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Our dress, a personal language

by TERESA SUNYÉ BARCONS

Clinical psychologist. Psychotherapist. Psychoanalyst

Photographs: CDMT, QUICO ORTEGA

“La toilette ... est pour toutes les femmes une manifestation constante de la pensée intime, un langage, un symbole” (Honoré de Balzac).

“Dress is extremely indiscrete: it immediately suggests things that, without it, we could never know” (Margarita Rivière).

People are social beings: we need others, we need to communicate with them. To do this we have developed a variety of languages. The one that we are most aware of is speech, but it is not the only one: in fact, dress is the most immediate way we have of presenting ourselves to others, of suggesting impressions, of beginning a dialogue. Dress reflects the historical moment in which we live, the society in which we move, our moods ... In fact, the act of dressing is such a part of our everyday lives that we can easily overlook its enormous significance. Dress is a carrier of meaning, a language that is part of how a particular society is interpreted; through our dress we transmit messages to others. People with a public image or who represent institutions are well aware of this. A recent example is the media impact of the appearance of Pope Francis wearing a white robe and a pair of old moccasins. His image conveyed, even to those who did not hear or read his words, a message of simplicity. By means of his dress, Pope Francis expressed a particular conception of religion.

Through dress we can study the changes in a society in different areas: the effects of technological advances, changes in concepts of modesty with regard to the areas of the body that may or not be displayed, and so on. Studying the history of a particular garment can reveal to us the cultural, social, political, technological and symbolic aspects of a culture. For instance, by following the gradual introduction of trousers for women in Western society and their popularization throughout the twentieth century, we can trace the feminist struggle for sexual equality and the historical and cultural conditions that made it possible. The history of the appropriation of trousers by women shows how the conquest of authentic female citizenship also demanded a revolution in appearance.





The dress we choose has a profound influence on our attitudes: it dictates the way we feel and move. It modifies the perception of our body and our gestures: we behave differently when wearing party clothes, our working clothes, or dressed to play tennis. Our dress changes our behaviour because it becomes integrated in our body and is part of the image we have of it. We do not look in the same way at a man dressed in a suit and tie or dressed in a tracksuit; a woman is not the same, nor does she transmit the same message, when wearing a low-cut neckline and high-heeled shoes or wearing jeans and sneakers.

Though it seems such an everyday phenomenon, dress is a reflection of our personality; with it we convey messages to others and consciously or unconsciously read the messages we receive. Through it we communicate our own image; we express the relationships we build, fear, or desire with others, our happiness or unhappiness, consciously or otherwise; we speak of our desires, our personal history, and the emotions we experience: our tastes, desires, aspirations, moods. It is a language created by ourselves, aimed at ourselves, but above all at others. It is a language that reflects aspects of our personality but also other aspects of which we are not aware. Beyond a simple garment, our dress reveals many secrets, expressing what our parents have passed on to us, explaining how the body is experienced, how it is hidden and how it is displayed. It embodies a history, a desire, a need, a reference point, a social brand, a prosthesis.



CDMT, NR. 14688.

Our dress is far less neutral than we might like to believe. It has a soul, a role, a function of its own, unique and individual in accordance with the relationship that each person establishes with it. There are women who enter shop after shop and buy compulsively, burning up their credit cards in search of a femininity that they feel they lack. There are men who go to a particular shop to buy shirts that give the image of elegance that makes them feel attractive to a potential partner. There are women who wear black clothes and scarves to cover a body rejected over and over again, who sleep with their arms around a blanket to smell the man who is no longer there ... These and many other individual stories are a reflection of the emotional relationship we establish with our dress.

Our dress protects us from storms and from prying eyes, but it is also a transition between the naked body of the intimate universe and the socialized body we present to the world. It conforms to the body creating a second skin, forging an image of us, the first impression that others have of us, the skin with which we receive a comforting hug, a pat on the back to say "Well done; keep going." Dress is the second skin that marks the body, showing curves, breasts, hips, legs, or leaves it uniform with tunics, wide dresses and long skirts. It conceals and reveals at the same time; it silences and incites the gaze of others, a barrier and a promise, it seduces and prohibits. It forms a part of us, it touches our skin, we choose it from among many others, we feel it to be our own, and at the same time it is part of the exterior, receiving the scrutiny of others.





CDMT, 14128.



CDMT, NR. 14678.

When we look in the mirror at home, in a shop, or in the eyes of others, the vision we have of ourselves is imbued with our self-esteem. The images that come to us contain our perception of ourselves and of our bodies. It is a vision that comes to us refracted by our subjective evaluations, by the way we were seen, valued, loved in our childhood. The feelings we have about ourselves, how we look with affection, rejection, reluctance, admiration ... are constituted from a very early age by our interactions with our loved ones. The gaze of the mother, and then of the father, construct the child's psyche and subjective identity. The mother's gestures when caring for her baby, the words she uses, the way she looks at her child, are the mirror through which the child will create their own self-image, which will accompany them throughout their lives.

We do not dress the same way in the different stages of our lives; dress is an instrument that helps us build and rebuild our image as we develop. In adolescence dress is crucial to distinguish ourselves from our parents, and to allow our integration with peer groups. Moments of drama in our lives may often modify the way we dress, as a way of integrating ourselves in the new stage. Separation or divorce is often accompanied by a change in dress as a way of leaving behind an era in one's life and embarking on a new one.

Dress can also be a source of conflict when it is used as a tool to resolve unconscious personal problems. It can become a way to express emotional distress; people with low self-esteem deficit may use dress to repair a self-image that makes them uncomfortable. Giving excessive importance to one's



CDMT, NR. 12502.

appearance often reflects a desire to compensate for emotional fragility. It is a way to find security through the image one projects, in the search for acceptance and admiration of others. At the other extreme are those who give no importance to the way they dress, who have no interest in their appearance, reflecting a certain apathy towards themselves. Depression is often reflected in dress, which transmits the malaise that the individual is feeling.

Some people always dress in the same way; their choice of dress and colours is repetitive, there is no sense of creativity. This resistance to change indicates an inner fragility, an extremely rigid relationship with oneself in which there is no room for play or fantasy. This rigidity – looking in the mirror and seeing oneself always the same – may be an attempt to compensate for an unstable identity.

We project our experience of our body through the dress we use to cover it. If it is loved and valued, we will take care to present it well. If our perception of our bodies causes emotional conflict, dress can often be used to hide it from the eyes of others, because we are overweight, underweight, or lacking in appeal. Compulsive shopping may also reflect difficulties of accepting our body. In each new outfit we seek the desired image, which we catch in an instant in the shop mirror or we think we see in the eyes of the shop assistant, but disappears the moment we step out into the street.

If the image we have of ourselves is a positive one, dress becomes a playful element that enriches our lives. Shopping, trying on clothes, sharing them, altering them, combining them with accessories and other pieces from our wardrobe, can be a source of fun and creativity, a way to enjoy our body and the pleasure of feeling attractive, a tool in the game of seduction, the expression of our different moods and a companion at different stages of our lives. ●



CDMT, NR. 13499.

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From cape to chasuble: the conservation of the fabric of St Ermengol

by ELISABET CERDÀ (Holder of textile conservation of the CDMT)
and ROSA FLOR RODRÍGUEZ (conservator, specialist in archaeology and textiles)
Photographs: CDMT, QUICO ORTEGA and conservators CDMT

The conservation of the St Ermengol chasuble

¹ For more documentary information on the piece, see SALADRIGAS CHENG, S. “De capa a casulla: el teixit de Sant Ermengol”, pp. 29-38, *Datatèxtil* 28, CDMT, Terrassa, 2013.

² ALBERCH, T., GENDRAU, D. “Restauración del tejido s. XI denominada capa de San Ermengol”, in: Congreso de Bienes culturales, Valladolid, 1980; VIVES, A. “Els teixits medievals del Museu Diocesà d’Urgell”, in: *Urgellia*, vol.8 (1986).

³ VALENTÍN, Nieves, *El material Tèxtil. Susceptibilitats al biodeteriorament*, CDMT, Terrassa, 2009.

⁴ *Vestiduras pontificales del arzobispo Rodrigo Ximénez de Rada. S. XIII*, p.78, fig. 73, Ministerio de Cultura, Madrid, 1994.

In summer 2011, the conservation workshop of the Textile Museum and Documentation Centre was sent a piece known as the cape of St Ermengol by the Diocesan Museum of La Seu d’Urgell, and embarked on its analysis, documentation and conservation. The fabric was eventually identified as a chasuble. The findings were recorded in the report written by Silvia Saladrigas¹.

The chasuble was stored flat, sewn to a rigid display support after conservation in the 1970s². The support was badly damaged due to the effects of light and humidity, which had completely degraded the original colour of the fabric and had caused the appearance of spots and halos, which in some places had even reached through to the support. So the first step after photographing the piece was to separate it from the display support. The piece was then disinfested using anoxia³, since the preliminary examination had detected traces of insects and a possible fungal attack.

Documentation of the state of preservation

Prior to the conservation, we documented all the alterations and problems affecting the piece. We established that its condition was relatively unstable.

A full-scale sketch of the damage was made tracing and noting down all the changes on a *Melinex*[®]. We chose this method to gain as much information as possible; a smaller scale reproduction of the piece would not have highlighted all the changes.

The entire surface was covered in dust, dirt, debris and insect remains. Many of the fragments preserved solid material attached to the fabric that seemed to predate the first conservation process. From their shape, colour and texture we suspected that they might be remnants from a burial, as the arrangement of the fabric was very similar to that of other fabrics used as shrouds⁴. Above the remains a whitish film had been created with small scales covering much of the central area of the chasuble. Some areas which had been consolidated during the earlier conservation had become separated from the support, and other



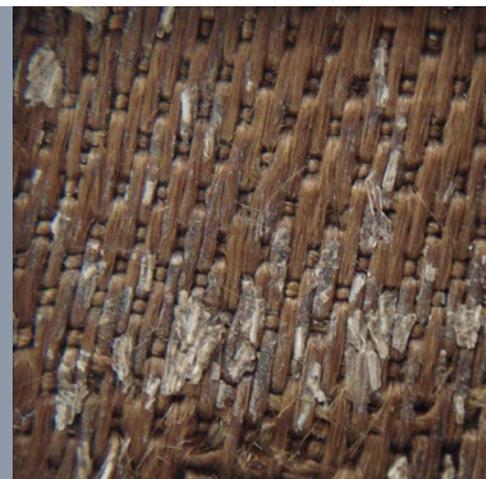
Map of the alterations in the chasuble.

