afterlife of Piet*, 216.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 212.

around ... some even take the credit for having done it. It's no problem to make."³⁶ Another article in the *Boston Globe* from September of 1965, titled "Mondrian Magic...", points out that "nothing has rocked the fashion world with such a resounding wham since the advent of the chemise!"³⁷ The collection was making a mark on the fashion world and would soon become a worldwide success.

The New York Times article, "Summing Up Another Fashion Season in Paris" from 1965, declares that "Yves Saint Laurent's Mondrian-inspired dresses were meant to have a long-range impact on fashion, giving rise to dresses or even coats divided into two or more colors."³⁸ The article discusses how Saint Laurent introduced a new name, Mondrian, into the fashion world and continues to mention where copies of Saint Laurent's original dresses would have been found, including stores like Alexander's, Lord & Taylor, and Bergdorf Goodman.

Troy, in her book *The Afterlife of Piet Mondrian*, asks the question, "What should we make of the slippage between Mondrian's art as it could be experienced in the museum and its resulting representation in the world of fashion?"³⁹ One way to view an answer to this question is to consider the wide acceptance that Mondrian's art had in the fashion world, then and now. Through the world of fashion and popular publications that showcased or reproduced Mondrian's paintings, Mondrian's art was able to reach a broader audience than it would have otherwise. Troy writes, "In fact, it is by no means certain that those who saw Mondrian's art in a museum setting reacted to it more positively or more knowledgeably than audiences who encountered it

³⁶ "Mondrian Madness," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, IL), August 30, 1965, B4.

³⁷ Marian Christy, "Mondrian Magic...", *Boston Globe*, September 24, 1965, 18.

³⁸ "Summing Up Another Fashion Season in Paris," *The New York Times*, August 30, 1965, 28.

³⁹ Troy, *The Afterlife of Piet*, 176.

for the first time through the filter of fashion.”⁴⁰ Saint Laurent made Mondrian new again, and more popular.

In the late 1960s the Mondrian dress was among one of the trendiest garments one could wear. The dress debuted on many magazine covers, only increasing its fame. The September issue of French *Vogue* (figure 40) in 1965 showcased the dress on a model placed diagonally across the cover. The traditional *Vogue* title is illustrated in green, with the model wearing the Mondrian dress, buckle shoes, and a white background. The same year Irving Penn photographed a model wearing the Mondrian dress for British *Vogue*, also the September issue. The *Vogue* September issue is significant because it’s the most important issue for fashion magazines. After a laidback summer, autumn indicates back to school, back to reality, and engaging with the world again. The September issue is the most anticipated issue because it signifies a season change, and a time for women to reinvent themselves. The timing of the collection helped Saint Laurent’s breakthrough into the international fashion world. It should come as no surprise that Saint Laurent was a big art collector. He and Pierre Berge’s home was filled with “eclectic modernism, whimsical mementos and priceless possessions,” writes Axel Madsen in his book *Living for Design: The Yves Saint Laurent Story*.⁴¹ Madsen’s book describes Saint Laurent’s home as cluttered and handsome. He writes,

The combination of sensuous art nouveau floral motifs and the geometry of the cubist patterns contrasts with the warm opulence of soft paisleys and animal skins covering the furniture. The love of art is everywhere: in the great wooden sculpture of a bird by Brancusi, Ruhlmann’s piano and table, a cobra lamp by Edgar Brandt illuminating a Lalanne mirror, an Assyrian statue and 1930s metal vases on either side of the chimney by Jean Dunand. A prancing, nude Josephine Baker shares walls with paintings in dark, rich colors-exotic scenes set in Arabia, decadent scenes of ancient Rome.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid., 181.

⁴¹ Axel Madsen, *Living for Design: The Yves Saint Laurent Story* (New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 1979), 193.

⁴² Ibid., 199.

Saint Laurent himself collected five works of Mondrian in his lifetime. After he purchased his first Mondrian following his collection, the painting began to function as a concrete object that validated the design of the dresses for him. Angela Taylor's article "I Hate Mondrian Now, St. Laurent Says," follows a story of Saint Laurent visiting Mondrian at the MoMA during a trip to New York where he called the paintings, the "father of my dresses." Saint Laurent says it was a sentimental trip because they did not have many Mondrian paintings in Paris.⁴³

Pop Art

Saint Laurent shocked the fashion industry by appropriating art again in his autumn/winter 1966 collection, which clearly evoked the Pop Art movement. The Pop Art movement emerged in the early 1960s, taking root in America several years before Saint Laurent's Pop Art Collection was showcased. The collection is clearly indicative of Roy Lichtenstein's work, Tom Wesselman's paintings, and Andy Warhol's influence. Saint Laurent and Andy Warhol were actually very good friends, borrowing from each other and creating their empires during the 1960s. The evolution of Pop Art in the 1960s also marks an important point in the relationship between art and fashion.

In contrast to the Mondrian collection, Saint Laurent's Pop Art collection (figure 41) exhibits no strict lines blocking off primary colors, but instead loose lines and physical representations of a woman's body, similar to paintings of Wesselmann. Emerson describes these shapes as "just wavy, pie-shaped slabs in contrasting shades."⁴⁴ Like the Mondrian Collection, the Pop Art dresses are made in jersey wool, creating a sense of a loose, yet structured shape on

⁴³ Taylor, "I Hate Mondrian Now," 53.

⁴⁴ Gloria Emerson, "A Nude Dress That Isn't: Saint Laurent in a New, Mad Mood," *The New York Times*, August 5, 1966, 53.

the body. Similar to the Mondrian dresses, the Pop Art collection displays women in mid-to-full-length shift dresses that also hide the curving shapes of the body. It is important to note that although the dress does not show the shape of the figure underneath the dress, the dresses from the Pop Art Collection display a side view of a woman's nude body (figure 42), a face with voluptuous red lips (figure 43), hearts (figure 44), circles and curving lines clearly suggesting female characteristics (figure 45). These dresses are also shown in a variety of different colors: red, pink, yellow, blue, and purple. The Collection is a stark contrast from the past Mondrian collection of minimalist design, no representation, and simple primary colors.

Unlike the Mondrian dress, the Pop Art Collection was met with some praise, but was mostly received negatively by the critics. The Pop Art Collection also faced a great deal of criticism not only for pandering to popular culture, but also for the designs themselves. Perhaps the criticism stemmed from his friendship with Warhol or the fact that Saint Laurent himself ran in these popular circles, and therefore his lifestyle didn't appeal to the masses. A *Chicago Tribune* article from August 1966, titled "Saint Laurent Goes Pop in Young, Fun Fashions," pokes fun at how Saint Laurent was pushing his luck with this collection. The article states, "Multicolored jersey shifts divide into four undulating areas that may be blue, red, green, and purple; or magenta, fuchsia, green, and black, as though one of last year's Mondrian's had spent the summer melting in the sun."⁴⁵ Perhaps the Pop Art collection was not timely on Saint Laurent's behalf as he tried to ride the wave of his success from his Mondrian collection. Pop Art, as a movement, was fresh in the minds of Saint Laurent's audience. Perhaps he did not leave enough time before appropriating the Pop Art movement, which was taking place in his contemporary popular culture, whereas with his Mondrian collection he was appropriating the past.

⁴⁵ "Saint Laurent Goes Pop in Young, Fun Fashions," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, IL), August 5, 1966, B10.

