FASHION IN EUROPEAN ART

Dress and Identity, Politics and the Body, 1775-1925

edited by Justine De Young

Justine De Young is Assistant Professor of the History of Art at the Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York (SUNY). Her research focuses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art and literature, visual and material culture, modernism and fashion. She has written widely on art and fashion, notably for the 2012–13 exhibition, 'Impressionism, Fashion and Modernity'.

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Fashion in European Art

Dress and Identity, Politics and the Body, 1775–1925

Edited by Justine De Young

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I dedicate the volume to my husband, Alex

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CONTENTS

List of Illustrations vii
Acknowledgements xi

Introduction: Addressing Fashion in Art 1
Justine De Young

1. From the Studio to the Street: Modelling Neoclassical Dress in Art and Life 11
Amelia Rauser

2. *Parures, Pashminas*, and Portraiture, or, How Joséphine Bonaparte Fashioned the Napoleonic Empire 36
Heather Belnap Jensen

3. Temporalities of Costume and Fashion in Art of the Romantic Period 60
Susan L. Siegfried

4. Dress and Desire: Rossetti's Erotics of the Unclassifiable and Working-Class Models 91
Julie Codell

5. Mourning for Paris: The Art and Politics of Dress after '*l'année terrible*' (1870–1) 120
Justine De Young

6. Mannequin and Monkey in Seurat's *Grande Jatte* 150
Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen

7. 'But the coat is the picture': Issues of Masculine Fashioning, Politics, and Sexual Identity in Portraiture in England *c.* 1890–1900 178
Andrew Stephenson

8. Silencing Fashion in Early Twentieth-Century Feminism: The Sartorial Story of Suffrage 207
Kimberly Wahl

9. Puppets, Patterns, and 'Proper Gentlemen': Men's Fashion in Anton Räderscheidt's New Objectivity Paintings 233
Änne Söll

Contributors 258
Selected Bibliography 262
Index 268

ILLUSTRATIONS

1.1	Anon., *Portrait of a Woman in White*, c. 1798. Oil on canvas, 125.5 × 95 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.	12
1.2	Angelica Kauffman, *Self-Portrait as the Muse of Painting*, 1787. Oil on canvas, 128 × 93.5 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.	15
1.3	Plate V, from *Drawings Faithfully Copied from Nature*, by Frederick Rehberg, engraved by Tommaso Piroli (Rome, 1794). Etching and engraving, 26.5 × 20.5 cm. British Museum, London.	24
1.4	Marie Victoire Lemoine, *Interior of an Atelier*, 1796. Oil on canvas, 116.5 × 88.9 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.	28
2.1	Baron François-Pascal-Simon Gérard. *Portrait of Empress Joséphine in her Coronation Costume*, 1807–08. Oil on canvas, 214 × 160.5 cm. Musée national du Château du Fontainebleau. Photo: Erich Lessing, Art Resource, NY.	41
2.2	Pierre-Paul Prud'hon. *Portrait of Empress Joséphine in the Park of Malmaison*, 1805–09. Oil on canvas, 244 × 179 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: Gérard Blot, RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.	44
2.3	Antoine-Jean Gros. *Portrait of Empress Joséphine*, 1808–09. Oil on canvas, 212.5 × 142 cm. Musée de Masséna, Nice. Photo: Erich Lessing, Art Resource, NY.	48
2.4	Firmin Massot. *Portrait of Empress Joséphine*, 1812. Oil on canvas, 74.5 × 66 cm. The State Hermitage Museum,	

St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo: Leonard Kheifets. 51

3.1 Achille Devéria, *Grands costumes*, Paris: Ostervald aîné and Adolphe Fonrouge, 1830, 'Costume civil de temps de Louis XIII.' Lithograph, 34 × 24 cm. Photo credit: Bibliothèque nationale de France. 67

3.2 Achille Devéria, *Costumes historiques, de ville et du théâtre, et travestissements*, Paris: Aumont, and Rittner and Goupil; London: Charles Tilt, 1830–9, plate 1, 'Mlle. Noblet, dans l'opéra de *la Muette de Portici* / rôle de la Muette.' Lithograph, 34 × 24 cm. Photo credit: Bibliothèque nationale de France. 69

