Open Call for Papers

DRESSED Conference 2023

The Complex Dimension of Clothing in Society
Interweaving Perspectives and Finding the Big Picture

Important Dates
- *Deadline for submission: 1. October 2023*
- *Notification for acceptance: 10. October 2023*
- *Conference: 07/08/09 November 2023*

Dear colleagues, scholars and textile professionals,

After the massive success of the first international Dress Conference in 2022, the Dress Research Association organises the second conference in the DRESSED series about the complex dimension clothing holds in society. We are delighted to invite interested researchers, scientists and designers to submit papers for presentations. Each track will include a ‚student special ‚to promote junior researchers and their work. Therefore, we warmly welcome contributions from PhD and master's students as well.

Last year 26 conference speakers from four continents presented their research about the expansive qualities of clothing in three different interdisciplinary sessions. In addition, over 100 researchers from various scientific fields contributed as speakers, organisers, and attendees to the conference. Lively discussions and innovative ideas about the interface of textile and design research and even about integrating data science into dress research were groundbreaking outcomes of the three-day conference, which will be published this summer.

In this year's conference, we will build on the insights we gained last year with three new exciting interdisciplinary Tracks to come. The conference will be held via Zoom from the 7th to the 9th of November 2023 (Tuesday to Thursday). Please find below the thematic introduction, the Tracks and all details for the call for papers.

Introduction

Clothing has been central to human existence for many millennia. However, the complex dimensions of clothing in society remain a phenomenon to be explored.

Clothing fulfils a wide range of practical communicative and social functions: It is a creative toolkit that enables us to enhance our skill set to meet new challenges. It is an artistic language to communicate our personal and cultural narrative. Furthermore, as a collective memory, it traces the changing eras and their social structures and represents the past, present and future. In doing so, clothing reveals wide-ranging information about their wearers, the technological and cultural knowledge, the availability of resources, and even the innovation skills of societies.

Through our clothes, we embody our strategies and give our ideas a concrete form. Producing clothes is a complex task, solved by converting creative ideas into a mathematical concept and applying it to a specific problem. Therefore, clothing is a powerful driving force for economic and social networking and the development of new technologies. Consequently, clothing can be an essential momentum for significant social change.

In order to dress, we have repeatedly developed innovative ideas, technologies and concepts over the millennia to face new challenges and creatively express who we are. Equally, we have created outstanding strategies to use valuable resources effectively. Today we are responsible for a sustainable future and developing new strategies using clothes to reshape our social interactions and deepen our interpersonal communication. Therefore, understanding clothing in its complexity is an essential precondition to constantly reinventing ourselves.

This conference explores the complex dimension clothing holds in society through the ages, from the past to the future. The conference intends to open new ways to think about clothing and investigate a complex phenomenon that has been central to human existence for thousands of years and will be central to us in the future. The conference welcomes historical, contemporary and interdisciplinary approaches to the topic and invites contributions from textile, dress and design researchers, dress and design historians, curators, conservators, archaeologists, and students and scholars in related fields, as well as writers, practitioners, educators and museum professionals who engage with the role of dress in society. The conference provides three tracks to discuss the topic from different perspectives and to interlink textile and design research and practice with data science:

Track 1 — Perspectives on Dress History & the Narrative of Clothing: How clothes & Textile Production characterise Societies

Clothing strikingly characterises the social structures and epochs in their ongoing change through its many functions and diverse qualities. It communicates and represents our personal and cultural narrative as an artistic craft and language. What could be more bound to individual and cultural identity, human beliefs, social behaviour or cultural values than the garments people wore? Historic clothing is layered with such insights, and clothes, like data archives, contain, even after several thousand years, their creators' ideas and concepts within themselves.

Like forensic scientists, researchers from various fields unravel through distinct methods and sources the different layers of the many-sided meaning of our clothes throughout history. There are infinite perspectives and methodological approaches to discovering the complex phenomenon from different angles.

Track 1 aims to explore the various insights we can discover, translating the complex language of clothing through versatile data and sources and discovering the specific narrative clothing presents in various contexts and through its versatile functions. Furthermore, it discusses how we could combine the different puzzle pieces to investigate the diverse traces that clothing left behind throughout the ages by interlinking perspectives and approaches.