5 LANDI, Sheila, *The textile conservator's manual*, p.15, Butterworth and Co, Kent, 1995.

parts of the peripheral fabric had disappeared, leaving visible only the stitches made in sewing the piece to the support.

The biggest problem affecting the fabric of the chasuble is the degradation of the natural silk fibres, accelerated by the presence of light and sudden changes in temperature and humidity. Over the years these fibres have suffered severe dehydration and loss of the protein matter, fibroin, which forms the threads of silk and provides the elasticity and brightness characteristic of this material⁵. The most obvious consequence is the breakdown of the silk filament, so that the fabric may eventually disintegrate. The threads lose their thickness and break, affecting the ligament and finally the structure of the fabric. In fact, varying degrees of degradation can be found along the entire surface of the piece. The most affected areas are the front and the upper part of the back, where most of the gaps and losses of fabric are seen.

Area showing the different types of degradation affecting the piece. See detail.



Details of whitish deposits located on the surface of the fabric.

Cleaning process using controlled aspiration.



The process of conservation

The conservation process began with the unstitching of the eight fragments from the support, followed by cleaning.

Fabrics can be either wet or dry cleaned. Dry cleaning removes the dust and dirt located on the surface of the fabric, which in many cases acts as a catalyst in fungal attacks and is responsible for the oxidation of the fibres. In our case the cleaning began with the aspiration of all the fragments using a *ConserVac*® low-suction vacuum preservation model to control the power applied at all times. As a safety measure we used a protective mesh that allows the suction of dirt without damaging the fabric. For the most strongly attached dirt we used *DA7C*® suction clips which allow microaspiration of pieces located within the ligament and thus conserve part of its former lustre and flexibility. This process of dry cleaning was applied to both the front and the back of the fragments and also identified two fragments of red silk taffeta, which might have belonged to the original lining of the chasuble.



6 TIMÁR-BALÁZSY, Agnes and EASTOP, Dinah, *Chemical principles of textile conservation*, pp. 195-213, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 1998.

Wet cleaning is an irreversible process, since the addition of a solvent affects the internal structure of the fibres, but at the same time it removes adhered remains that dry cleaning cannot eliminate. After weighing up the pros and cons of this type of cleaning⁶ we chose to use the immersion bath with deionized water, meaning that rinse baths were unnecessary. This process ensured more thorough cleaning and also rehydrated the fibres.

Before beginning wet cleaning, we enclosed all the fragments with tulle, so that wet cleaning could be done without any risk of loss or breakage of the fabric during bathing. The cleaning was done by immersing and buffering the fabric with deionized water alone, without the use of any detergent or surfactant. Once the cleaning was complete, during the drying process we aligned the warp and weft of the fabric and flattened it, removing creases and correcting deformities. To help us in this process we used flat glasses and weights that maintained the shape of the fragments ([see cleaning process](#)).

For the new consolidation support of the chasuble we chose a brown cotton taffeta. To make the shade closer to the chasuble we covered it with a bronze-coloured silk crepe. On top of this we placed the eight fragments of the chasuble and consolidated it by sewing with one-headed silk thread. Various conservation stitches were used depending on the needs of each fragment. In the front, by far the most damaged area, conservation stitches could not be used and so we enclosed it with crepe. We used a shade similar to the one used in the consolidation support.



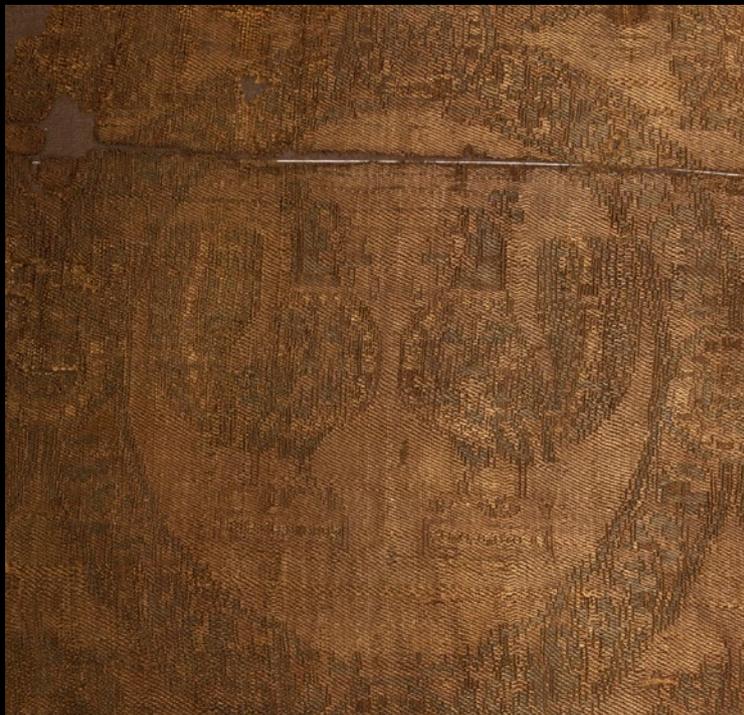
Fixing the chasuble on the consolidation support. Photo: CDMT, Quico Ortega. ▲
Enclosing with crepeline. ▼



The chasuble after the consolidation and fixation.



Principal motif detail.



To avoid an abrupt change in colour between the enclosed areas and the others, we cut the perimeter of the crepline following the shape of circles that make up the design of the piece, and we sewed it using an eyelet stitch. We then cut the consolidation support a centimetre larger than the circumference of the chasuble to be able to attach the edges without damaging the original fabric. At this point, the chasuble recovered its original shape, as the fabric was folded following the original marks on the sides.

Display⁷

To allow the exhibition of the piece in optimal conditions, a tailor-made support was created with conservation materials. The support has a semi-rigid metal frame covered with plastic lined with neutral pH cardboard and wheat starch glue, using the measurements of the chasuble folded flat. Once the support was made, we lifted it and folded it, creating a bell shape. To maintain the shape, we inserted a sheet of Ethafoam[®] covered with neutral pH cardboard on the bottom. The structure is held inside a metal T-shape which also serves as the base of the display case. This custom-built support allows the piece to lie perfectly, without creating any tensions or deformations.

To provide a lightweight padded surface for the support, we covered it with polyester wadding and a dark brown cotton canvas. The inside and the lower part were painted with acrylic paint in the same shade as the canvas. On the top, we sewed a piece of cloth vertically in the front, as the chasuble does not close completely. Finally we attached the chasuble on to the display stand with tacks to ensure its physical stability and to prevent any movement that might damage it.

Currently, the chasuble is stored inside a glass case built with conservation⁸ materials in the Diocesan Museum of La Seu d'Urgell. This cabinet is illuminated with LED lights with a maximum intensity of 50 lux. Visitors may find the lighting rather weak; but it will allow the preservation of the piece for future generations, since silk is highly degradable by light. The degradation process of silk cannot be stopped, but it can be delayed by maintaining values of temperature and relative humidity as constant as possible. ●

⁷ The conservator Gemma Torra i Campos also helped to make the display support.

⁸ The display was made by Stem.



Making the display stand.



The chasuble on display.
Photos: CDMT, Quico Ortega.



The new Barcelona Design Museum

by PILAR VÉLEZ

Director of the Barcelona Design Museum

Next year Barcelona will inaugurate its new Design Museum in the Plaça de les Glòries, a vibrant cultural district in the city centre which is also home to the National Theatre, the Auditorium, the Museum of Music and the 22@ technological innovation hub. The Museum of Design project has had a long, complicated history, dating back two decades.

The process was launched some twenty years ago by the architect Oriol Bohigas, who was then the director of Culture of the City Council of Barcelona (1991-1994). With an expert's knowledge of the city's artistic heritage, and well aware of the difficulties facing the museums that housed collections of decorative and applied arts – the Museums of Decorative Arts, Ceramics, Textile and Clothing, and Graphic Arts – Bohigas proposed a thorough reassessment of the role of these institutions as the twentieth century came to an end.

The history of these museums goes back to 1932. The great Catalan museum expert, Joaquim Folch i Torres (1886-1963), was responsible for bringing together the decorative art collections of the Museum of Decorative Arts in the [Royal Palace of Pedralbes](#), which came under the jurisdiction of the City Council after the proclamation of the Republic in 1931. With the Statute of Autonomy of 1932, the museums of Barcelona were reorganized and on 18 December of that year the Museum of Decorative Arts was officially inaugurated in the Palace of Pedralbes.

After the war, in 1949, the museum was relocated to the *Palau de Virreina* on the Ramblas, and remained there until 1986 when the building became home to the City Council's Department of Culture. In 1994 the museum returned to Pedralbes and was open to the public until December 2012, when it closed down in preparation for the move to the Plaça de les Glòries. But its successive relocations are not the most important feature of its history: what is really interesting is how the increase in its stocks continually obliged the museum to adapt to new situations.

Over the years certain collections grew considerably, especially thanks to large donations like the Rocamora costume donation in 1935, and the Alcora



¹ In fact this museum was originally the Section of Popular Engraving of the Ethnology Museum (1942); it then became the Museum of the Book and the Graphic Arts (1974), the Museum of Graphic Arts (1988) and since 2008 it has been the Cabinet of Graphic Arts.

ceramic collection left by Francisca Roviralta in 1965, to name just two representative cases. The pieces donated were divided thematically and assigned to a set of new museums: the Textile Museum opened in 1961, the Ceramics Museum in 1966, the Lace Museum in 1968, the Carriage Museum in 1970, and the Museum of Books and the Graphic Arts in 1974¹. In the 1990s the Palace of Pedralbes once again became home to the Ceramics Museum (1990) and the Museum of Decorative Arts (1995), the starting-point of our story – and later to the Textile and Costume Museum (2008), and the Cabinet of the Graphic Arts (2008).