3.3 A. D. Menut, 'Modes Françaises de 1500 à 1831,' *La Caricature (Journal)*, no. 17 (24 February 1831), plate 34. Lithograph, 30 × 23 cm. Photo credit: Bibliothèque nationale de France. 72

3.4 Achille Devéria, *Le Goût nouveau*, Paris: chez Tessari; London: Charles Tilt, 1831, No. 5. Hand-coloured lithograph, 37 × 30 cm. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown. Photo © the author. 74

4.1 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Monna Vanna*, 1866 (repainted 1873). Oil on canvas, 88.9 × 86.36 cm. © Tate, London 2015. 96

4.2 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Bocca Baciata*, 1859. Oil on panel, 32.1 × 27.0 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of James Lawrence, 1980. 261. 97

4.3 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Bride / The Beloved*, 1865–6. Oil on canvas, 82.55 × 76.2 cm. © Tate, London 2015. 99

4.4 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Blue Bower*, 1865. Oil on canvas, 84 × 70.9 cm. Inv. No. 59.1. The Henry Barber Trust © The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham. 102

5.1 Anon., *Exchanging Pleasantries before the Body of a Communard*, c. 1871. Oil on canvas, 91.7 × 63.8 cm. Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Saint-Denis, France / Bridgeman Images. 126

5.2 Engraving by Frank Holl after Henriette Browne's *Alsace! 1870* (N. 221, 1872 Salon). Author's collection. 132
5.3 Puvis de Chavannes, *L'Espérance* (N. 1282, 1872 Salon). Oil on canvas, 102.5 × 129.5 cm. Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. 134
5.4 Emile-Auguste Carolus Duran, *Portrait de Mme* *** (N. 574, 1872 Salon). Now known as *Portrait de Madame Sainctelette*. Oil on canvas, 188 × 156 cm. Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, inv. 3789. © Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Brussels / photo: J. Geleyns – Ro scan. 139
5.5 Berthe Morisot, *Portrait de Mme E. P...* (N. 1142, 1872 Salon). Now known as *Portrait of Madame Edma Pontillon, née Edma Morisot, sister of the artist in 1871*. Pastel, 81.5 × 65.8 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France / Bridgeman Images. 142
6.1 Georges Seurat, *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte – 1884*, 1884/6. Oil on canvas, 207.5 × 308.1 cm. Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection, 1926. 224, The Art Institute of Chicago. 151
6.2 Illustration by Frédéric Front in Léon Riotor, *Le Mannequin* (Paris: Bibliothéque Artistique et Littéraire, 1900), n.p. Image courtesy of Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY, Gladys Marcus Library Department of Special Collections. 154
6.3 *Buste-mannequin* produced in 1885, photograph illustration in Léon Riotor, *Le Mannequin* (Paris: Bibliothéque Artistique et Littéraire, 1900), n.p. Image courtesy of Fashion Institute of Technology / SUNY, Gladys Marcus Library Department of Special Collections. 156
6.4 [Gordon Thompson], 'That Troubles Our Monkey Again: female descendant of Marine Ascidian: "Really, Mr. Darwin, say what you like about man, but I wish you would leave my emotions alone!"' in *Fun*, 16 November 1872. 165
6.5 Albert Robida, 'Le phare de la mode,' *La Caricature* no. 302 (10 October 1885). Courtesy Bibliothèque Nationale de France. 167
6.6 Georges Seurat, *Poseuses*, 1886–8. Oil on canvas, 200 × 249.9 cm. Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia. 170

7.1 John Singer Sargent, *W. Graham Robertson*, 1894. Oil on canvas, 230.5 × 118.7 cm. Tate Gallery, London. 180

7.2 The 'Chesterfield' overcoat, Harrods Stores illustrated catalogue, London 1895. 184

7.3 William Rothenstein, *L'homme qui sort (the painter Charles Condor)*, 1892. Oil on canvas, 120.3 × 55.2 cm. Toledo Museum of Art. 190

7.4 Roger Fry, *Edward Carpenter*, 1894. Oil on canvas, 73 × 43 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London. 194

8.1 Sylvia Pankhurst, 'Fashions of the Fair,' *Votes for Women*, 6 October 1911, p. 4. LSE Library. 213

8.2 'A. Patriot,' 'Time to Shut Up Shop,' front cover of *Votes for Women*, 4 July 1913. LSE Library. 218