Track 1 welcomes all the many-faceted aspects of dress and fashion as well as textile and clothing production in society throughout history. Relevant topics include, but are not limited to:

- Archived Narratives in the Material Culture
- Clothing as Personal or Collective Memory
- The contest-bound narrative of clothing in relation to the human body
- The narrative of clothing in motion
- New Strategies and Concepts in Historical Textile and Clothing Production
- Analysing, Reconstructing, Modelling and Testing Historical Clothing and Craftsmanship
- Reimagining the Relations between Dress, History and the human body
- Exhibiting and Curating the Collective Memory of the Dress
- The Meaning of Clothing and Fashion in the Context of Historical Texts and Pictorial Sources or Motion
- Understanding Clothing, Fashion and Textile Crafts through Conservation and Storytelling

Track 2 — Data Digitalization & Structuring: What can we learn about Clothing & Society through Data Digitalization & even AI Learning?

Even though it might be hidden behind clothing's compelling poetry and aesthetics: producing clothes is solved by converting creative ideas into a mathematical concept and applying it to a specific problem. It is a complex task that almost always includes an impressive fusion of diverse skills, elaborate strategies and creative thoughts. Consequently, a vast amount of wide-ranging information is archived in the material culture and other relevant sources related to the many functions of clothing and clothing production. However, carefully and systematically extracting those data from the sources is just the beginning.

How can we structure and digitalise the collected data from the different sources to gain those interesting hidden insights that go far beyond an individual object or a specific group of sources? How can we achieve me-thodological and systematical standards and intelligently interlink our data so that the collected information is best possibly comparable, reasonable and in its structure adaptable and expandable? How can we analyse, understand, communicate and exchange relevant information? Furthermore, could we even implement AI learning to help us understand the big picture and hidden insights?

Track 2 aims to explore how to structure, digitalise and interlink data efficiently and, by doing so, to learn how to problem-solve, think creatively, and ask meaningful questions. Furthermore, it intends to discuss how to wire data and our thoughts by extension. Track 2 welcomes all aspects of data structuring, machine learning, and methodological approaches in this field. Relevant topics include, but are not limited to:

- Structuring Data Sets: The Challenges of Data Digitalization
- Digital Metrics and Evaluation Tools: Analysing, Systemizing & Sharing Data
- Data Cultures in Dress and Textile Research
- Decoding Archived Knowledge: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue
- Practice: Defining Quality Standards and Understanding the Big Picture
- The Future of Our Collective Memory: Data and Data Science
- How might AI learning help us better understand the big picture and the complex dimension clothing holds in society?

Track 3 — The Political and Economic Dimensions of Clothing: From Sustainability & Production Concepts to affecting & even shaping Social Values

Designing clothes is an exceptionally creative and equally problem-solving discipline, responding to recent social and cultural developments and new technologies. Fashion and textile designers creatively invent new clothing concepts or cultivate a unique perspective through their artistic reflections on society. Today, we even widen the range of clothes' practical communicative and social functions by implementing new technologies, experimenting with novel materials, and realigning the production process. By doing so, we influence every area of our society and our lives.

We are equally responsible for a sustainable future, as we are developing new strategies using clothes to reshape our social interactions and deepen our interpersonal communication. How do we want to understand, define, cultivate and design the current role that clothing holds in our society? Which areas of society do we want to involve actively?

Track 3 aims to explore new ideas for designing, cultivating, and researching the recent role that clothing holds in society through new production strategies, materials, clothing concepts, and practical research approaches. How do we choose to understand and reinvent ourselves through our clothes and create our future? Track 3 welcomes all aspects of designing clothing concepts, creating new production strategies, novel materials and practical research approaches. Relevant topics include, but are not limited to:

- Structuring Data Sets: The Challenges of Data Digitalization
- Digital Metrics and Evaluation Tools: Analysing, Systemizing and Sharing Data
- Data Cultures in Dress and Textile Research
- Decoding Archived Knowledge: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue
- Practice: Defining Quality Standards and Understanding the Big Picture
- The Future of Our Collective Memory: Data and Data Science
- How might AI learning help us better understand the big picture and the complex dimension clothing holds in society?

Submit to present

To submit a proposal for a 20-minute presentation at the conference, please email the following information as a .doc or .docx attachment.

- A 250-word (maximum) abstract (word counting without footnotes and title) that describes your presentation.
- A 70-word (maximum) biography to be published in the programme.
- Optional: An image that represents your presentation (with a complete reference/citation)

Procedures for proposals

1. Please submit your abstract for your presentation by First October 2023 via mail@dressconference.org. The paper or abstract should indicate the conference track.
2. Submissions will be reviewed, and acceptance decisions will be issued by 10 October 2023.
3. The complete paper submission for the conference proceedings will be shortly after the conference. The deadline for submitting the conference proceeding papers will be 15 January 2024.

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