The transfer of the pieces to the new site is already in progress, although the whole operation is expected to take a year and a half. Taking advantage of the move, the museum has organized an overhaul of the collections to ensure that they reach their new destination in the best possible condition. Their new location – state of the art compact storage areas designed especially for the purpose – covers an area of some 2000 sq m. The entire space has been carefully adapted by the Department of Collections to house over 70,000 items in the most diverse formats, from a carriage to a set of earrings, in a vast range of materials – polychrome wood, silk or synthetic resins – all of which have specific storage requirements of their own.

Over its 80 years of history, this public heritage has grown steadily thanks to donations from members of the public, collectors, artists, designers and creators. Their generosity has made a vital contribution to the growth and preservation of the country's history, and now the collections have an ideal setting for their preservation.

BKF chair, 1938-1939, Austral Group. MADB 135.390. Photo: Rafael Vargas.



Dress. Spain, 1966,
Cristóbal Balenciaga.
MTIB 109.881.



2 The commissioners were
Marta Montmany, Josep
Mañà and Pilar Vélez.

Bohigas’s initial proposal, in 1994, led to the organization of an exhibition entitled *Decorative Arts in Barcelona. Collections for a museum*². For the first time people began to talk about the culture of objects and the importance of material culture in civilization, recovering and updating the philosophy of its founder, Folch i Torres. Largely neglected until that time, the stocks were now studied in great detail in order to demonstrate the value of this heritage to the city. The chronological development of the pieces was also traced, bringing together all the collections, techniques, materials, creators, and stressing the importance of their social role. The project was a notable success and it now embarked on a new stage, with two main objectives: the inclusion of all

Mosaic The chocolate feast,
Barcelona, 1710. MC 52770.







Hall 0. Design Hub Building
Barcelona. Photo: Lourdes Jansana.

the museums, under the leadership of Jordi Pardo, who worked closely with the technical staff of the museums and with external experts, with Marta Montmany at the helm; and second the construction of its new site, designed by the studio MBM Arquitectes.

The remarkable creativity of Barcelona throughout its history, and especially since the industrial expansion of the nineteenth century and the development of industrial design in the twentieth, has produced an impressive array of museum pieces. This variety gave rise to an initial proposal based on a cross-sectional, multidisciplinary interpretation of the collections under the name of Museum of Design in Barcelona, which generated considerable debate. In 2006, with Ramon Prat as commissioner, the focus of the project changed, and many of the specialists who had worked on the previous stage or were familiar with it considered that the heritage was being undervalued. In 2008 the new project was named the Design Hub Barcelona (DHUB), and people began to talk of the DHUB museums. Inside the programme, experimentation and innovation took on great importance.

Today, our collections, so wide-ranging and rich in meaning, trace the history of the decorative arts up until the twentieth century, a time in which two key developments took place. The first was the emergence of industrial design, which replaced many of the formerly utilitarian objects produced by the decorative arts. The second was the gradual disappearance of the artisan tradition, the blurring of boundaries between the arts and the emergence of contemporary applied arts leading to a new artistic object in the form of pottery, jewellery, enamel, and glass.



3 Initiated in 1992 by Juli Capella and Quim Larrea.

So the twentieth century offers a dual approach to the world of the object. The first perspective sees the object as the product of a combination of design and manufacturing, generally industrial, which is reflected in the museum's Industrial Design Collection, with more than 2,000 objects representative of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries³. The second focuses on the artistic object, the product of the creativity of authors who are free to express themselves via any art form or any technique – painting, sculpture, ceramics, glass, or engraving.

Therefore, the museum's new discourse is defined as “From the decorative arts to industrial design and contemporary applied arts”, which allows us another reading from the perspective of aesthetics, based on the composition and types of the collections. Design acts as a link between the historical collections and the research and experimentation currently in progress.

The Barcelona Design Museum brings together the collections of the four museums and bases its philosophy on a cross-sectional reading that engages a variety of different narratives at one and the same time: multidisciplinary and specific stories, studio galleries, workshops, laboratories and new formulas ... without reproducing the division into four separate entities. With the participation of the different sectors involved in the culture of the object, the museum aspires to goals beyond the mere conservation of heritage, which is, nonetheless, the cornerstone of the entire project.

The museum promotes both research and dissemination of knowledge of the past and innovation through all kinds of temporary and permanent exhibitions



Museum Night. Auditorium.
Design Hub Building, Barcelona.
May 2013. Photo: Xavier Padrós.

of its collections, through activities both in situ and online, through its publications, via the Internet, and so on. And as the Catalan saying goes: *Roda el món i torna al Born*: roughly, we have come back to our roots, as we have recovered the initial sense of the 1932 object, although necessarily adapted to the reality of 2013.

The name “Museum of Design” may not be a faithful expression of its content – from traditional decorative arts to digital production – but its setting, the design of the twentieth century, is a cultural and socio-economic environment in which Barcelona has always had a great deal to say. Heritage, research and innovation constitute the triple base of the new project. ●

Aurèlia Muñoz. Infinite Research. Fibres, textures and space

by ANDREU DENGRA, curator of the Contemporary Tapestry Museum of Sant Cugat and DR. SILVIA VENTOSA, curator of the Museu del Disseny de Barcelona, Col·lecció Tèxtil i d'Indumentària

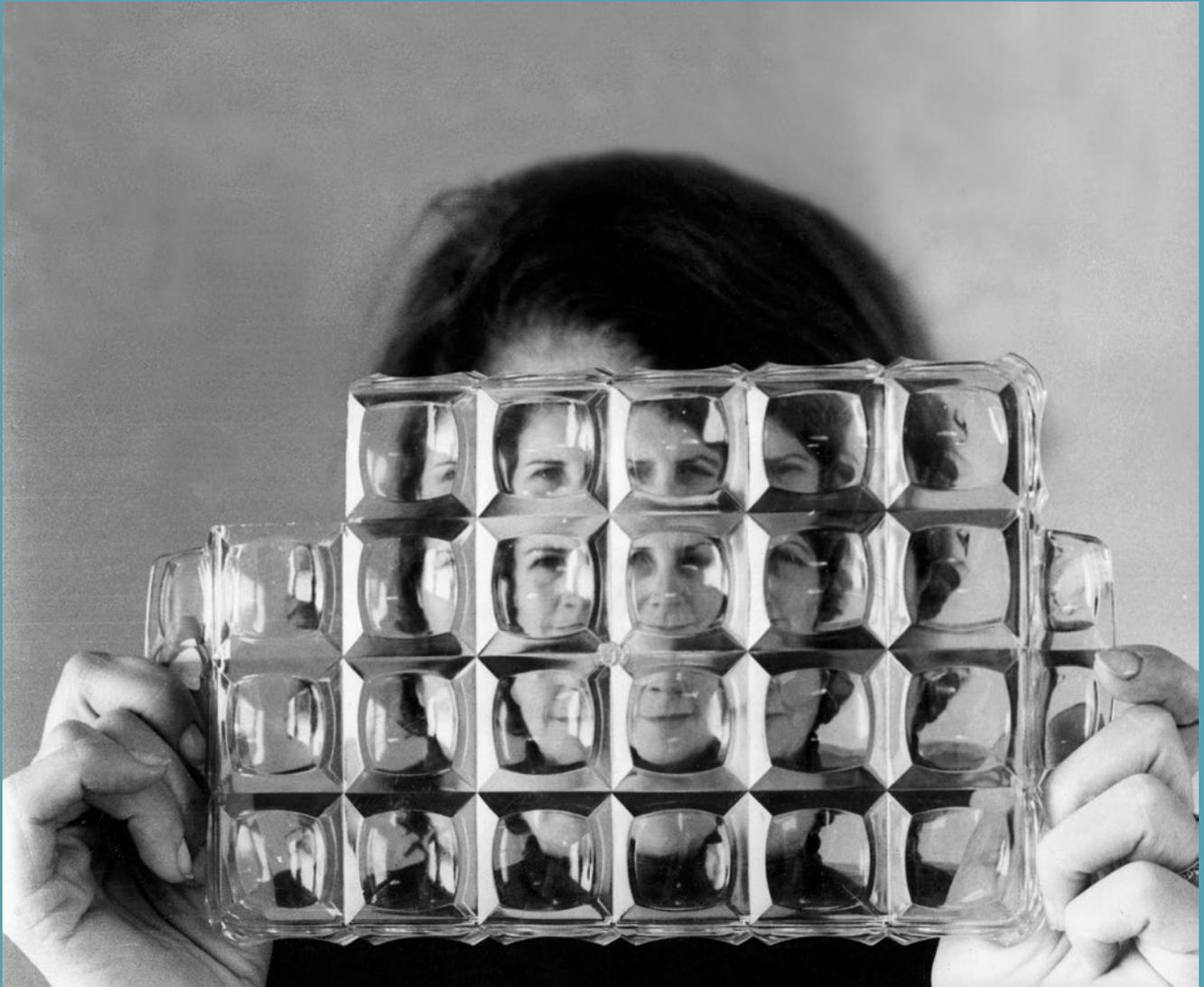
This is a good moment to celebrate handmade work. Social movements around the world are singing the praises of the concept and practice of handmade artwork, especially using textile techniques. Artists like Olek cover buildings, cars and outdoor sculptures with knitwear, crocheted or sewn shirts, embellishing urban areas with textile materials that are close to people, colourful, flexible and adaptable, and giving warmth to shared public spaces.

This neo-romantic trend dates back to the 1960s with the birth of the youth movements, the respect for nature and ecology, crafts, women's work and the influence of oriental styles. The textile industry enjoyed a renewal of artistic expression. In Catalonia, the work of Aurèlia Muñoz was a starting point for a change in the way that textiles were conceived and for the recovery of long-forgotten techniques, such as macramé in schools.

The world of contemporary tapestry

Until the 1960s and 1970s textile production both in Catalonia and Europe had been linked to domestic work and the decorative arts and crafts. But at that time an international movement of artists, critics and patrons began to emerge with the aim of providing it with a new expressive language. The New Tapestry movement (*Nouvelle Tapisserie*, a concept invented by the critic André Kuenzi in 1973) was created to promote the International Tapestry Biennials of Lausanne, with the intention of taking tapestry down from the wall and of creating three-dimensional works. The biennials and the foundation of the International Centre of Ancient and Modern Tapestry were projects led by Jean Lurçat, the first artist to renew contemporary tapestry, and by Pierre Pauli, one of the promoters of the New Tapestry movement.