8.3 Louise Jacobs 'The Appeal of Womanhood,' *Suffrage Atelier*, 1912. Museum of London. 223

8.4 David Wilson, 'The Hand that Rocks the Cradle,' front cover of *Votes for Women*, 24 June 1910. LSE Library. 226

9.1 Anton Räderscheidt, *Junger Mann mit gelben Handschuhen (Young Man with Yellow Gloves)*, 1921. Oil on wood, 27 × 18.5 cm, private collection. © VG Bild Kunst, Bonn 2015. 235

9.2 Illustration from *Die Herrenkleidung*, no. 17 (spring/summer 1920): 3. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstbibliothek. 238

9.3 Anton Räderscheidt, *Begegnung (Meeting)*, 1921. Oil on canvas, dimensions unknown, lost. © VG Bild Kunst, Bonn 2015. 241

9.4 August Sander, *Painter (Anton Räderscheidt)*, 1926. © Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur – August Sander Archiv, Cologne; VG Bild Kunst, Bonn 2015. 250

9.5 Anton Räderscheidt, *Akt am Barren (Nude at the Bars)*, 1925, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown, lost. © VG Bild Kunst, Bonn 2015. 251

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INTRODUCTION
Addressing Fashion in Art

Justine De Young

Fashion reveals not only who we are, but whom we aspire to be. From 1775 to 1925, artists were especially attuned to the gaps between appearance and reality, participating in and often critiquing the construction of the self and image. Their representations of modern life must be read with an eye to fashion and dress as to do otherwise omits a whole world of complex calculations and subtle signals. Artists did not merely record the fashions around them, but in their two-dimensional renderings of dress, posture, and pose also shaped contemporary ideals and self-fashioning in the real world. Each chapter in this volume explores the ramifications of these choices in case studies centred on crucial historical, cultural, and political moments. Contributors examine not only dress and the art object – their production and reception – but also the larger visual and material culture within which they were embedded. By unpacking the significance of historical dress, as well as the lived experience of dress and its representation, the essays consider how artists and sitters engaged with the fashion and culture of their times. They all view artworks as socially mediated cultural artefacts that illuminate the varied and complex meanings of dress in art and life during the long nineteenth century, with serious implications for our understanding of dress cultures today.

Contributors draw on a vast array of visual sources, from paintings, photographs, prints, and posters to fashion plates, caricatures, and

advertisements. Their period print and archival research is equally diverse, encompassing private letters, autobiographies, painting treatises, Salon reviews, Suffrage publications, fashion magazines, print indexes, contemporary poetry and fiction, and sociological theory. Moreover, their work engages with a wide swathe of modern critical theory, in keeping with the different approaches and questions pursued by each contributor and also the orphaned status of fashion studies more generally. Lacking a true disciplinary home, fashion has been studied and defined from a multiplicity of perspectives and backgrounds, including: economics and the conspicuous consumption demanded by capitalism (Veblen, Roche), anthropology (principally non-Western fashion), semiology and linguistics (Barthes), psychology (Flügel), aesthetics (Uzanne), feminism (Felski, Parkins), sociology (Entwistle), costume history (Ribeiro), politics (Lipovetsky), social and cultural history (Steele, Wilson), sexuality (Laver), and architecture (Wigley, McLeod).[1] Contributors benefit from and reconcile in their own work these diverse disciplinary perspectives.

As these essays showcase, the study of dress has productively driven new research in the social history of art, feminism, gender and identity studies, as well as visual and material culture. Authors explore how dress practices reacted to and intersected with political and social forces and events – from charting the effects of war on a nation's self-conception and its view of art and dress as an articulation of its values to the calculated manipulation of fashion as propaganda. Scholarship has increasingly acknowledged the role dress plays in fashioning the self and in our perception of ourselves and others; indeed, as the volume demonstrates, artists were particularly attuned to the significance and signification of dress. Their responses to and uses of fashion, while always deliberate, were by no means uniform, ranging from enthusiastic celebration to deliberate rejection and everywhere in between.