Saint Laurent was able to make the Mondrian collection new again, bringing old fine arts back into fashion, while perhaps Saint Laurent didn't leave enough time to try and appropriate Pop Art because it was contemporary to the collection and still fresh in people's minds. In the 1966 article titled "A Nude That Isn't: Saint Laurent In a New, Mad Mood," Gloria Emerson writes a critical reaction to Laurent's latest collection. She states that

Saint Laurent may have just discovered Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol, but others did quite long ago. The French were the only ones to squeal and giggle when a black dress with huge red lips across the chest sauntered into the salon today. Saint Laurent also made a long purple jersey dress embellished by a long, pink silhouette of a nude. A short, sleeveless red wool dress, and a double of it in green, might move Andy Warhol to buy an Yves Saint Laurent now that Yves Saint Laurent has bought a Warhol.⁴⁶

Emerson seems to be criticizing Saint Laurent for following the pack, not leading it, as he had done with the Mondrian collection. An article from the *Boston Globe* in August of 1966, titled, "Yves Runs With Young, Not With Pack" commended Saint Laurent's fresh new take, writing, "He is terrorizing other Paris designers with his Pop Art dresses... He feels that these offbeat clothes are a laboratory for fashion experiments, that to be fresh you have to have a new point of view."⁴⁷ The article continues to write how Saint Laurent is saving Paris couture. He not only helped the art world, but also helped Paris fashion week with his new and unique designs. Saint Laurent's Pop Art dresses were on the cover of LIFE magazine (figure 46) in 1966, also increasing the collection's recognition.

This collection was even more radical than the Mondrian collection in the sense that Saint Laurent was doing something that had truly never been done before in high fashion. Saint Laurent was appropriating recent, contemporary art of his time, turning popular art into high fashion, aiming for a wide success. Although the collection was very telling of the 1960s, it was

⁴⁶ Emerson, "A Nude Dress That," 53.

⁴⁷ Marian Christy, "Yves Runs With Young, Not With Pack," *Boston Globe*, August 30, 1966, 22.

hard for the public to admire the collection with positivity because the art was more contemporary. Mondrian is also considered to be high art, whereas the Pop Art movement was more popular and more accessible to the masses. Saint Laurent's approach to appropriating high art was more successful than the Pop Art collection. This is in part due to the fact that Pop Art was a movement for the public and was thought to be not exclusive or elite enough to be appropriated in high fashion. The Pop Art collection was also criticized for being too young. *The Globe and Mail* article titled, "The French Squealed: Saint Laurent Shows He's Up on Pop Art" from August of 1966, writes, "Saint Laurent, a gifted and much copied designer strains too hard to convince the world how he is hand-to-hand and eye-to-eye with the very young."⁴⁸ The public might have viewed this collection as humorous, that Saint Laurent might not have been taking his work seriously enough. The article continues to discuss how the collection should have been put aside for the young boutique he was going to open, or should have been "saved as a small private joke for a few friends."⁴⁹

A Wearable Canvas

Saint Laurent's dresses are themselves pieces of art in appearance. Saint Laurent attempted to integrate the flatness of the canvas surface into a wearable garment. While transforming the painting from a flat, two-dimensional surface into a three-dimensional object, the impression of a "wearable painting" comes through, by maintaining the dimensionality of the painting through the color-bloc technique.⁵⁰ The article "Wearing Mondrian" also observes that "the sensation of the Saint Laurent story is a series of Pop Art clothes colorful enough for any

⁴⁸ "The French Squealed: Saint Laurent Shows He's Up On Pop Art," *The Globe and Mail*, August 5, 1966, 9.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁰ Reij, "Wearing Mondrian Yves Saint."

modern art gallery.”⁵¹ The collection communicated a new kind of way to envision garments and for women to express themselves through their fashions, a direct overlap of art and fashion.

When looking at Saint Laurent’s designs in his Mondrian, Pop Art and the 1988 collection, discussed below, the viewer is struck by an overwhelming sense that he or she is looking at a piece of artwork. The plainness of the dress’s design allowed Saint Laurent to work with a blank canvas of sorts. The wool of the garment is very heavy and is barely affected by movement, unlike satin or cotton, which are lighter materials that move with the body, emphasizing a form or shape. Unlike Schiaparelli, Saint Laurent’s pieces act as a medium between the painting and the dress. The dresses are wearable art because their fabric is the appropriated design, whereas Schiaparelli created pieces of art herself. The piece overall is able to hold its own, acting as a piece of art. The dress is able to act as a piece of artwork because it is devised by a designer taking risks and aiming to create a change or spark a flame in the fashion world’s industry at the time. The dress is meant to hold a conversation with its wearer and with its viewer, similar to the type of conversation that viewers have with a piece of art in a museum or gallery.

Saint Laurent was a visionary, a man who was able to see beauty in the arts and transform it into clothing. Troy declares that it was “with the Mondrian look that he [Saint Laurent] inaugurated his enduring practice of making fashion out of art, eventually he would collect and make outfits based on the work of Leger, Matisse, Braque, and Picasso.”⁵² Saint Laurent’s 1988 haute couture collection was almost entirely based on iconic works of art. These pieces were also appropriations of the original artworks. In the 1988 collection, Saint Laurent created beaded jackets based (figures 47-48) on Van Gogh’s paintings *Irises* (figure 49) and *Sunflowers* (figure

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Troy, *The Afterlife of Piet*, 214.

50), which were the world's two most expensive paintings at this time, worth an estimated price of \$85,000.⁵³ The collection also showcased designs inspired by George Braque's iconic bird motif (figures 51-53) and Henri Matisse's infamous painting *La Gerbe* (figures 54-55) from 1953. This collection was glittery and flashy, and very representative of the 1980s period style. As the author Amy Fine Collins points out, the prices of Saint Laurent's clothes "pay tribute to the wealth and privilege reflecting the market value of the paintings he appropriates."⁵⁴ This quote reinforces the idea that Mondrian, the paintings, and the collection appeal to a bourgeois, elite culture.

Fashion for Saint Laurent was a way to make a difference and express modernity into his clothing. Saint Laurent directly lifted artwork off the canvas and put it on clothing rather than loosely reinterpreting artwork like Schiaparelli. Saint Laurent was trying to keep fashion as modern and up to date as possible. "Yves said it himself: 'Chanel freed women, and I empowered them.' ... You understood that Yves was first with everything and has inspired practically everybody," writes Susan Train.⁵⁵ Saint Laurent truly understood his times and was able to fully embody the modernity of a woman. As Axel Madsen writes in his book, *Living for Design*, "Fashion is the universal teacher of modernity."⁵⁶ Madsen quotes Saint Laurent, saying, "If I chose this trade, it was because I wanted to be the greatest. I wanted to mark my era because I think fashion is very important. It reflects the state of mind, the evolution and the future civilization. Every seven, ten years there's a great change in how we live that is expressed in the way we dress."⁵⁷ Saint Laurent believed that fashion was a major art in the grand scheme of

⁵³ Bee-Shyuan Chang, "The Well-Trained Eye of an Art Historian," *New York Times*, April 12, 2013, accessed March 1, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/14/fashion/what-amy-fine-collins-wore.html>.

⁵⁴ Troy, *The Afterlife of Piet*, 215.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 535.

⁵⁶ Madsen, *Living for Design: The Yves*, 215.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 218.

things. Perhaps this is where his appropriations began taking from the masters. He believed that fashion combined the manual skill of the artisan with style or awe for objects and ideas. He believed that ordinary fashion leaned toward combining the beautiful with the useful, but as a modernist he believed that beauty did not have to make sense, and that every style is in essence a reaction to previous fashions. Saint Laurent rose up and created iconic pieces of clothing and fashion-meets-art that remain very significant in fashion history.