In Catalonia, the roots of contemporary tapestry can be found in the Aymat factory in Sant Cugat, which since the 1920s had produced carpets and rugs. In spite of its relatively small size, the firm had had a significant international impact. In 1950, the factory changed focus and opted for experimentation. The Catalan School of Tapestry was created by the entrepreneur Miquel Samaranch



Aurèlia Muñoz.
Photo: Jordi Pericot.

and the artist Josep Grau-Garriga, who set Catalan tapestry in the same direction as the trends in vogue elsewhere in Europe. In the same years, in Catalonia artists such as Maria Teresa Codina and especially Aurèlia Muñoz were embarking on their independent projects.

The work of Aurèlia Muñoz

Within this new framework called “textile art”, Aurèlia Muñoz (1926-2011) began to make her mark. She had studied at the Escola Massana in Barcelona, but her true sources of inspiration were her visits to museums, her travels and her discussions with craftspeople, artists and architects, as well as publications on technical textiles, dance and scenery.

Aurèlia Muñoz’s career stands out for its constant research into forms of expression, concepts, materials and techniques that allow new solutions in her particular definition of interior and exterior spaces. She works with a variety of techniques without the use of the loom: from patchwork to paper, embroidery, collage, macramé, knitting and sails. Chronologically her work can be divided into four stages, distinguished by different concepts and techniques.

Stage with protagonist, 1965. watercolour and ink on paper. 50 x 41 cm. Photo: La Fotográfica





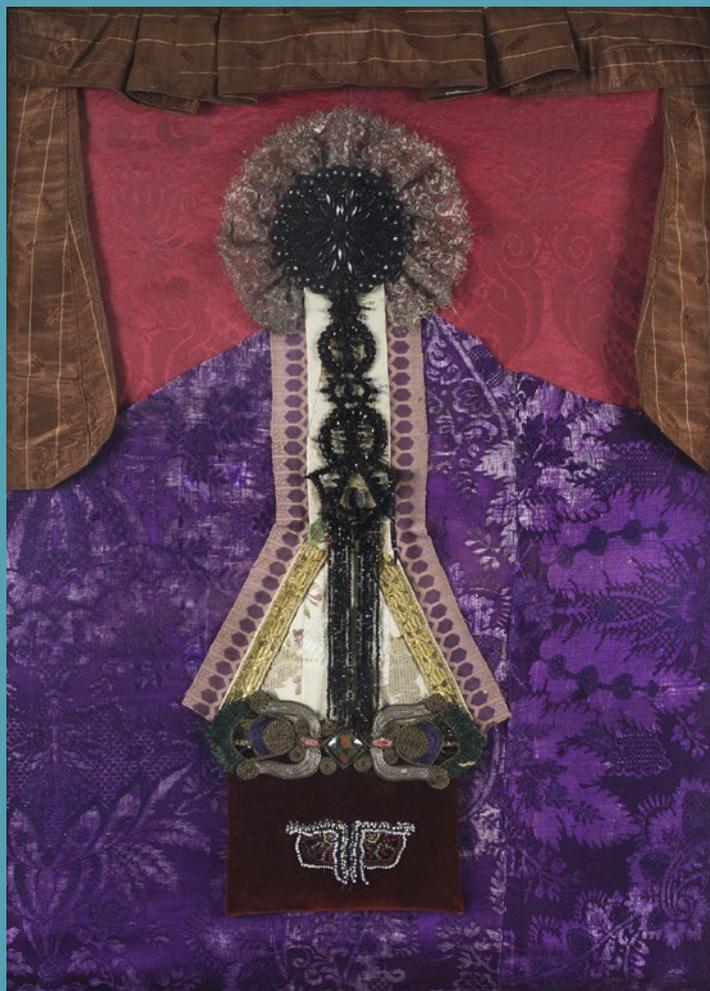
Totem, 1967. Embroidered wool on burlap jute. 155 x 255 cm.
Photo: Montse Faixat

1. Representing Abstraction (1960-1968)

Aurèlia's early drawings depict interiors of Renaissance palaces and cloisters of monasteries, which were then reproduced in patchworks and embroidered tapestries, with a curious array of kings, cockerels, strange characters and monsters or angels. All this imagery, present throughout her work, is a mixture of poetry and dream with a certain touch of irony; she termed it "Mediterranean surrealism".

Her initial encounter with textiles was through painting, printing or embroidering jute to represent characters in architectural spaces. She also added fabrics which evolved into patchworks with geometric shapes that moved her towards abstraction. The juxtaposition of colourful fabrics led her search for freedom in embroidery, inspired by the Tapestry of Creation in the Cathedral of Girona, which allowed her to create a subtle combination of colours and themes, without ever becoming over-refined or excessively technical. Colour take centre stage, but the free direction of the pass stitch, done with coloured threads of thick wool on a jute base, give it expression, luminosity, and even relief.

Tapestry artists called for a form of expression of their own, independent of the other arts, using fewer colours and thicker materials, and an interaction



Virgin of Macarena, 1967.
Collage application of fabric,
trimmings, reliquaries. 70 x 53 cm.
Photo: La Fotogràfica. [See detail.](#)

with the surrounding architecture and a greater social dimension. Aurèlia Muñoz applied these concepts to embroidery with everyday threads and wools, achieving a complex interplay of textures and reliefs, and saving time – factors that make the piece understandable and affordable for the public – and also offering contemporary results to bring the aesthetic and the language up to date.

Aurèlia Muñoz obtained her first international recognition for her embroidery at the second Biennial of Lausanne in 1965, with a huge abstract composition that was well received by both artists and art critics. As we mentioned above, the Biennials were authentic discussion forums. There she discovered works from all over Europe, especially the experimental works in space and materials by artists such as Magdalena Abakanowicz, Jagoda Buic and Elsi Giaque, with whom she struck up lasting friendships and was able to enjoy a constant exchange of ideas. These contacts allowed her to reflect on her great concern: how to integrate the work of art into space and architecture. In her attempt to take tapestry down from the wall, her embroidery acquired relief and volume, but she realized that as a technique performed on fabric it was unlikely to take on three-dimensional form. Her patchworks and applications, collages of reliquaries, passementerie and Baroque fabrics represented a first attempt at three-dimensionality, acquiring geometric shapes that reflect each other as if in a mirror and form new perspectives.



Beige eagle, 1977. Macramé jute and sisal yarns dyed by hand. 350 x 250 x 160 cm. Photo: F. Català Roca - Photographic Archive of the Arxiu Històric del Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya.

2. Discovering the interior (1969-83)

Searching for traditional textile techniques, Aurèlia found networks and especially macramé, an ancient Oriental knotting technique, which the Arabs termed the “noble knots.” The highly personal use of this technique allowed her works, completely distanced from figurative art, to achieve a mastery of three-dimensional space. Her working of these pieces was totally original, as the repetition of simple knots with unspun jute, strings of sisal and nylon, did not disturb the concept. With the possible exception of Françoise Grossen, no-one has used this technique like Aurèlia Muñoz, who achieved [three-dimensional solutions](#) never seen until then. Aurèlia alternated small and large pieces that merge together with the architecture; in some cases they were large-scale models, but their organization and creation was so meticulous that they could be called *petit format*, in spite of their dimensions. All the questions of the knots and the spatial and physical tensions, forces and weights were resolved in *petit format*. The works in macramé, called Birds, Trees, Capes, Personae or Beings are Aurèlia Muñoz’s best known creations and can be found in museums and private collections all over the world.



Bird natural silk II, 1982. Fabrics of natural silk and metal stems with weights. 90 x 120 x 120 cm. Photo: La Fotogràfica.

3. Towards the outdoors. 1978-83

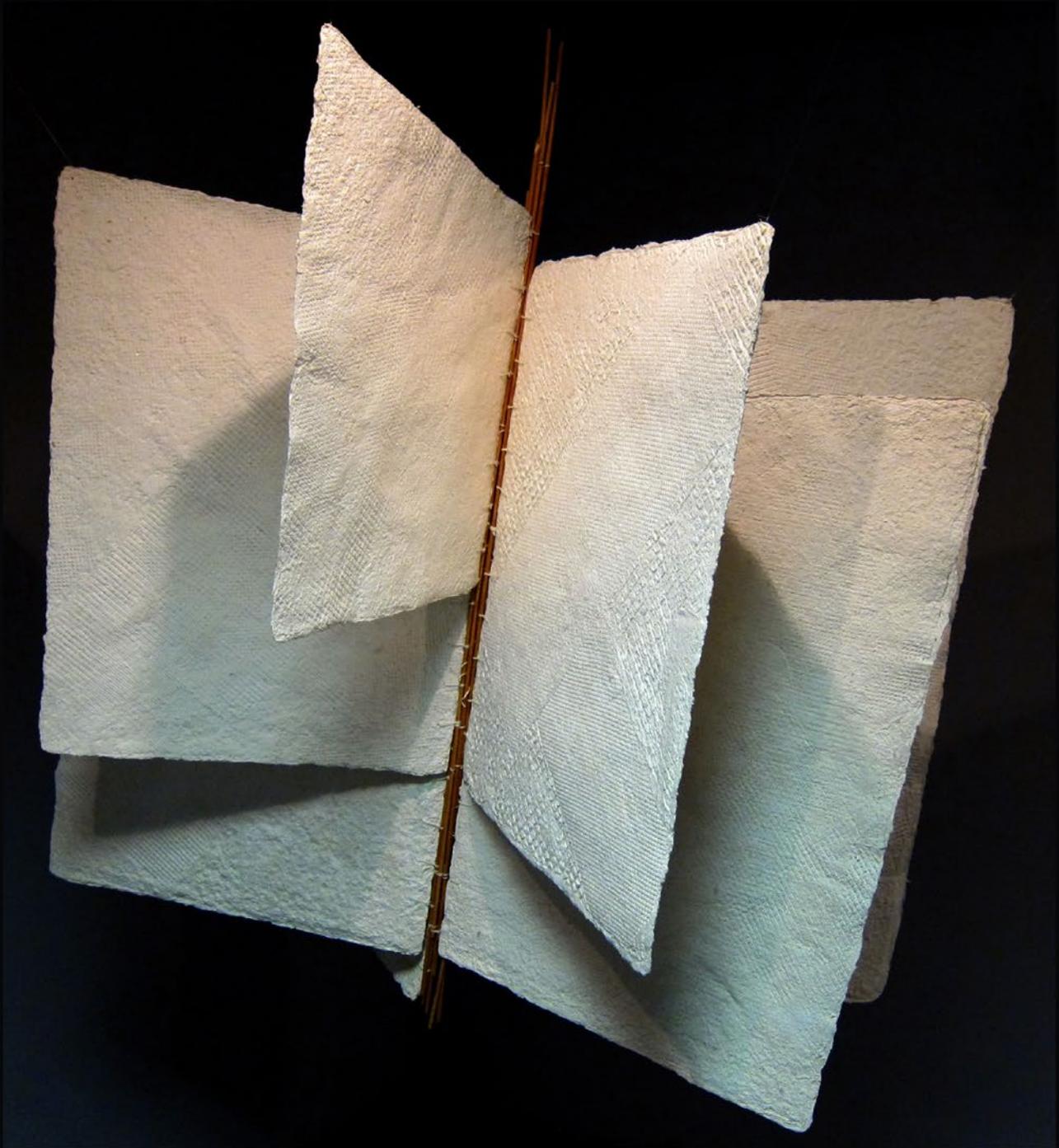
Her interest in the spatial aspect led her to experiment with architecture, and with the air and wind that drive movement. She studied the sails of ships made of a lightweight yet durable fabric to use the strength of the wind and the tension of the anchorages. Her works evoked shapes of birds or kites with a minimalist and geometric spirit, which she termed the *flexion of space*. The series of “Bird-stars”, aerial structures made using this sail technique, filled the space with their flight. It was the points of anchorage and the natural weight of the fabric, or the added weights, that defined the final shapes of the pieces that take on a monumental size, up to seven metres across. These pieces were presented in 1982 at the Palacio de Cristal in Madrid where birds and white sails accompanied the light architectural structure of a greenhouse.