Authors attend closely to the relationship between depicted dress and lived reality – indeed many representations of fashion reveal more about contemporary ideals and fantasies than they do about worn garments. Fashion, whether ignored or embraced, was inextricably bound up in ideals and conceptions of masculinity and femininity as well as of the body. The signification of a garment also depends upon who wears it and

authors trace the movement of garments between different dress cultures and the ramifications of those dislocations. Fashion emerges from complex circuits of cultural exchange and, as the essays by Jensen and Codell stress, European fashions were heavily enmeshed in colonial projects and influenced by the visual and material culture found there. Indeed, while this volume concentrates on Western Europe, one could easily imagine a later volume examining similar dynamics in Russia, America, China, or Japan.[2]

Yet when considering fashion and avant-garde art between 1775 and 1925 Europe set the tone. Anyone interested in fashion and art in this period, no matter their focus, must understand local practices alongside those of the trend-setting European capitals – as nearly everyone in the period did themselves. As fashion became international news, how one responded to it was considered revelatory of one's style, taste, and even morality. From 1775 to 1925, Europe was the dominant centre of the fashion industry and press and of the Western art world as well. It was the golden age of the fashion plate and of painting as mass entertainment (and state tool of propaganda); by the 1920s, both would be displaced by photography and film. While there is a bias towards elite fashion and representation in the early part of the period as portraiture and state-produced art favoured the ruling classes, with the advent of realism and growth of modern-life painting, artists turned their attention in greater numbers to the dress of the middle and lower classes as well. Fashion, moreover, was no longer merely an elite preoccupation as the press enthusiastically spread fashion knowledge to the bourgeoisie and beyond. Great novelists of dress – Austen, Balzac, Dickens, Zola, Wharton, and James – underlined the increasing importance of fashion to all levels of society. Essays in the volume attend to not only elite cultural forms (painting), but also mass cultural print sources (fashion plates, journals, advertising, the illustrated press, and caricature).

While art historians of all periods have begun to address and evaluate dress, the long nineteenth century is a particularly crucial moment as it saw the rise and establishment of the modern, globalized fashion system that we still rely on today. The period witnessed the birth of the department store, mass production, the mannequin, shopping as a leisure

activity, and the rise of the fashion press, the fashion designer (*couturier*) and the fashion show. The fashion press from its earliest days was inextricably linked to advertising and was international in its reporting, relying on the increasingly interconnected globe – spreading news first via the illustrated plate and then the photograph, first via letters from correspondents then the telegram.[3] The advent of modern mass transit within cities and then between them – from omnibuses and subways to trains and steamships – made possible and greatly facilitated the spread of fashion knowledge, goods, and people in this period as never before.

Those living between 1775 and 1925 also witnessed a series of important shifts, among them the adoption of the suit and greater uniformity in male dress and the related gendering of fashion as feminine. While in the late eighteenth century dress was considered a way of remaking the self and of rendering the nation more equal, the 150 years that followed saw a loss of faith in fashion as an equalizer and marker and even as rational or legible. The volume spans from the post-revolutionary celebration of the natural body to the post-World War I acknowledgement of the body's frailty, from a conception of dress that favoured transparency and exposure to a view of clothing as a body-concealing sheath or even shell.

While there is now great interest in the role and importance of dress to the making of art and its reception, few books actually examine the movements and artists in this critical period. Virtually all published work on fashion and art is monographic, focusing on a single artist or movement, or interested in fashion as art, rather than the multivalences of fashion *in* art. A few survey texts like Florence Müller's *Art & Fashion* (2000) and Alice Mackrell's *Art and Fashion: The Impact of Art on Fashion and Fashion on Art* (2005), have more broadly addressed the relationship between art and fashion across the centuries.[4] Fashion and art as an important nexus in the nineteenth century has received serious attention by costume historians like Marie Simon, writing of the Impressionist period, and Aileen Ribeiro, who has published more extensively and helped to pioneer the sort of close attention to fashion and dress upon which this volume depends.[5]

Recent museum exhibitions have also explored fashion in art and its significance in this period. 'Whistler, Women & Fashion' at the Frick Collection in 2003 concentrated on Whistler's portraits of women

and 'Monet und Camille: Frauenportraits im Impressionismus' at the Kunsthalle Bremen in 2005 surveyed the large format 'portraits' of modern women by Impressionist and academic artists from the 1860s to the 1880s. In 2004–05, 'Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams' demonstrated how textiles were the key to understanding Matisse's visual imagination. The Courtauld's 2008 'Renoir at the Theatre: Looking at *La Loge*,' and the Musée d'Orsay, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Art Institute of Chicago 2012–13 exhibition 'Impressionism, Fashion, & Modernity' showcased the Impressionists' engagement and fascination with contemporary fashion.