Chapter 3: Kawakubo's Sculptural Interpretation

As the first two chapters argued, Schiaparelli's clothing encompasses Surrealist art come to life, creating designs that are, in essence, illuminated Surrealist thought into a physical manifestation. Saint Laurent appropriated modern artists and used their art as a basis for the pattern of his clothing design. On the other hand, Rei Kawakubo's designs act as individual pieces of conceptual sculpture as opposed to Schiaparelli or Yves Saint Laurent's. Kawakubo is a pioneering Japanese fashion designer creating standalone pieces that function similarly to sculpture. Kawakubo's label, Comme des Garçons, produces garments that force the wearers to reach their own conclusions about their meaning.

Japanese fashion designers have been influencing Western dress for a long time. Japanese designers, namely Issey Miyake, Junya Watanabe and Yohji Yamamoto have offered a new and special way of viewing the process of creativity by challenging the norms established in the fashion world at large. The understated elegance of the cultural aesthetics of Japan creates a recognizable difference from Western dress. Comme des Garçons provides the public with a way to live that has been shared by the Japanese people for centuries. The underpinning of this way of life, one that embodies comfort, simplicity and builds upon a traditional Japanese dress, confronts the fashion industry by challenging the notions of Western ideals of beauty. Kawakubo draws upon the past while making way for the pervasive newness constantly achieved in her work. Kawakubo not only challenges Western beauty ideals, nor does she represent her work as merely fashion, but incorporates art into everyday life and activities. Kawakubo tailors art to “embod(y) features such as asymmetry, imperfection and incomplete beauty, rejecting the idealized, the majestic, the imposing the superficial and the minutely detailed – all facets of a

continental civilization,” as Bonnie English writes in her book, *Japanese Fashion Designers; The Work and Influence of Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo*.⁵⁸ Kawakubo has created a visual language through her clothing design that blurs the line between what defines fashion and what defines art. English writes that Kawakubo’s “understated work underlies the notion that culture, conceptualization and experimentation can be integral to fashion, as it is to art.”⁵⁹ Kawakubo’s work and process directly mimic that of an artist.

Kawakubo’s early life prepared the way that her art would find voice the fashion industry. She is the daughter of a professor and a university administrator and studied literature and philosophy, including the history of aesthetics, at Keio University in Tokyo. After working in advertising, she began to create her own clothing, beginning her career in 1967. “The very first thing I wanted to do when I started this was to make a living, be independent, and have a job. But I could never find clothes that I wanted to wear, so I decided to make them myself,” Kawakubo has stated.⁶⁰ From the beginning, Kawakubo’s work aimed to stray away from mainstream fashion and challenge the stereotypical Western ideal of the body, beauty and glamour. Instead, Kawakubo wanted to encompass quality and morality through dress, and re-instill a respect for traditional cultural traits. She designed for independent, working women who did not rely on their body to attract men.

⁵⁸ Bonnie English, *Japanese Fashion Designers; The Work and Influence of Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo* (Oxford, UK: Berg, 2011), 43.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁰ Jacques Hysagi, "Rei Kawakubo's Radical Chic," *The Guardian* (London, England), September 20, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2015/sep/20/rei-kawakubo-radical-chic>.

Kawakubo's Haute Couture

Kawakubo refused to be associated with haute couture at the beginning of her career and solely created in pret-a-porter manner. Haute couture, as described in the Saint Laurent section, is defined by unique, custom designs, specially hand-tailored for the modern wearer who can afford them. Western fashion is based primarily on haute couture fashion and extorts the features of glamour that Japanese designers reject. With Kawakubo's defiance of haute couture, she aimed to represent the "actual feel of the fabric."⁶¹ She wanted to expose the lines, structures and processes that it takes to create these couture pieces. For example, Look 17 (figure 56) from Comme des Garçons' Fall 2004 collection exhibits couture materials, but in a disheveled kind of way. The look is made up of black pleated, oversized suit pants, complete with a sheer top. The top is covered in feathers and bustles, while the embellished shirt hides the sheerness of the top. Feathers are placed on the left shoulder that mimic the shape of a shoulder pad, while the right shoulder is left bare. The left arm is covered in a satin fabric, and the right hand is fitted with a leather glove. The model is also dressed in red lipstick that is smeared to the left side of her mouth. Perhaps this look is commenting on Kawakubo's perception of the haute couture culture because the look appears to be formal and signifies the fancy, one-of-a-kind characteristics found in typical couture pieces. She is, in a sense, ridiculing haute couture. Kawakubo's ideology is itself a philosophy reflecting her appreciation of Japanese philosophy of ancient times. Through her appreciation of "poverty, simplicity and imperfections" she confronts the underlying characteristics of haute couture.⁶²

Given Kawakubo's dislike of haute couture, it is not surprising that she would balk at showing her designs in the rarified atmosphere of museums. Nevertheless, in 1984, Kawakubo

⁶¹ English, *Japanese Fashion Designers: The Work*, 41.

⁶² Ibid.

was part of the show titled *Three Women* held at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. The exhibition showcased three exceptional women in fashion: Claire McCardell, an American fashion designer in the middle of the 20th century, Madeleine Vionnet, a leading French fashion designer between World War I and World War II and Rei Kawakubo herself. The show was meant to exemplify each woman's outstanding designs and their contributions to the fashion world. At the time of this show, Kawakubo was at a very early stage in her career. For Kawakubo, the exhibition showed her potential in the fashion world at large, and signified her progressive techniques. Placing herself in a museum context and her designs to be appreciated as art, gave her the power to challenge the viewer with the questions her pieces pose surrounding question of gender and social status. Kawakubo also had the opportunity to place herself out of the traditional trend of fashion and into an art context at a very early stage in her career.

Dover Street Market

In 2004, Kawakubo, along with her husband Adrian Jaffe, created Dover Street Market, a fashion retail building and concept store. Dover Street Market first opened in London, and then in New York, Tokyo, and Beijing in the following years. The store focuses on a multi-brand retail experience that is grounded in the idea of “beautiful chaos” (figure 57).⁶³ Dover Street Market is home to some of the most outrageous designs on the market today. Each season the store showcases certain designers, where each designer creates their own special art installation, and are asked to curate the spaces in which their fashions are placed. Every season the store also undergoes “tachiagari,” which means the interior of the store is continuously reborn.⁶⁴

⁶³ "Dover Street Market," Business of Fashion, accessed April 3, 2016, <http://www.businessoffashion.com/community/companies/dover-street-market>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Kawakubo has essentially created her own gallery setting. She has curated a gallery showcasing fashion in a purely art setting, while still maintaining a commercial space. By placing the garments in an art centric room, through an artistic curatorial practice, the garments are transformed into pieces of art themselves.

Although Dover Street Market has since relocated, it is interesting to note that the fashion mecca's first home previously belonged to the Institute of Contemporary Arts. Founded in 1946, The Institute of Contemporary Arts is a "membership institute that promotes and encourages an understanding of radical art and culture."⁶⁵ The institute aims to produce exhibitions that promote conversation in the contemporary art world. The Institute of Contemporary Arts and Dover Street Market are both aiming to involve a new generation of artists, designers and audiences.⁶⁶ By choosing this space previously home to a gallery setting, Kawakubo and Jaffe are placing Dover Street Market directly in an art context. Not only is the ideology of Dover Street Market meant to be viewed as a gallery itself, it is also taking the space of a previous gallery, a space accustomed to this type of viewing. Similarly, the Comme Des Garçons store in New York is conveniently located in the gallery streets of Chelsea. Kawakubo is deliberating placing her designs in an art context. By placing her store in this setting, she is again presenting her clothing as works of art themselves.