4. Playing with movement. The poetics of paper (1980-2009)

From the early 1980s onwards, paper was the main protagonist of Aurèlia Muñoz’s work. For her and other international textile artists like Jagoda Buic, paper was not a “support” but an expressive language.

Aurèlia used paper to make rigid or flexible plates to create books, hanging artworks, writings and hieroglyphs of minimalist inspiration, with drawings, ideograms, animal characters and dreamlike figures reminiscent of her first drawings from 1964. The influence of the Far East is palpable, both in the techniques and in spirituality that emerges from the work. Her pictograms on acetates recall Japanese writing and works like [“Washi”](#) refer to the production of handmade paper in Japan.

Aerial book, 1985. Handmade paper and wood stems. 90 x 110 x 80 cm. Photo: Montse Faixat.





Anchored star, 1974.
Macramé with nylon strings.
280 x 900 x 900 cm. Installation
in the chapter house of the
monastery of Sant Cugat, 2012.
Photo: La Fotogràfica.

Her works hover in space, and the sails become monumental “origami” pieces. The macramé entities become cubist books and hanging artworks. The handmade paper itself is made of textile materials, with a base of paste made of cotton or linen fibres. Aurèlia dyed the paper by hand, just as before she had dyed sisal, threads of wool and silk fabrics.

Along with paper Aurèlia created collages with the shells of sea animals, stones, stems, plants. Previously these objects had played a more structural role in her work; now they became its expressive and poetic component.

A work that looks to the future

Aurèlia Muñoz’s internationally acclaimed work is defined by the search for new forms and textile techniques in a dialogue with sensitive material and architectural spaces.

Aurèlia Muñoz was the forerunner of many modern movements that called for the occupation of public spaces with textiles. Crafts-activism is a social, peaceful and radical movement that protests against the excessive use of technology and the consumerism of modern society. To combat the pessimism caused by a deep crisis that is not just economic but marks a change in the social and political paradigm, small informal groups meet to celebrate handmade artwork and neglected textile techniques such as networks and knitting to enhance our ability to “think with our hands” and to live a unique and creative therapeutic experience using raw materials.

The exhibition **Aurèlia Muñoz. Infinite Research. Fibres, textures and space** will be on display in 2013 at Martorell, Vilafranca, Ripollet and Granollers (Barcelona). It is a production organized by the Diputació de Barcelona and the Museu del Tapís Contemporani de Sant Cugat. ●

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The Honiton Lace Industry

by HEATHER TOOMER
Photographs: © HEATHER TOOMER

Honiton is a small market town in Devon, a county in South-West England, which has given its name to a part, or free, bobbin lace made particularly in the surrounding area. The first reference to lace in Honiton comes from a tombstone in Honiton churchyard which describes John Rodge, who died in 1617, as a 'bonelace seller' ('bone lace' was a common name for bobbin lace as bobbins were often made from animal bones).

Rodge was clearly a successful merchant as he left £100 for the benefit of the poor but there is no indication of the source of his goods. Most probably these were produced locally as a comment in a parliamentary debate in 1626 stated that 20,000 people made a living from lace-making in England and many of these must have been in Devon as records show that bobbin-lace making was flourishing there by 1630. Slightly later, Thomas Fuller, researching in the 1640s for a book on 'The Worthies of England' noted of bonelace – 'Much of this is made in and around Honyton, and weekly returned to London': it is from comments such as this that lace made in all the towns and villages of East Devon probably came to be known as 'Honiton', the convenient staging post for coaches to London. Later still, a companion of Cosimo de Medici in his tour of England in 1669, said of Devonshire 'There is not a cottage in all the county nor in that of Somerset where white lace is not made in great quantities; so that not only the whole kingdom is supplied with it, but it is exported in great abundance.'

Clearly the lace made was of good quality but we have no fully provenanced examples of lace made in Devon in the 17th century. It was most probably similar to Flemish bobbin laces of the period, with some stylistic differences suggested by English portraits. Those of the 1630s-40s show many deep falling collars with scalloped bobbin-lace borders in rather more naïve, less flowing floral designs than contemporary Flemish laces. Celia Fiennes, another traveller writing of Devon in 1695, commented that 'Here it is they make fine bone lace in imitation of the Antwerp and Flanders lace, and indeed I think its as fine, it only will not wash so fine which must be the fault in the thread.' There is



Plate 1. Two lappets, c 1725-40.

That on the right (probably Brussels) is of very high quality: that on the left is of fine quality but the design is less sophisticated and the thread is poorer – probably Honiton. The dense designs are characteristic of lace fashions in the 1720s-30s. [See detail.](#)



Plate 2. Cap back: probably Honiton, mid 18th century. The massing of floral motifs without a clear design structure is typical of Honiton laces. The motifs are joined by drochel bobbin ground.

good reason for this comment as much of the linen thread used in the Devon lace industry came from locally-grown flax and was never of quite the superb quality produced in the Low Countries.

Apart from lack of provenance, the identification of true Devon laces from the 18th century has been complicated by the term ‘point d’Angleterre’ which was in use from the late 17th century. By the early 18th century it was definitely being applied to high-quality Brussels laces. The implication that Brussels laces were made in imitation of an English type is, I must admit, unlikely: the term was much more probably coined because much Brussels lace was made for the English market, with the added possibility that it was sold as ‘English lace’ at a time when imports from Flanders were banned to support the home industry: the French term was most likely chosen as France was the fashion leader.

Whatever the derivation of the name, its use makes it difficult to distinguish Honiton laces from Brussels laces in documentation and confuses the discussion of surviving examples. It is, however, generally accepted that, by the early 18th century, when ‘Brussels bobbin laces’ had become distinguished from bobbin laces made elsewhere in the Low Countries, Devon was making very similar laces. Unfortunately, what is also generally accepted is that Honiton lace was of poorer quality than Brussels. It is true that, among the 18th-century laces of ‘Brussels’ type surviving in British collections, many are of poor-to-

Plate 3. A matching cap back, frill and pair of lappets arranged roughly as in wear as a formal cap, together with an additional border: c 1755-75; probably Honiton. The quality of design, workmanship and thread are better than in the Honiton laces in Plates 1 and 2 but still more likely to be English than Brussels. The motifs are joined by a point de Paris ground. [See detail.](#)