This volume does not pretend to survey the representation of fashion in all European art from 1775 to 1925, but instead models the sort of close and historicized reading necessary to understand the complex signification of fashion in art and life, offering methodological exemplars for future research. Resisting attempts at control by the court, the aristocracy, the fashion industry, and the press, fashion has remained vexingly capricious and opportunistic in its inspiration and forms and thus necessitates this sort of in-depth analysis to tease out its particular meanings when represented.

Yet while chapters address fashion from different countries and periods, many themes and interests unite them. Each explores the different ways dress articulates and distinguishes a person's class, politics, gender, and national identity. Certain contributors attend to the effect of the individual trendsetter (Rauser, Jensen), others to the broader cultural moment (Siegfried, De Young) and to contemporary discourses concerning science, society, and sexuality (Butterfield-Rosen, Stephenson). Many consider the relationship between avant-garde artistic circles and different sets of politics and how those affiliations informed the art they produced – from the political embrace of fashion (Wahl), the parodying of it (Codell), or the ironic performance of it (Söll) by individuals or by groups. All are animated by the conviction that dress has legible meanings and does cultural work that must be carefully parsed to understand a society and the art that it produces.

Amelia Rauser in 'From the Studio to the Street: Modelling Neoclassical Dress in Art and Life' reveals how the adoption of diaphanous white

muslin dresses and very few undergarments emerged from decades of studio practice in which models, actors, dancers, and portrait-sitters were dressed in quasi-classical drapery in the studio or in artworks, quite differently from the ways they would have dressed in everyday life. Her essay argues that it was a new cultural recognition of the small gap between art and life, catalyzed by some key events around 1790 that caused women to want to style themselves as living artworks by wearing neoclassical dress. This self-conscious construction of identity through image and presentation of the body *as* an image to be consumed both in art and life is integral to all the essays in the volume, but particularly unites her chapter with the one that follows: Heather Belnap Jensen's '*Parures, Pashminas*, and Portraiture, or, How Joséphine Bonaparte Fashioned the Napoleonic Empire.'

Jensen analyses how costume in later portraits of Joséphine actively engaged in the construction of the Empire, creating a material and visual culture that supported imperialism. She considers how Joséphine used fashion in state portraiture to influence the shift from republicanism to imperialism, to shape the culture of Napoleonic Europe, and to expand the domain of French couture within the economic context of Napoleon's protectionist trade policies. Joséphine achieved this impact not only through the painted portraits themselves, but through their printed reproduction, signalling the growing importance of prints not only in reproducing portraits like Joséphine's, but also as a burgeoning means of conveying fashion information and of creating fashionable taste.

Susan Siegfried's essay, 'Temporalities of Costume and Fashion in Art of the Romantic Period' attends to the central role of the lithographic artist in shaping fashionable taste in the Romantic period. She examines the distinction between 'costume' and 'fashion' in contemporary terminology of the early nineteenth century, focusing on the lithographic practice of Achille Devéria, which occupied a zone between fine art and commerce. Her essay advocates for attention to the temporal dimension (the 'now and then') in understanding fashion and costume in this period, beyond the more obvious spatial distance (the 'us and them') evoked by the costume prints. The hybrid national, spatial, and temporal origins of inspiration for Devéria's print practice are notably paralleled by

Dante Gabriel Rossetti's own exotic and erotic juxtapositions as discussed in Julie Codell's 'Dress and Desire: Rossetti's Erotics of the Unclassifiable and Working-Class Models.'

Codell explores how works by Dante Gabriel Rossetti bricolaged second-hand clothes and jewellery, rejected Victorian fashion principles of the ensemble and dress protocol, and challenged the social symbolism of dress. His female figures' 'dis-ensembled' dress from no single period and/or place suggested new fluid, *deraciné* identities tied to his working-class models. His mixtures of cheap and exotic goods paralleled and parodied displays in international exhibitions, museums, and shops in a critique of the world of goods. She argues that his figures, wearing dress without legible social meanings, were not the *femmes fatales* often described by scholars, but rather agents of their own 'eroticism of the unclassifiable.' Codell's essay furthers Rauser's discussion of the home as site for appreciation of avant-garde dress practices and display, as well as Siegfried's and Jensen's analyses of how artists grapple with foreign influences on dress.