Cindy Sherman

Comme des Garçons collaborated with artist Cindy Sherman for their unconventional 1994 Ad Campaign. Sherman is best known for her Untitled Film Stills (figure 58) from 1977 to 1980. These stills depict sixty-nine black and white photographs of Sherman posing as different

⁶⁵ "About," ICA, last modified 2016, accessed April 30, 2016, <https://www.ica.org.uk/about>.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

women in various roles. Sherman is channeling these stills in her photographs for the 1994 campaign, in which she poses in assorted conceptual portraits (figures 59-62). Sherman uses the aesthetics of the Comme des Garçons line in order to create an alter ego to embody the designs. She is able to challenge the idea of reconstruction and the portrayal of women in society, which highlights Kawakubo's underlying intentions throughout her work. Sherman was able to fully embrace the Comme des Garçon aesthetic, but then added one more layer by criticizing the idea of the fashion campaign, advertising and photo-shoots in general. The photographs confront the viewer with various warped and distorted images of women. One photograph is directly playing on the ideas of orientalism, while another displays a woman in a great deal of make-up with a face expressing shock.

Similar to Kawakubo's designs, the post cards used as the mode of display, are alarming and stimulating. The photographs are unusual, and unlike most fashion campaigns. The images, similar to Kawakubo's designs, reject the ideal image of beauty, and instead show somewhat startling and unappealing portrayals of women. Again, similarly to Kawakubo's designs, the photographs do not exemplify the clothing, as in an average campaign, but instead draw the viewer outwards. The images pull the viewer away from the clothing and in turn, the focus becomes the underlying concept of the images. The postcards created showcased the photographs on the front, with only the words "COMME des GARÇONS" over the image in white or black letters, there is no other information given. The brand name written on the postcards is the only clue that these photographs have to do with the label. By utilizing Sherman in the ad campaign, Kawakubo is fully embracing the artist and putting Sherman at the forefront. Comparably, Kawakubo's designs and Sherman's photograph ask their viewer to draw their own

conclusions about the work in front of them. Both, Kawakubo and Sherman probe the audience to view fashion as an artistic language.⁶⁷

Building Upon Japanese Tradition

Japanese design teaches how to appreciate the ways a very sophisticated and specific aesthetic can become an inherent part of daily living. Established in their samurai roots, Japanese aesthetics have always inhabited a refined approach that emphasizes simplicity and asceticism. The Western world looked down upon Kawakubo's first collection show in Paris and described the designs as exhibiting "aesthetics of poverty." The notion of the aesthetics of poverty is traced back to the traditional Japanese tea ceremony that developed as an "art concealing art, an extravagance masked in the garb of noble poverty."⁶⁸ The Japanese argue that everyday objects that are aged with time and use, similar to the containers used in the tea ceremonies, are crucial to understanding the basis of beauty. The idea that these vessels become beautiful through wear and age is intrinsic to understanding Japanese conditions of beauty. The notion of the aesthetics of poverty is very hard for the Western world to understand and is why Kawakubo was faced with such critiques. In Japan, the aesthetics of poverty represents "individuality and appeal[s] to the humanistic spirit."⁶⁹ Kawakubo is drawing upon these inherent cultural traits, and building upon them as a base for her work, to push the viewer out of their comfort zones. Kawakubo, in a sense, is appropriating these aspects of her traditional culture and applying them into her designs. By utilizing these cultural traits, Kawakubo is able to not only present clothing that denies the conventional standard of beauty, but also questions the wearers themselves. When a viewer is

⁶⁷ Jade French, "The Art/Fashion Divide," Kids of Dada, accessed April 30, 2016, <http://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/15959989-the-art-fashion-divide>.

⁶⁸ English, *Japanese Fashion Designers: The Work*, 3.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

faced with a piece of sculpture, they are inherently predisposed to either liking or disliking the sculpture. Kawakubo's designs go through the same process, but is taken one step further by asking the wearer to question why they might like or dislike the clothing and suggests a uniformity through this process.

The kimono (figure 63), a traditional Japanese garment, has been the basis of Kawakubo's fashion design throughout her career. People of all social classes wear the kimono, and the kimono has the power to unify the classes by creating an equal platform for all wearers. The kimono calls attention to the space between kimono and body by the loose quality of the traditional garb, giving way to Kawakubo's ideas regarding the relationship of garment to body. The kimono is a T-shaped garment, made up of conventional lines, falling straight down the body. The kimono does not emphasize the bodies' curves, but instead stresses ease and comfort for the wearer. The space between the fabric and the body is most recognized and re-interpreted in her spring/summer 1997 collection, titled *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, most commonly known as *Lumps and Bumps*. Not only does the kimono reject the tight-fitting garments of Western clothes, but also enables Kawakubo to push boundaries and question the "normal" or "accepted" ideals in the fashion world.⁷⁰ The space between body and garment contributes to the idea of covered or bulky clothing that becomes a sculptural form of its own. Kawakubo's *Lumps and Bumps* collections in 1997 and in 2010 are clearly evident of these ideas coming to life.

⁷⁰ Rosie Dalton, "Five 90s Runway Moments That Challenged Beauty Clichés," *Dazed*, October 2015, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www.dazeddigital.com/fashion/article/26119/1/five-90s-runway-moments-that-challenged-beauty-cliches>.

Lumps and Bumps I and II

Kawakubo's 1997 *Lumps and Bumps* collection showcases padded sections added to the clothes that distort the natural curves of the body. Her designs were exhibited in a variety of colors; soft pink, pale yellow and baby blue, all in a gingham pattern print (figures 64-68). The bulging padding hides the model's true body shape, distorting the conventional female body. The warped essence questions the pre-existing ideals of the picturesque tradition of the female body.⁷¹ Look 55 (figure 69) exhibits a model in an all-red dress that imitates a turtleneck and ends right above the knee. The lumps and bumps are located on her right side body and above the right shoulder. The lumps go over the arm and wrap around the body, seemingly connecting all the fabric into one piece. The dress appears to be made of a stretchy-cotton blend and creates a wrap type of feeling. The lumps seem tumor-like and are clearly distorting the form of the figure. The literal clothing is operating as criticism towards the ideal female body. The padded bumps act as the accessories to the tight-fitting gingham clothes. The padding was added to the shoulders, hips, belly and back. Kawakubo, through her designs, becomes the sculptor. She takes on the role of designing the body and molding the "lumps" and "bumps" to her liking.

Adrian Joffe, Kawakubo's husband, said the 1997 *Lumps and Bumps* collection was inspired by "Rei's anger at seeing a Gap shop window filled with banal black clothes."⁷² Kawakubo held her presentation of the 1997 collection at the Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie (the National Museum of Arts of Africa and Oceania) in Paris, without a catwalk or music. Kawakubo's presentation captured a true gallery feeling and created an overwhelming sense that the clothes acted as sculpture. The audience was left to meditate on the conflicting

⁷¹ Bethany Rose, "Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body: An Analysis of Comme Des Garçons Spring/Summer 1997 Collection," *Milk Teeth* (blog), entry posted October 24, 2014, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://bethanyroselamont.blogspot.com/2014/10/body-meets-dress-dress-meets-body.html>.