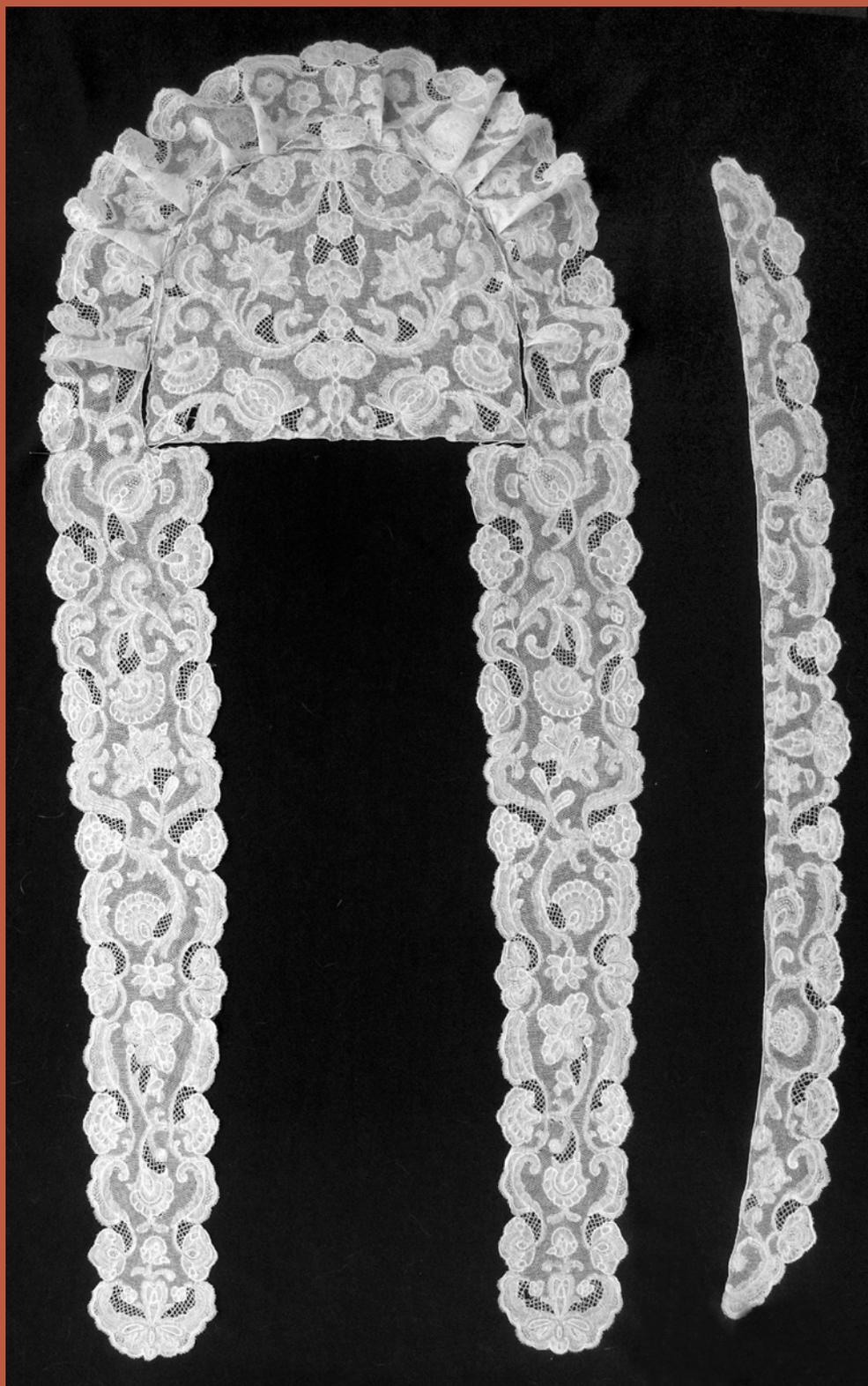




Plate 4. Detail of three Honiton borders: top – c 1730-50; middle and bottom – c 1750 – 75. These are more typical of laces found in England than the higher-quality examples in Plates 1-3. The designs are uncontrolled and many motifs are reduced to simple slug and scroll shapes. The motifs are joined by drochel ground but this is worked in different directions around the motifs. Similar poorer-quality laces were also made in coarse thread in the low Countries. [See detail.](#)

Plate 5. A collection of 19th-century Honiton motifs of different qualities before being assembled to form an article. The two strips would have been joined with others to form a border.



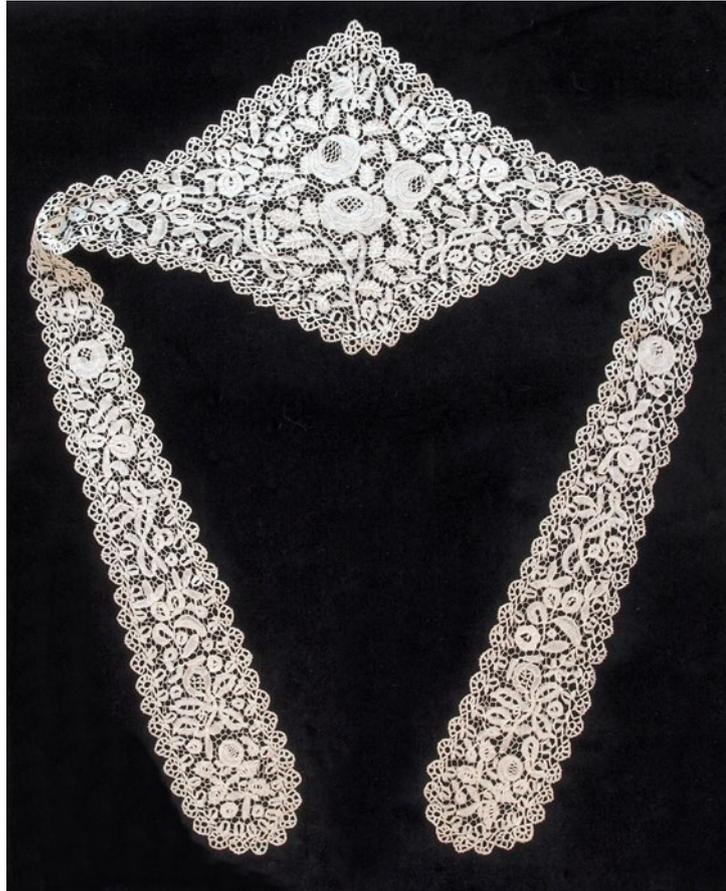


Plate 6. A good-quality Honiton fall cap: mid 19th century with a typical massed-floral design. [See detail.](#)

good quality and are likely to have been made locally rather than imported: what we cannot say is how many of the higher-quality laces that we ascribe to Brussels may in fact have been made in England with imported Flemish thread.

There are, however, other good reasons for the preponderance of poorer-quality laces in our collections: as already mentioned, the local thread was not of the highest quality but, also, the local merchants who organised the industry were making for a less fashion-conscious market than the Brussels factors whose major market was the French aristocracy. This, and the fact that new designs were frequently pirated, gave little incentive for manufacturers to pay experienced designers for good patterns. If we can extrapolate back from known conditions in the late-18th – early-19th centuries, the basic organisation of the workforce was also problematic. Manufacturers did not control a localised workforce: rather, workers spread over the many towns and villages of Devon and neighbouring counties might work for several manufacturers on a piece-rate basis. Manufacturers gave out prickings for work required and expected to receive work made on those prickings but there was little control over how the patterns were worked: the same motifs worked by different lace-makers might be of very different standards, with different fillings, different use of raised work and, indeed, different interpretations of the motifs themselves. When these were collected from their makers and assembled to form a complete article, the result could be very inconsistent, an effect yet further aggravated by a lack of consistency in the joining itself. These problems were further compounded by the fact that the same prickings were often used for several years, either

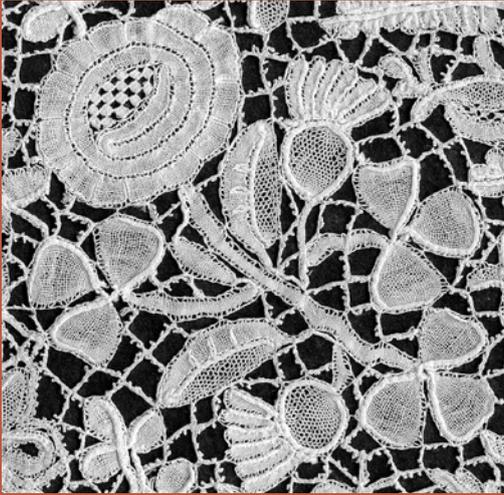


Plate 7. Detail from a fine-quality late 19th-century Honiton cuff with a bride ground. This includes the rose, shamrock and thistle, symbols of England, Ireland and Scotland, a common combination. The rose is unusual in having petals defined by thicker threads worked into the lace in the Brussels manner: raised work is worked in cloth stitch. ▲

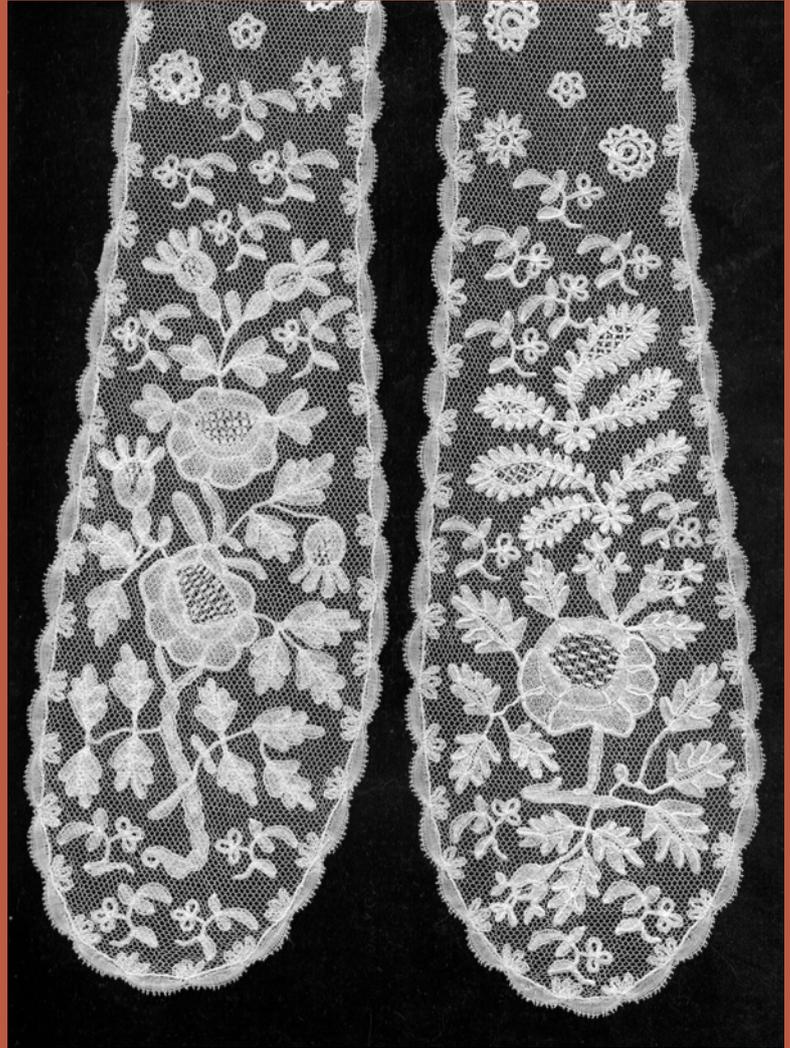


Plate 8. The two ends of a tie or pair of joined lappets of machine-made net with applied Honiton motifs: late 19th century. The work is fine but, even for Honiton lace, it is unusual to have totally different designs on two ends of an article. ▶

Plate 9. Detail from a machine-made net collar with applied Honiton motifs. See detail. ▼





Plate 10. Cuff of machine-made net with applied Brussels bobbin lace motifs: second half 19th century. The design is simple but sparser and more organised than in most Honiton laces. [See detail.](#)

because the manufacturer did not trouble to keep up with fashionable design trends or the workers passed the prickings to other workers. With continued re-use, the pinholes became enlarged, the pattern distorted and open to further misinterpretation.