The alluring possibilities of illegibility discussed by Codell stand in stark contrast to the strong countervailing call for transparency in dress by French critics in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War and Paris Commune of 1870–1 as discussed in Justine De Young's 'Mourning for Paris: The Art and Politics of Dress after '*l'année terrible*' (1870–1).' De Young examines how the siege of Paris, the loss of the Franco-Prussian War, and the street-by-street fighting of the Paris Commune affected discourses surrounding art, women, and fashion. Her essay charts the varied sartorial responses – both discursive and actual – to the events and examines how artists navigated the altered landscape, offering new understanding of their art and the responses it received in the press. Her essay underscores not only the historically specific forces shaping dress and its representation, as other essays in the volume do, but also the centrality of fashion to France's identity and economy. From Napoleon's embrace of fashionable goods and conspicuous consumption discussed by Jensen to the Third Republic's partial repudiation of that legacy in the wake of national defeat and division, fashion was inextricably bound up in France's idea of itself. The fashionable Parisienne was a national symbol,

but a discomfiting one in a time of crisis, when the supposedly authentic and uncomplicated peasant girl became more appealing for a time, as De Young's essay shows.

Indeed fashion often occasioned discomfort and distrust, particularly in the context of mass production, when it lost much of its indexical power as a signal of class, but also in light of evolutionary theory, as Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen's 'Mannequin and Monkey in Seurat's *Grande Jatte*' investigates. Butterfield-Rosen situates fashion in relationship to other intellectual and political currents of the time, establishing the historical contingency of the word mannequin and its significance in relation to Seurat's standing female figure and her curious companion. Probing Seurat's infamous decision to accessorize this figure with a pet monkey, she argues that the incendiary pairing of these figures formalized a notion of *imitation*, a concept which took on new urgency at this moment in various disciplines, from the sociology of Gabriel Tarde to the evolutionary biology of Charles Darwin. Her essay serves as a valuable case study in considering the role fashion can play in anxieties about the dehumanizing effects of consumer capitalism.

Andrew Stephenson's chapter, ''But the coat is the picture': Issues of Masculine Fashioning, Politics, and Sexual Identity in Portraiture in England (*c*. 1890–1900),' furthers the discussion of the changing social and political significance of dress in the era of mass production. Stephenson explores the ways in which the long grey or black overcoat operates as a keen signifier of a self-consciously posed and constructed artistic male identity. It is adopted as a signifier of aesthetic dandyism by Graham Robertson and Charles Condor, but also carries with it connotations of political radicalism; most acutely in the perception of Edward Carpenter's overcoat as 'anarchist' when represented in Roger Fry's portrait. The careful surveillance of the self and of others – a theme throughout the volume – here becomes particularly important in the context of socialist and anarchist politics and emerging homosexual cultures, both of which were under increasing judicial threat in the period.

The intersection of fashion, politics, and the police continues with Kimberly Wahl's 'Silencing Fashion in Early Twentieth-Century Feminism: The Sartorial Story of Suffrage,' which examines how

fashion often implicitly informed the public discourse surrounding suffragettes. Wahl interrogates the complex and productive role of fashion in the artistic, literary, and visual framing of the campaigns for suffrage – a phenomenon which has often been elided or trivialized in earlier accounts of feminism. With the return of classical imagery, discussed by Rauser earlier, the chapter also examines how contemporary discourses around fashion and the feminine ideal echo through generations. Wahl explores how the avant-garde artistic ideals of the preceding generation inevitably shaped the visual and aesthetic imaginary of key suffrage image-makers as they were growing up. The chapter further stresses the importance of print culture touched on earlier by Siegfried and others.