⁷² Hyzagi, "Rei Kawakubo's Radical Chic."

feelings the clothes stirred up. This presentation created a shocking response in the audience because it was new and out of the ordinary. Catwalks at the couture shows are usually fast-paced: the models walk down the runway hastily, complemented by some kind of sound accompaniment. The audience is left with a very quick view of the clothing as they pass by. In Kawakubo's presentation, the audience was forced to concentrate solely on the new garments presented in front of them, rather than having to make a fleeting observation.

In the fall of 2010, Kawakubo re-introduced her 1997 *Lumps and Bumps* Collection in a new and exciting way (figures 70-75). Again, Kawakubo played with adding padding to the shoulders, hips, backs and torsos of her designs, playing with transforming the female body into an unrecognizable form. This collection, in contrast with the 1997 *Lumps and Bumps* collection, exhibits the colors black, white and grey in solid patterns, as well as a red flannel pattern. A large number of her designs implement the color black. Here, the use of black acts as a non-color, representing absence, rather than presence. The solid colors, along with the deep red flannel print, are very serious, and are no longer playful like the 1997 collection's pastel gingham prints. The 2010 collection showcases designs that are not just protruding padding, but padding coiled within each garment, emphasizing different parts of the body, rather than only distorting the body's female shape. Look 5 (figure 76) offers evidence of this. The look consists of a jacket, and the reminiscence of a skirt, mid-calf length pants, and a pair of shoes. The jacket is very masculine, and exhibits a thick collar and three large buttons. The jacket is padded in a lump-like fashion. The skirt appears to be coming out of the bottom of the jacket, where the padding of the skirt conjures the image of intestines curled outside the body. Under the skirt there are pants that are similar to that of a lounge pant, and has a white stripe down the side of the legs. Half the calf is left bare, along with the hands and face of the model. The model's face is strikingly pale, her

hair is put into two buns and a ribbon covers her forehead that wraps below her chin. A great amount of the collections designs now have a puffy, cloud-like feel. These pieces are more masculine in construction, almost military-like, whereas *Lumps and Bumps*, although distorting the body, suggested some sex appeal. The 2010 collection avoids any suggestion of a sexualized female body and maintains a masculine, distortive bulky quality.

In this reworking of her original collection, Kawakubo was again faced with grave criticism. The audience was shocked with these new designs that acted as pieces of art on their own. Journalists described the garments as “having padding coiled around the body, cloud-like-dresses that were bursting at the seams with pillowy fluff or ‘yucky’ protuberances of deconstructed bustles and swollen pinstripes.”⁷³ Kawakubo would disagree with this harsh criticism. Kawakubo, who never takes a bow and rarely gives interviews, said two words to the press about this collection, “inside decoration.”⁷⁴ She urges her audience to delve inside and find the deeper questions of what beauty means for them, and what they are meant to provoke. Kawakubo’s few words commenting on the idea of digging inside, an idea she wants her audience to take away from her collection.

The Power of Kawakubo

Both *Lumps and Bumps* and the 2010 collection refer back to Kawakubo’s traditional culture, the power of simplicity and uniformity, and the grace found in confronting the ugliness of the problems her collections face. Perhaps the 1997 and 2010 fashions aren’t exactly “wearable,” as some would argue, but they are “wearable art,” a theme connecting Kawakubo, Saint Laurent, and Schiaparelli. Kawakubo offers a new type of art in contrast with Saint Laurent

⁷³ English, *Japanese Fashion Designers: The Work*, 82.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

and Schiaparelli. Kawakubo forces the audience to appreciate the clothing in the same way one would appreciate art and forces the audience to delve inside themselves. Her designs force the audience to draw conclusions on their own. For example, Comme des Garçons' spring 2012 collection (figures 77-80) references the idea of the Western bride and the white garb that comes along with the ceremony. The collection's "brides" are not typical; the designs of this collection are avant-garde and out-there, like most of her collections. The faces of the models are all obstructed by a headpiece, that can lead one to conclude that these "brides" are in hiding, escaping their duties. Kawakubo is also drawing on traditions by depicting the veil. Although her veils are not traditional in construction, she is building on a cultural tradition that extends beyond Japan and includes Americanized traditions.

Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto, another revolutionary Japanese fashion designer, brought the aesthetics of poverty to the fashion shows in Paris beginning in the 1970s. The Parisian catwalks are arguably one of the most glamorized settings in fashion. As English points out in her book, the "deconstruction" of style that these designers brought to the catwalks in Paris is commonly described as the breaking down of "elements, traditions, and ideas in a fine art context."⁷⁵ Kawakubo's work defies the traditional characteristics of haute couture stereotypes. Instead, she executes her garments with no or rough edged hems, or through ill-fitting garments where seams are located in unlikely places. Kawakubo adds pouches, padding and many other unconventional materials in out of the ordinary places. Through these deconstructed garments, Kawakubo is practicing her art. She is sculpting not only the shapes of the body, but the garments into sculptural ensembles. Kawakubo's work is spontaneous and personal. She has said, "When I am designing, what's important to me is to express what's happening in my own

⁷⁵ Ibid., 38.

life, to express my personal feelings through my designs.”⁷⁶ Kawakubo’s approach is artistic and her meditative process is recognizable in her creations.

Kawakubo incorporates Japanese history into her designs while actively looking toward a future that substitutes glamour with distinctiveness, distortion and eccentricity. As English clearly states, “Kawakubo’s work [is the] epitome of visual arts practice in that it relies on challenging artistic conventions (notion of perfection, or the ideal, sustainability, or planned progression).”⁷⁷ By delving into each of Kawakubo’s collections, the onlooker is overwhelmed and often confused by the basis of her intentions. Her designs are inspiring and can be observed through the same process as that of an artist. Although, her designs reflect Japanese traditions, her work often refers to reoccurring themes of sexuality and social status throughout her collections. Kawakubo is constantly building upon tradition and her past work. Her garments evolve into new or different articles, taking innovative shapes, a process very similar to the way a sculpture or a painting can be molded. The artist has the power and ability to create a template for themselves from which to base their processes. Kawakubo’s template incorporates tradition and a constant striving towards the new. She creates a total design by transferring her emotions to her audience.

Schiaparelli, Saint Laurent and Kawakubo

Schiaparelli and Saint Laurent’s work is understandable and accessible to many levels of the public, but this is less so the case with Kawakubo. There is more conflict in Kawakubo’s vision, and her designs are not as simple or direct. In turn, her motives are more complicated. Even with Saint Laurent’s pantsuit, the audience can feel that he is not functioning out of anger,

⁷⁶ Ibid., 75.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 75.

but an appreciation for the art of design and for the woman who wears his designs. Even though Kawakubo is extremely innovative, her clothes give us more of a sense of her own personal turmoil and sense of self which influences how and what she creates, leaving the audience with confusion as to the motives of her art and her image of herself. When looking at her collections, there is almost a sense of discomfort, rather than the sense of love and honesty so purely exhibited in Schiaparelli and Saint Laurent's designs. With Kawakubo, there is confusion and distortion, an uneasiness that reflects something within her that is complex. Her designs reveal not only her aesthetic sense, but also her emotional aesthetic. Kawakubo's art speaks more about her than the world she is designing for. Kawakubo is overwhelmed with technique and creativeness, but her emotion is the driving factor in coloring her designs. As a sculptor, these emotions would have been more clarifying. Viewing her work, as conceptual sculptural pieces would be more helpful in understanding Kawakubo's underlying intentions.