Although Honiton laces were not generally as stylish as their continental counterparts, their designs nevertheless changed roughly in line with fashion as can be seen in the accompanying illustrations. During much of the 18th century, they found a ready market both in Britain and her colonies but, towards the end of the century, designs became simpler and far less suited to Honiton's part-technique. The market was already dwindling when Britain suffered a major economic blow: in 1776 the USA became independent and was no longer forced to buy British or face heavy surcharges on goods from elsewhere. By 1800, only a few hundred lace-makers were recorded in Devon whereas only a decade or so earlier there had been several thousand.

As regards training for the industry, occasional records survive from the 17th and 18th centuries of children being taught lace-making in poorhouses so that they would have a means of earning a living when they grew up or of children being apprenticed to lace-makers for several years: it is not until the 19th century that we have fuller records, both of training and of the organisation of the trade. We know, for example, that from the early 19th century, some pupils were taught the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic alongside long hours of lace-making in lace schools. Here parents were expected to pay the teacher in the initial stages but once the pupils had reached a level of competence that enabled their work to be sold, they, or their parents, might receive some compensation for their labours.

At this time the trade was mainly in the hands of small shopkeepers who often operated the 'truck system', that is, rather than pay their workers in coins, they paid in tokens which had to be spent in their employer's shop where goods

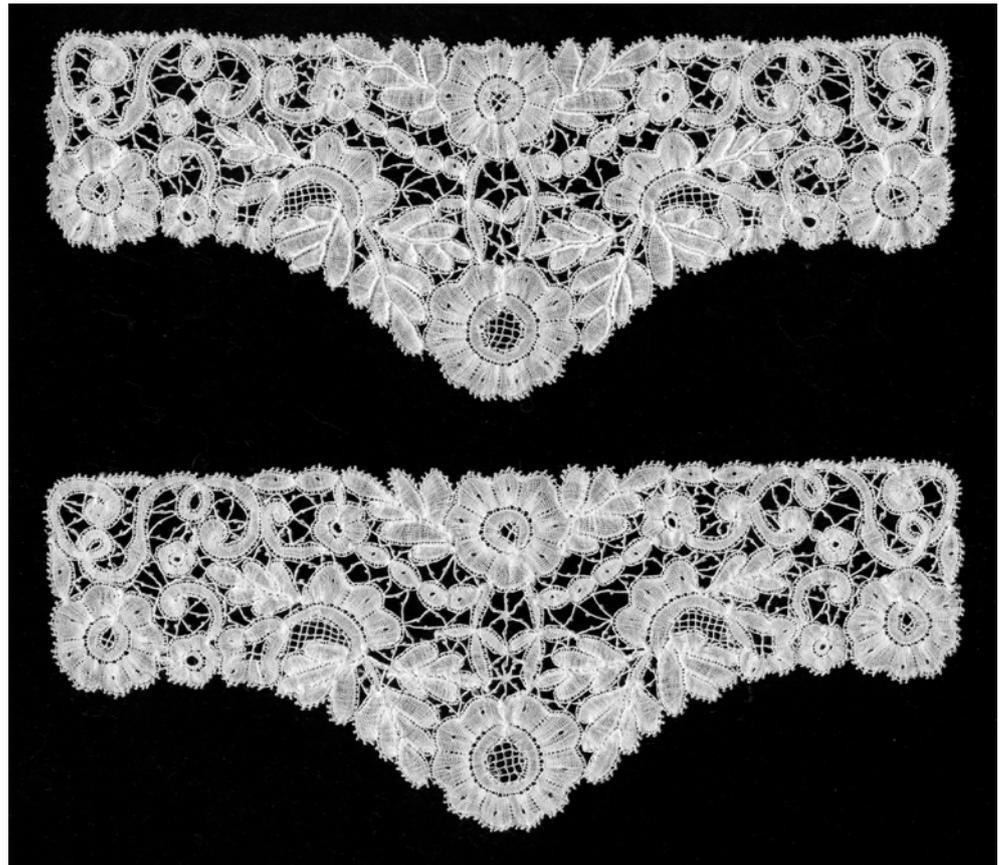


Plate 11. Pair of cuffs (bottom one wrong side up): Belgian, late 19th – early 20th century, with a bride ground. These, like the Honiton laces, are made by the part technique. They are not of the best Brussels quality and are worked in a thick thread but thought has been given to their design. [See detail](#).

were often more highly priced than in other stores. Some shopkeepers paid only 10 pence in tokens for 12 pence-worth of work or forced their workers to buy the thread for their lace: it is little wonder that workers felt little loyalty to their employers and standards of work were generally low. Fortunately there were some better employers who did take care to procure better designs and ensure that they were well worked.

By the early 19th century, designs were so sparse that it was quicker to make the drochel net characteristic of Brussels and Honiton laces in panels and to apply the motifs to it rather than work the net around the motifs. When a stable machine-made net became available, it made sense to apply motifs to this cheaper foundation and the making of drochel ground soon died out in England but this did not solve Devon's problems completely: until fashions returned to fully-patterned laces in the mid 19th century, the Honiton industry languished. Queen Adelaide tried to boost the industry in the 1830s by wearing Honiton lace: Queen Victoria did likewise but Miss Bidney, of Beer on the Devon coast, had difficulty in finding lace-makers with sufficient expertise to make the flounces and later wedding veil to fulfil her order. Many of the skills known in the 18th century had been lost due to the simplicity of lace in the intervening years and further training was needed to enable the order to be completed.

The 1850s at last saw a return of interest in Honiton lace and also in guipure laces, that is, laces with a bar ground rather than a net ground. This old technique, scarcely used since the early 18th century, was revived but, surprisingly, a new ground, made with a needle, was also introduced. In the 1850s and 60s, it seems that Devon could sell as much lace as its population

could make, whatever the quality: there was little incentive for most workers or dealers to raise standards but, fortunately, there were still some manufacturers like Mrs. Treadwin of Exeter, and the Tuckers of Branscombe who made lace which could win medals at the new International Exhibitions of the period, such as London's Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace in 1851.

As standards fell, designing was reduced to the arrangement of flower heads and leaves along the borders of articles and the filling of the centres with motifs, with no thought to the aesthetic appeal of the result. The motifs themselves were simplified: three-dimensional raised work was replaced by bundles of threads loosely bound to the surface or was omitted altogether. Many small leaf shapes and scrolls, known locally as 'slugs and snails' and often made by children learning the craft, filled the spaces between larger motifs. Yet, at the same time, some very pretty laces were made, with flowers carefully drawn from nature and new raised work introduced in the form of butterfly wings or petals attached along only one edge to the surface. An interesting sidelight is that the new Honiton guipure was so regarded that it was copied at Mirecourt in France while cross-fertilization with the 'duchesse' laces in Belgium resulted in many hybrid versions.

The 1870s saw a new slump. The preceding decades had seen the rise of the machine-lace industry and a lowering of lace prices. Devon was unable to compete by producing the high-quality laces that enabled its Brussels' competitors to survive. Devon's lace-makers were again forced into other forms of employment. Moreover changes in laws governing the employment and education of children meant that old lace schools were forced to close and there were fewer recruits to the industry. When the final lace revival came in the late 1880s only a few lace-makers took up their old employment and, although some better-quality work was produced, the industry effectively died in the early 20th century. ●

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Champions of motorcycling

by TERESA VIDAL

PhD Student in design and architecture; curator of the exhibition

Photographs: © MUSEU DE L'ESTAMPACIÓ DE PREMIÀ DE MAR AND TXENI GIL

The Premià de Mar Museum of Printing is hosting the temporary exhibition CHAMPIONS OF MOTORCYCLING, from 10 March to 31 December

The idea of the exhibition is to show that behind the world of high risk motorsports there is an army of designers, textile engineers and assistants who play a crucial role in providing equipment and apparel for the professional riders. Their creations must be up-to-date and stylish, reflecting the fashion trends of the moment, but must also be fully functional in terms of comfort, flexibility, freedom of movement, protection and safety. And of course the sponsors' brand names and logos printed on the riders' clothing must be clearly visible.

The exhibition covers various forms of off-road and circuit motorcycle racing, and celebrates the achievements of the champions from the world of Trial, Motocross, Enduro, and Rally Raids. It also includes the media favourite Moto GP on a trip through history featuring riders from Catalonia and elsewhere.

The exhibition begins with Trial, an off-road discipline, in which riders overcome a series of obstacles without allowing their body to touch the ground. Trial was invented in the UK in the early twentieth century: in 1909 of the Scottish Six Days Trial was held for the first time, which combined competitions of speed and skill. The first indoor trial was held in Barcelona in 1978, and today this discipline is extremely popular in Catalonia and the UK.

The Trial rider's equipment consists basically of helmet, gloves, boots and trousers or suit. The one piece suit has to combine protection with elasticity and lightness, which are vital to achieving success in this discipline.

The elasticity is provided by the fabric: most suits are made of spandex, a synthetic fibre that can stretch up to 600% without breaking and always returns to its original shape. It is a very long chain polymer composed of at least 85% of segmented polyurethane. It was invented in 1959 by the chemist Joseph Shivers and marketed by DuPont. The best known brand name is Lycra®, now the property of INVISTA.

Kevlar® (poly-paraphenylene terephthalamide) is a fibre that provides safety and protection. Kevlar® is characterized by its toughness, its mechanical



Panoramic view of the exhibition showing the route marked out by the tread of a tyre, which links together the different displays.

resistance and its tolerance of high temperatures. It is a polyamide with a very rigid molecular structure. It was first synthesized by the chemist Stephanie Kwolek in 1965 while working for DuPont.

These fabrics can be printed using what is called the transfer system. First, the design is printed on paper with a digital printer, and transferred to fabric using sublimation printing. The machine applies high temperatures to the ink which passes from solid state into gas and then vice versa. The ink becomes volatile and thus attaches to the fabric.

The Trial suit and the other garments are ideal for carrying the sponsors' brand names and advertising slogans. Marketing and communications professionals study the movements made by the riders to position logos and other printed designs on the most exposed areas. The point is to ensure the highest possible exposure visibility in competitions and in the media; situating them strategically is essential in order to maximize their impact.