The final chapter of the volume, Änne Söll's 'Puppets, Patterns, and 'Proper Gentlemen': Men's Fashion in Anton Räderscheidt's New-Objectivity Paintings' returns to the issue of the mannequin raised by Butterfield-Rosen and again addresses a nation grappling with fashion and bodily ideals in the face of military defeat, as De Young did. Söll establishes how the rapid development of ready-to-wear clothing around 1900 – made possible by new measurement systems – produced new conceptions of the body as a standardized object and prompted questioning of the idea of bourgeois male individuality. Her discussion of the suit, masculine identity, and self-fashioning in the work of New Objectivity painter Anton Räderscheidt connects in powerful ways to Stephenson's prior discussion of the multivalent signification of the overcoat.

By addressing dress not only as a material object, but also as a discourse and visual signifier, the volume works to establish new approaches to the study of fashion and dress in art history and to offer an introduction to the diversity of methods, meanings, and motivations behind the representation of dress in art. Fashion perplexed period writers and, much to the chagrin of theorists and historians, continues to resist easy explanation even today with the perspective of history, underlining the importance of close reading and case studies like those assembled here. By exploring key moments in this pivotal period, this volume also enables better understanding of the art and dress cultures of today, when dress and identity, politics and the body continue to be inextricably linked.

Notes

1 For additional works by these and other authors, see the Selected Bibliography at the end of the volume. Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Book-of-the-Month Club, 1981); Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983); J. C. Flügel, *The Psychology of Clothes* (London: Hogarth Press, 1930); Octave Uzanne, *La femme et la mode: métamorphoses de la parisienne de 1792 à 1892* (Paris: Librairies-imprimeries réunies, 1892); Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); Ilya Parkins, 'Fashion, Femininity, and the Ambiguities of the Modern: A Feminist Theoretical Approach to Simmel,' in *Georg Simmel in Translation: Interdisciplinary Border-Crossings in Culture and Modernity*, ed. David D. Kim (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006); Joanne Entwistle, *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000); Aileen Ribeiro and Valerie Cumming, *The Visual History of Costume* (London: Batsford, 1989); Gilles Lipovetsky, *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History*, Rev. ed. (New York: Berg, 1998); Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, Rev. ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003); James Laver, *Dress; How and Why Fashions in Men's and Women's Clothes have Changed During the Past Two Hundred Years* (London: John Murray, 1950); Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995); Deborah Fausch, ed. *Architecture in Fashion* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994).

2 Christine Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes: A History of the Russian Fashion Industry, 1700–1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Kate Haulman, *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Antonia Finnane, *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Penelope Francks, *The Japanese Consumer: An Alternative Economic History of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

3 Justine De Young, 'Not Just a Pretty Picture: Fashion as News,' in *Getting the Picture: The Visual Culture of the News*, ed. Jason E. Hill and Vanessa R. Schwartz, 109–15 (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

4 For other survey texts, see the Selected Bibliography. Florence Muller, *Art and Fashion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000); Alice Mackrell, *Art and Fashion: The Impact of Art on Fashion and Fashion on Art* (London: Batsford, 2005).

5 Marie Simon, *Fashion in Art: The Second Empire and Impressionism* (London: Zwemmer, 1995). Aileen Ribeiro, *Ingres in Fashion: Representations of Dress and Appearance in Ingres's Images of Women* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). See other titles by Ribeiro in the Selected Bibliography.

1

FROM THE STUDIO TO THE STREET

Modelling Neoclassical Dress in Art and Life

Amelia Rauser

In this 1798 French portrait (Figure 1.1), the female sitter poses in an austere neoclassical interior wearing the most radical version of neoclassical fashionable dress: a sheer white muslin overdress twisted at the bust and gathered with little tasselled cords to form tight sleeves. An opaque, high-waisted white shift underneath the sheer muslin drapes loosely over the sitter's lower torso and legs, while a rich red shawl fills the chair behind her and twines around her back and over her left knee. Her un-powdered hair is simply dressed and ornamented only with a braid; she wears no jewellery. Restrained in palette, detail, and texture, this fashionable sitter's ensemble is arranged to emphasize that her beauty is 'natural' and embodied in her physical form, rather than in artifice or ornamentation. Although it might seem surprising, women in late eighteenth-century Europe did actually wear the style of dress represented in this portrait; indeed, less extreme versions of the style are familiar to any viewer of Jane Austen films.[1] How did it happen that, in the late 1790s, fashionable women could wear such simple and transparent clothing, and what did it signify? As this chapter will show, neoclassical chic had a powerful alibi: it proclaimed its wearer's natural beauty using the language of art.