Schiaparelli was brilliant in her collaborations; she offered new and exciting designs in a time of turmoil and distress. She focused on the innate qualities of Surrealist design and for the first time, also forced her audience to question the boundaries of gender and offered a new way of dealing with these realities through self-expression. Saint Laurent, a revolutionary, appropriated his biggest inspirations, taking high art and making it accessible to the wider public. All visionaries offer their respective audiences the opportunity to view fashion through a difference lens. All three designers—Schiaparelli, Saint Laurent, and Kawakubo—empower different types of women, and beg the question of what defines the line between fashion and art. Kawakubo's fashion is unlike Schiaparelli and Saint Laurent's because it does not have to be collaboration or an appropriation in order to be appreciated in an art context; Kawakubo's work

is art and does not need any transformation, making her approach different from Schiaparelli and Saint Laurent.

Conclusion

Richard Martin, the late art historian and Metropolitan Museum of Art costume curator, claimed, “The difficulty of consider[ing] dress making an art form was not simply tied to its functionality, but also to its association with the feminine world.”⁷⁸ Through Martin’s argument, we can understand that dressmaking has been culturally devalued. Elsa Schiaparelli, Yves Saint Laurent and Rei Kawakubo have defied this notion. These three designers created fashion that empowered different types of women, giving them a voice otherwise unheard. Additionally, their fashions were presented as unique works of art. If sculpture possesses a form, and a painting can be a representation of a physical object, there is no basis to reject fashion as an art form.

Fashion has been in museums for a long time, but the nature of fashion in museums takes place as material culture, not art. For example, the traditional Japanese kimono displayed represents the society of 20th century Japan, rather than the fashions of Japanese culture. Material culture is the physical evidence of objects and spaces that has developed and defined a society.⁷⁹ For years, museums did not exhibit fashion, but instead considered the bowls, silverware and other items as intrinsic to understanding the material culture of a certain time period. Through the type of materials, textures and designs that are drawn onto various pieces of material culture, the audience is able to gain a vision of a past time, but the audience is missing a holistic knowledge of the visual culture. It is important to understand the material culture in its entirety in order to understand the time period in its totality. In this regard, it is important to place fashion in a museum/art context because the art of a time period contributes to defining a society. Fashion also tells a story, the same way the Narashima, Vishnu sculpture from the Indian section

⁷⁸ Marsha Miro et al., *ReFUSING FASHION: Rei Kawakubo* (Detroit, MI: Idea Books, 2008), 19.

⁷⁹ "Material Culture," in *Oxford Dictionary* (n.p.: Oxford University Press, 2016), accessed April 28, 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/material-culture?q=material+culture.

does, or the tapestry from the Ming Dynasty in the Chinese wing does. Fashion can be just as artful and telling as the Vishnu sculpture or the Ming Dynasty tapestry.

It wasn't until the second half of the twentieth century that high fashion slowly began to be exhibited in museums. This was the beginning of considering clothing as pieces worthy of recognition as temporal objects. In 1983, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the first museum to exhibit fashion, put on a show celebrating the work of Yves Saint Laurent. This was the first time a living designer was ever shown in a museum. These exceptional pieces were representative of the visual culture of the period in which Saint Laurent designed. Through the pieces, one could gain an understanding of a time period, and how progressive Saint Laurent was.

In the most recent years, the unwillingness to view fashion as art is being eroded. There have been many major exhibitions of fashion in major museums all over the world. In this coming Spring of 2016, the Metropolitan Museum of Art is opening a show titled, "Manus x Machina; Fashion in the Age of Technology". The exhibition is going to highlight handmade and machine-made haute couture and ready-to-wear garments. The intention of the show is to meditate on the idea surrounding haute couture, when the sewing machine was invented, and the division made between handmade and machine made clothing during the beginning stages of mass production. Through exploring the handmade and machine-made garments, the show will tackle the difference between haute couture and ready-to-wear clothing.⁸⁰ This show is a large step in tackling the underlying issues that should be addressed by exhibiting fashion in a high art context. The clothing depicted in the fashion exhibitions not only celebrates the designs itself, but also the creator, the company, the history, the innate detailing put into each garment. To

⁸⁰ "Manus X Machina," The MET Museum, last modified 2016, accessed April 26, 2016, <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2016/manus-x-machina>.

present fashion as merely dress continues to devalue the creativity, the work and the time it takes to construct these pieces. To present fashion as artistic works, standing on their own, aims to give fashion an equal platform in the art world.

Figures

All figures taken from ARTstor unless otherwise noted.



Figure 1. *Savage Beauty*, Alexander McQueen, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011.



Figure 2. Agnes Martin, Installation View, Dia:Beacon.
(Source: <http://www.diaart.org/exhibitions/main/89>)



Figure 3. Elsa Schiaparelli.

(Source: <http://thejewelryloupe.com/women-who-paved-the-way-elsa-schiaparelli/>)



Figure 4. Yves Saint Laurent. (Source: photograph by Alexander Liberman)



Figure 5. Rei Kawakubo.

(Source: <http://www.asianfashion.com/designers/rei-kawakubo/>)

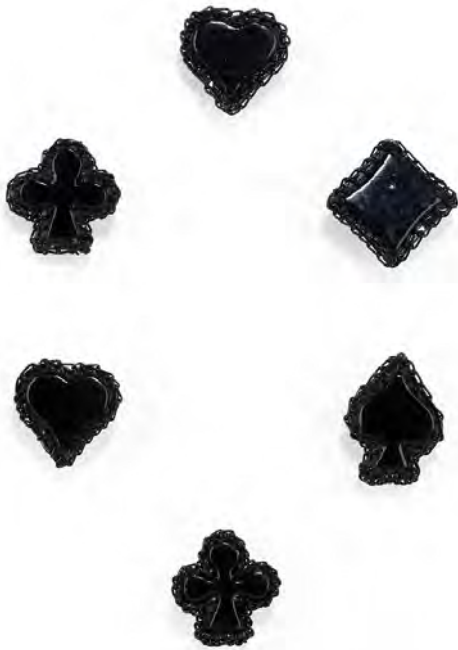


Figure 6. Elsa Schiaparelli, Innovative Buttons, 1939.



Figure 7. Elsa Schiaparelli, Innovative Buttons, 1939.



Figure 8. Elsa Schiaparelli, Innovative Buttons, 1938-1939.



Figure 9. Cravat Jumper, Elsa Schiaparelli, 1927.



Figure 10. Jumper, Elsa Schiaparelli, 1927.

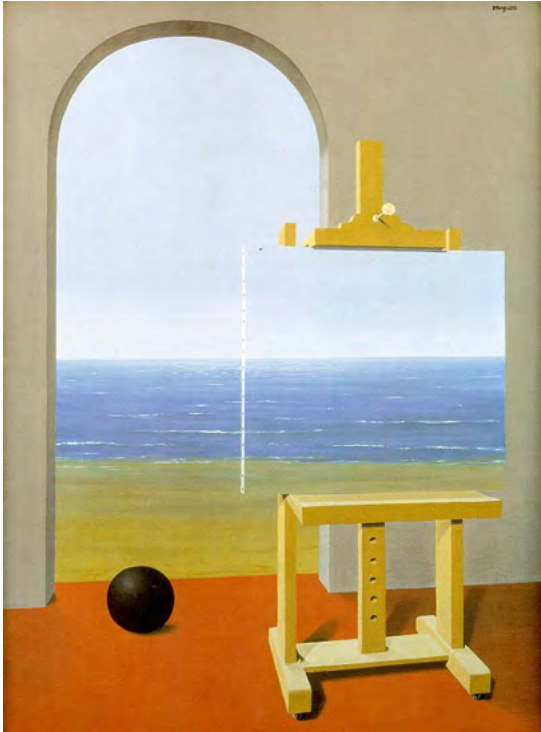


Figure 11. *The Human Condition*, René Magritte, 1935.
(Source: <http://www.artonfashion.com/blog/2014/11/rene-magritte-and-fashion/>)



Figure 12. *The Persistence of Memory*, Salvador Dalí, 1931.