This radical fashion of undress, sometimes called empire-style or *robes à la grecque*, swept the metropolitan centres of Europe in the 1790s, overturning mores of modesty and display and startling contemporary commentators during its short-lived reign. The simplicity and nudity of this style

1.1 Anon., *Portrait of a Woman in White*, *c.* 1798. Oil on canvas, 125.5 × 95 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

was a dramatic departure from the hoops, silks, padded hips or bums, tall hairstyles, and hair powder of the previous few decades. Scholars often explain it as a revolutionary political statement exemplifying classical virtue and moral transparency; or as decadent French chic; or as a Rousseauian gesture to authentic maternity and gender essentialism.[2] While these views do have significant explanatory power for the meaning of neoclassical dress in the 1790s, at its origins, neoclassical dress had another set of meanings that have been poorly understood. In fact, neoclassical fashion did not emerge from the crucible of political revolution, nor was it invented in France, but rather it first arose as artistic dress, used by innovators in painting, theatre, and dance across several European cultural centres as an aid in their search for a more authentic and expressive art. In this chapter, I will argue that neoclassical fashion's status as cosmopolitan artistic dress provided both the inspiration for its emergence as street dress and the context for its meaning to contemporaries. As a kind of anti-fashion, neoclassical dress allowed women who embraced it to appear to rise above petty artifice and ornament and construct themselves as aesthetic agents at the centre of key artistic and philosophical discourses of the Enlightenment.

ARTISTIC DRESS IN THE PAINTING STUDIO

While discussions between painters and sitters about what sort of dress should be depicted in their portraits have probably always been fraught, by the 1780s the issue was considered to be critically important to the ambition of the artist and the success of the artwork. Indeed, as Sir Joshua Reynolds influentially argued in his *Discourse VII*, delivered to students at the Royal Academy in 1776, it is the depiction of nakedness and drapery that separates the great artists from the lesser ones; in the painting of modern dress, he said, the essential work had already been done by the tailor.[3] He called on his students to elevate the national taste by adopting an idealized classical dress for portraiture in their own practices:

> He, therefore, who in his practice of portrait painting wishes to dignify his subject … will not paint her in the modern dress, the familiarity of

> which alone is sufficient to destroy all dignity. He … dresses his figure with something of the general air of the antique for the sake of dignity, and preserves something of the modern for the sake of likeness.[4]

Reynolds's own ideas about how much to concede to fashion in portraiture varied over time.[5] Yet by and large, his grand manner portraits strove for this synthesis, featuring sitters wearing flowing robes without hoops or corsets but conforming to fashionable silhouettes and with their hair elegantly dressed and powdered.

Reynolds's chief rival in English portraiture during the 1780s, George Romney, also preferred to clothe his sitters in generalized dress, even though he distinguished his portrait style by meticulous specificity in rendering his sitters' expressions.[6] With filial bias, his son even retrospectively credited Romney with leading the taste for antique-style dress:

> Though it was the fashion during the greatest part of Mr. Romney's practice, for ladies to wear high head dresses and stiff, long-waisted stays; yet, whenever he had an opportunity … he rid himself of those ungraceful incumbrances, and returned to nature and truth. His picture of Cassandra, in the Shakespeare Gallery, influenced the public taste, and was instrumental in expelling from the empire of fashion the long and shapeless waist; and in introducing a more simple and graceful mode of dress, approaching nearer to the Grecian.[7]

This characterization of 'Grecian' dress as 'simple and graceful' and aligned with 'nature and truth,' rather than worldly artifice, was universal by the early nineteenth century, when John Romney was writing. Indeed, Romney even traces a trajectory from the studio to the street here, crediting artistic practice with driving 'the empire of fashion.'

Two women artists of the 1780s, Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun and Angelica Kauffman, not only frequently painted their sitters in generalized classical dress, but also adopted such dress themselves, both as studio dress and in their numerous self-portraits.[8] Kauffman's *Self-Portrait as the Muse of Painting* (Figure 1.2), made for the Duke of Tuscany's famous gallery of self-portraits in 1787, is a masterful example, hovering as it does

1.2 Angelica Kauffman, *Self-Portrait as the Muse of Painting*, 1787. Oil on canvas, 128 × 93.5 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.