Figure 13. Suit with Drawers as Pockets, Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, 1936.
(Source: <https://quizlet.com/97872498/history-of-fashion-chapter-3-flash-cards/>)

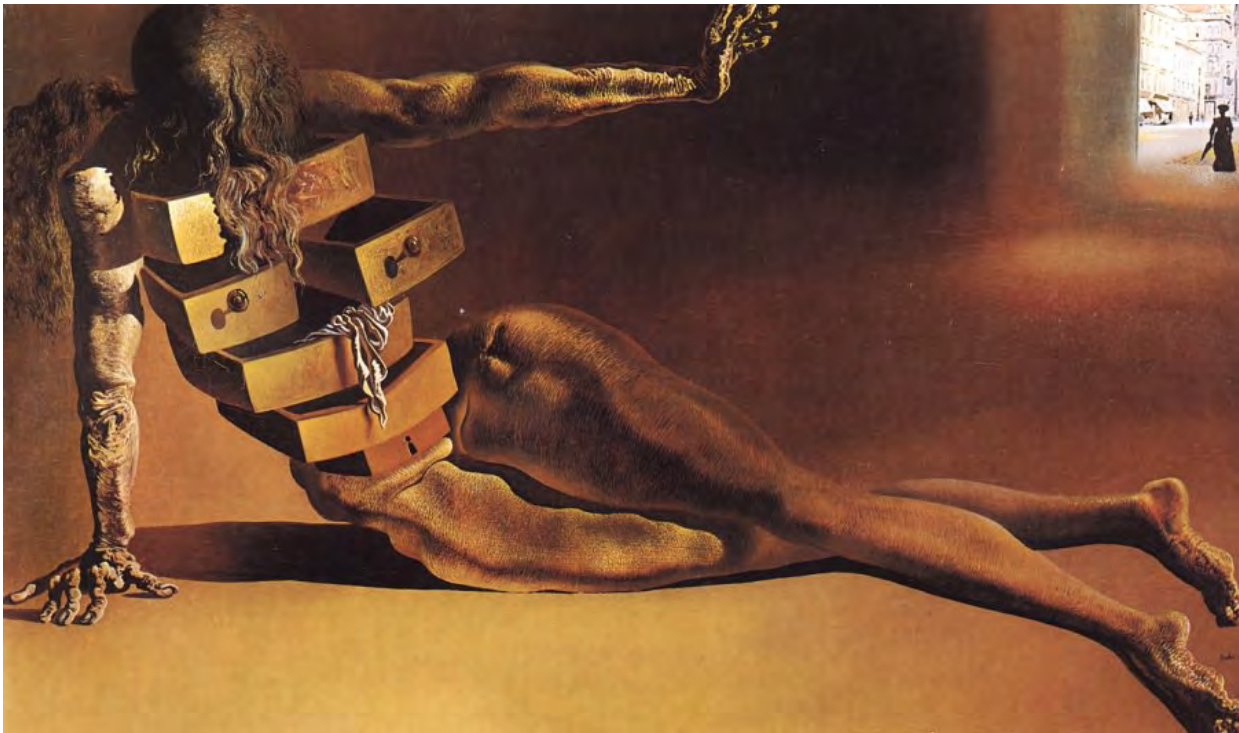


Figure 14. *Anthropomorphic Cabinet*, Salvador Dalí, 1936.
(Source: <http://www.dalipaintings.net/the-anthropomorphic-cabinet.jsp>)



Figure 15. Evening Dress with Lobster Print, Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, 1937.



Figure 16. *Lobster Telephone*, Salvador Dalí, 1937.



Figure 17. *Vogue*, Wallis Warfield Simpson, 1937.
(Source: <http://indulgy.com/post/XLb6hf2mZ1/wallis-simpson-the-duchess-of-windsor-by-ceci>)



Figure 18. Tiny Snail Buttons, Elsa Schiaparelli. Winter 1935-1936.



Figure 19. Shoe Hat, Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, 1937-1938.



Figure 20. Shoe Hat (titled over wearer's head), Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, 1937-1938.



Figure 21. Skeleton Dress, Elsa Schiaparelli, 1938.
(Source: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O65687/the-skeleton-dress-the-circus-evening-dress-elsa-schiaparelli/>)



Figure 22. Tear Dress, Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, 1938.



Figure 23. *Three Young Surrealist Women Holding In Their Arms the Skins of an Orchestra*, Salvador Dalí, 1936. (Source: <https://www.touchofmodern.com/sales/salvador-dali--6/three-young-surrealist-women-holding-in-their-arms-the-skins-of-an-orchestra-1936>)



Figure 24. "Tears" Print from Tear Dress, Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, 1938. (Source: <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/a-shock-of-schiaparelli/>)



Figure 25. New Look, Christian Dior, 1939.



Figure 26. Le Smoking, Tuxedo Suit, Yves Saint Laurent.



Figure 27. Pantsuit, Yves Saint Laurent.
(Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/384565255657992762/>)



Figure 28. Trench Coat, Yves Saint Laurent.
(Source: <https://in.pinterest.com/pin/273523377345002938/>)



Figure 29. Safari Jacket, Yves Saint Laurent.
(Source: <https://lostinfrance75.wordpress.com/tag/yves-saint-laurent/>)

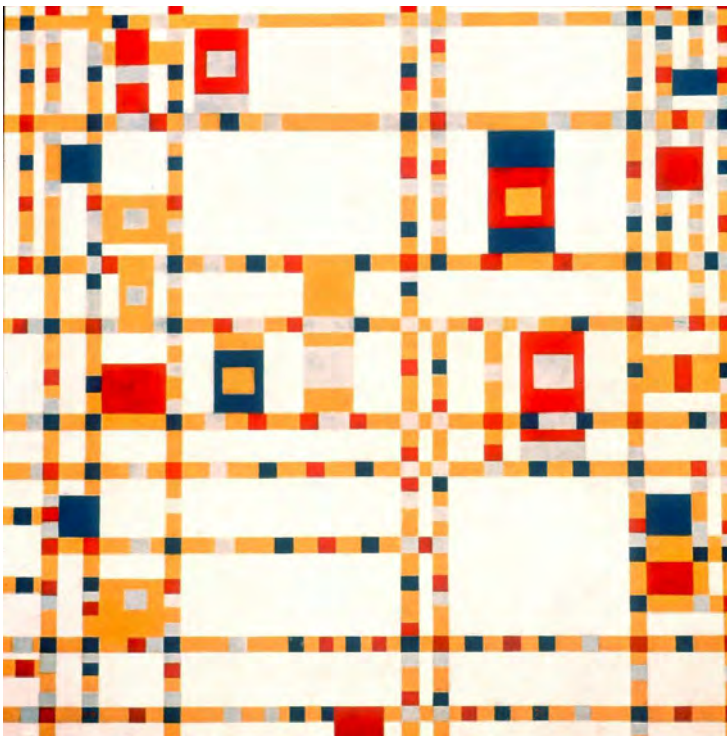


Figure 30. *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*, Piet Mondrian, 1942-1943.



Figure 31. *Still Life #20*, Tom Wesselmann, 1962.



Figure 32. *Non Objective I*, Roy Lichtenstein, 1964.

[illegible]

Figure 34. Original Brownie Design, Stella Brownie, mid 1940s.
(Source: Troy, Nancy J. *The Afterlife of Piet Mondrian*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013.)



Figure 35. "Mondrian Makes the Mode," *Art News* 44. August 1945.
(Source: Troy, Nancy J. *The Afterlife of Piet Mondrian*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013.)

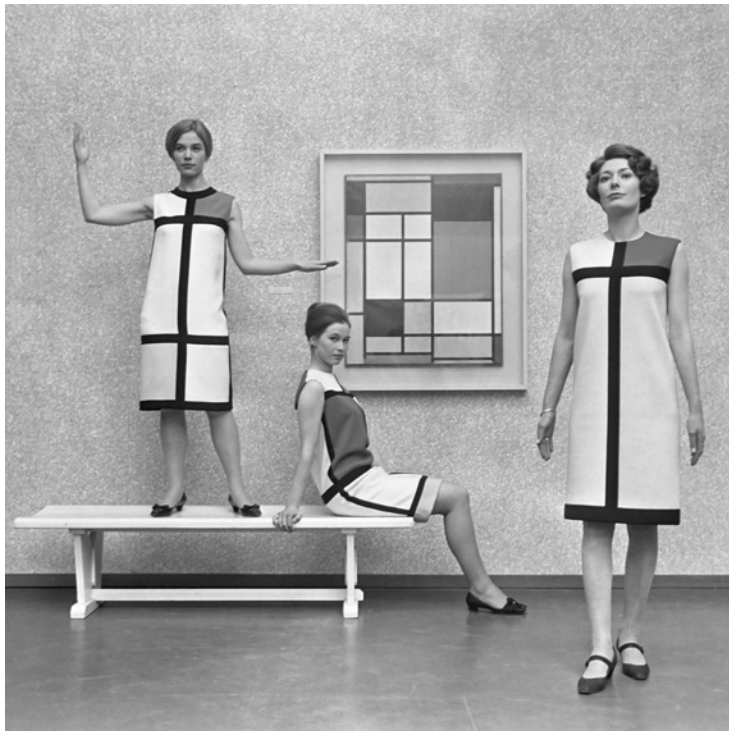


Figure 36. The Mondrian Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 19.
(Source: <http://www.notorious-mag.com/2015/04/07/art-fashion/>)



Figure 37. Mondrian dresses, Yves Saint Laurent, 1965.
(Source: <http://www.splendidhabitat.com/style-icons-yves-saint-laurent-part-1/>)



Figure 38. Mondrian dresses, Yves Saint Laurent, 1965.
(Source: <http://blog.usabilla.com/tailor-a-perfectly-fitting-website-in-6-steps/mercedesrobirosa-mondriandress-yvesstlaurent-haute couture/>)



Figure 39. Mondrian dresses, Yves Saint Laurent, 1965.



Figure 40. French *Vogue*, September Issue, Mondrian dress, Yves Saint Laurent 1965.
(Source: <http://sofiakuzmenko.weebly.com/blog/de-stijl-influence-on-the-contemporary>)



Figure 41. Pop Art Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 1966.

(Source: <https://beautybythebunny.wordpress.com/2015/03/22/designer-darling-yves-saint-laurent/>)



Figure 42. Dress with Nude Body Motif, Pop Art Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 1966.

(Source: <http://www.myfatpocket.com/touch-of-vogue/when-pop-art-meets-fashion-because-you-can-get-away-with-it.html>)



Figure 43. Dress with Face and Lips, Pop Art Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 1966.
(Source: <http://www.myfatpocket.com/touch-of-vogue/when-pop-art-meets-fashion-because-you-can-get-away-with-it.html>)



Figure 44. Dress with Heart, Pop Art Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 1966.
(Source: <http://www.myfatpocket.com/touch-of-vogue/when-pop-art-meets-fashion-because-you-can-get-away-with-it.html>)



Figure 45. Dresses with Curving Lines, Pop Art Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 1966.
(Source: <https://makeminevogue.wordpress.com/category/decade/1960s/>)



Figure 46. LIFE magazine, Cover showcasing Pop Art Collection, Yves Saint Laurent, 1966.
(Source: <https://makeminevogue.wordpress.com/category/decade/1960s/>)



Figure 47. Jacket (based off Van Gogh's *Iris*es), Yves Saint Laurent, 1988.
(Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 48. Jacket (based off Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*), Yves Saint Laurent, 1988.
(Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 49. *Irises*, Van Gogh, 1888.

(Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 50. *Sunflowers*, Van Gogh, 1888.

(Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 51. *Doves Dress*, modeled by Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, a tribute to Georges Braque, Yves Saint Laurent, 1988. (Source: <https://lostinfrance75.wordpress.com/tag/yves-saint-laurent/>)



Figure 52. *Shoulder Embellishment, Dress* (based off George Braque's *Birds*), Yves Saint Laurent, 1988. (Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 53. *Les Oiseaux*, George Braque, 1953.
 (Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 54. Dress (based off Henri Matisse's *La Gerbe*), Yves Saint Laurent, 1988.
 (Source: <http://bustownmodern.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-fashionable-art-of-fashion-art-part.html>)



Figure 55. *La Gerbe*, Henri Matisse, 1953.



Figure 56. Look 17, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2004.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 57. Dover Street Market, London, 2016.
(Source: <http://newyork.doverstreetmarket.com/index.html>)



Figure 58. Untitled Film Stills, Cindy Sherman, 1977-1980.
(Source: <http://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/15959989-the-art-fashion-divide>)



Figure 59. Comme Des Garçons Ad Campaign, Cindy Sherman, 1994.
(Source: <http://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/15959989-the-art-fashion-divide>)



Figure 60. Comme Des Garçons Ad Campaign, Cindy Sherman, 1994.
(Source: <http://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/15959989-the-art-fashion-divide>)



Figure 61. Comme Des Garçons Ad Campaign, Cindy Sherman, 1994.
(Source: <http://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/15959989-the-art-fashion-divide>)



Figure 62. Comme Des Garçons Ad Campaign, Cindy Sherman, 1994.
(Source: <http://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/15959989-the-art-fashion-divide>)



Figure 63. Traditional Kimono.
(Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kimono>)



Figure 64. *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, Comme des Garçons, Spring-Summer 1997.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 65. *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, Comme des Garçons, Spring-Summer 1997.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 66. *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, Comme des Garçons, Spring-Summer 1997.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 67. *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, Comme des Garçons, Spring-Summer 1997.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 68. *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, Comme des Garçons, Spring-Summer 1997.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 69. Look 55, *Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body*, Comme des Garçons, 1997.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 70. *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 71. *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 72. *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 73. *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 74. *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 75. *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 76. Look 5, *Lumps and Bumps II*, Comme des Garçons, Fall 2010.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 77. Spring 2012 Collection, Comme des Garçons.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 78. Spring 2012 Collection, Comme des Garçons.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 79. Spring 2012 Collection, Comme des Garçons.
(Source: Vogue)



Figure 80. Spring 2012 Collection, Comme des Garçons.
(Source: Vogue)

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