Jordi Tarrés was the first Catalan rider to attract large numbers of sponsors and effectively established Trial as a professional sport. Tarrés's suit is on display, along with a tribute to his professional achievements listed by seasons and championships. The other riders represented are Marc Colomer, Adam Raga, Laia Sanz, Takashi Fujinami, and the current indoor and outdoor world champion, Toni Bou.

The exhibition continues with Enduro and Motocross. Enduro is another off-road discipline in which riders must cover a set itinerary through all types of terrain inside a time limit. The stages are strictly controlled, and riders must

Trial: in the foreground, Jordi Tarrés (Gas Gas team, 1980s-1990s), the first rider to carry sponsorship printed on his clothing, in the background The suit worn by Marc Colomer (Montesa Team, 1985-2004), and a list of his titles, and the trousers worn by Takashi Fujinami, Repsol-Montesa HRC (2010).



Suit, photos and list of awards won by the Trial world champion Toni Bou, Repsol Montesa HRC team (2012-13). [See more.](#)



Suit worn by Narcis Casas (Enduro), consisting of helmet, jersey and trousers (1972).



stamp their cards at a specific time; they are penalized if they arrive either early or late. It may also include complementary tests that count towards the overall result, including a timed section and an acceleration test on asphalt, among others. In Motocross, also off-road, riders race each other in a circuit in open terrain with natural obstacles.

The exhibition continues with Rally Raid (also known as Cross Country Rallying). This is another off-road discipline for motorcycles (also for cars), a long distance race on all types of terrain which tests participants' resistance. It usually lasts between 3 to 15 days, and distances of up to 900 km per day may be covered. The best known are the Dakar Rally, the Rally of the Pharaohs, the Rally dos Sertões, the Central Europe Rally, the Baja Aragón, the Himalayas Raid and the Northern Forest race in Russia.

The equipment required by riders in these three disciplines is very similar. It consists basically of a helmet, boots, gloves, and the shirt and trousers. Riders also wear protection in the form of knee pads, elbow pads, and safety jackets with chest and back protectors.

The first trousers were made of leather, which were generally safe but quite rigid. Technological developments have made it possible to replace leather with a combination of high strength fabrics. Cordura 500D fabrics can be sewn with reinforced parts such as Kevlar and leather to increase the resistance.

Rally Raid suit worn by Juan Pedrero, consisting of glasses, boots, shirt and trousers. KTM Team (2012). [See details.](#)



A predetermined shape can also be given to the trousers to ensure greater comfort, complementing it with stretch fabric in the areas requiring maximum protection.

The exhibition presents examples of leather suits like the one worn by Narcís Casas and shows the evolution of the design in the shape of the suit worn by Francesc Rubio, and then a present-day specimen made of Cordura, worn by the Enduro rider Iván Cervantes.

Resistance is a key factor in motorcycle suits. CORDURA® fabric, patented by DuPont in 1929, offers excellent resistance. This is a polyamide made of densely woven nylon threads and is resistant to scratches, abrasion and perforation.

Unlike Trial, protection in Enduro and Motocross is provided by removable plastic parts. The materials used are EVA (ethylene vinyl acetate) and TPR (Thermoplastic Rubber) placed in strategic areas to soften blows or falls. In the study of the development and positioning of the piece of rubber, innovation and technology play a key part. Protectors are attached to the base fabrics through heat fusion techniques.

As for the printing, the designs and logos are printed on paper and then transferred to the fabric using the sublimation technique, as described above. All the base fabrics used in suits for Enduro, Motocross and Raid allow printing; in fact, even boots and TPR can be printed with thermal and high frequency screen printing techniques.

Motorcycle belonging to the Enduro champion Narcís Casas (1978). Bultaco, model: Frontera MK11, 370 c.c. Loaned to the museum by Narcís Casas and the Bassella Motorcycle Museum.



The exhibition displays the suits and lists of the titles won by Narcís Casas, Francesc Rubio, Iván Cervantes, Javi García Vico, Rafa García, and the promising youngster, Josep García, for Enduro and Motocross. Raid is represented by Marc Coma, Jordi Viladoms, Gerard Farrés, Joan Pedrero, and by the queen of the desert, Laia Sanz.

The exhibition ends with motorcycle racing. This event comprises short races in a circuit in which riders must complete a certain number of laps in the shortest time possible. There are several categories, such as Moto 2, Moto 3 and Moto GP, and other competitions such as Superbike, Superstock, and Supersport. The MotoGP championship is organized by the FIM (Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme) and the Spanish company Dorna Sports. In Catalonia, the Montmeló circuit hosts the Aperol Grand Prix of Catalonia.

The riders' **first line of defence** is their clothing. Besides protection, the most valued features of clothing for the Moto GP are aerodynamics, breathability, comfort, durability, flexibility, lightness and resistance to water. The equipment consists of a leather suit (cowhide or kangaroo), gloves, helmets, protective boots and accessories.

Cowhide, the base of the riders' suits, offers a good level of transpiration and guarantees high resistance to abrasion and low water absorption in the case of rain. Normally these suits are around 1.2 mm thick. Thanks to special treatments using resins and the application of natural fats, a soft feel is achieved and the colour fastness is ensured. These full suits have finishes for thermoregulation.

Ergonomics and comfort can be enhanced by inserting elastic fabric in strategic zones. Protection filaments can also be placed over different parts of the body, especially on the flanks, the collarbone, in the chest and kidneys. There are also special inserts made of multilayer structures based on carbon fibre and Kevlar® which ensure maximum protection against blows. In some cases, Airbag systems are built into the riders' suits to ensure their safety and protection.

The Impala 24 h. were extremely popular in Montjuïc in the 1960s*;1 they are considered the forerunner of modern-day speed bikes. In the photo, the Montesa Impala 4M, 175 cc (1962), donated to the Museum by Xavi Arenas of the Motoclub Impala.



* MARISTANY, Manolo, Operación Impala, editorial Librería Universitaria, Barcelona, 2011.



This type of suit can also incorporate a drinking device **placed on the back** attached to the helmet. A data collection system incorporating sensors constantly tracks the rider's physical condition. Reflective materials are often added on the elbows and the back to maximize the rider's visibility. The combination of designs and colours identifies the teams and sponsors. Manufacturers of these parts are: Berik, BKS, Alpinestars, Dainese, Puma, Revit, Spidi and Spyke. The display includes the suits of Emilio Alzamora and Toni Elias.

Each area also includes the motorcycles used in the various events, highlighting the chronological evolution of the different models.

A final word of thanks to all the riders who take part in these exciting championships every year, and a special mention for those who have suffered injury in these extremely dangerous sports. We also thank the organizers and contributors who have made this exhibition possible. ●

“Onna Kasen”. Conserving a nineteenth-century Japanese concertina book

女歌仙

by SANDRA VILCHEZ
Textile and document conservator
Photographs: CDMT, QUICO ORTEGA

Introduction: *Japonisme*

The mid-nineteenth century saw the discovery of a country which, until that time, had lived in virtual isolation from the West. With the development of trade and the celebration of the Universal Exhibitions of London in 1862 and Paris in 1867, the doors of Japan were finally opened; artists with distinct personal styles became known beyond the confines of their country thanks to the beautiful *ukiyo-e* wood block prints which depicted nature and everyday life, with drawings, vibrant colours and clear lines. These descriptive, slightly asymmetrical prints transmitted a sense of tranquility and even spirituality, and their images reflected the success of a new urban social class who followed *kabuki* theatre and *sumo*. On reaching Europe, these prints had a profound influence on the Impressionists, the Post-Impressionists and the Modernists.

The first Eastern influences in the West had been felt in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Europeans were attracted by China and the idea of a paradise ruled by a rich, wise, mysterious emperor. This was the era of the *chinoiseries* – European adaptations of luxury goods from the East – which imitated Chinese styles to create fanciful depictions of plants, flowers, and animals.

In the nineteenth century the influence of Japan in Europe went beyond interior decoration for palaces and began to be reflected in the work of a group of artists, many of them based in Paris. The response to the art of Utamaro, Hokusai and Hiroshige was termed *japonisme* and its influence is particularly evident in the work of artists such as Manet, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir, Cézanne, and Van Gogh. In Barcelona this trend found expression in the jewellery of the Masriera family and the illustrations by Alexandre de Riquer, Apel·les Mestres and Ramon Casas.

The interest in Japan is also reflected in the tastes of certain European collectors, who sought out all kinds of valuable items or curios from the East that were so different from the creations of the West. The collectors imported fans, stamped or embroidered silks, kimonos, handbags and books. Apparently it was the Jesuit Juan López Sopena who donated the book we describe here



¹ Data provided by Ricard Bru, Doctor in Art History and MA in Asian Studies. Postgraduate in Japanese language, culture and business (Senshū University, Tokyo).

Rupert Faulkner (senior curator, Japan, department of Asia of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London) and Anna Jackson (keeper of the department of Asia of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London), agree with the data provided by Ricard Bru.

² For a list of the 36 poetesses (June 2013), see: http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nyōbō_Sanjūrokkasen.

³ According to information provided by Anna Jackson (V&A) to Silvia Carbonell (CDMT), this is a highly unusual piece because it is created using *oshi-e* a technique that uses textiles in relief to form three-dimensional raised ornamentation. Jackson dates the book to the Meiji period (1868-1912), while Rupert Faulkner (V&A) thinks it may be from the first half of the nineteenth century or even slightly earlier.

⁴ Data provided by Katarzyna Zych, conservator of paper art works at CREPAC Belgium. Katarzyna has studied traditional Eastern art and techniques, such as the Conservation of Japanese folding screens (S. Grantham), Conservation of Wallpaper in Interior Decorations (G. Wisse) and the Tokyo workshops on the Conservation of Japanese folding screens (T Kimishima).

to the Textile Museum and Documentation Centre on 29 May, 1958. Inside the book was a handwritten note: “Japanese women’s clothing from the feudal period (fifteenth century)”.

This piece is an artist’s book, produced by a Japanese craftsman. The Kanji symbols on the cover are 女歌仙 – “Onna kasen” – which, literally translated, means “woman”, “poetry”, “immortal”. It is an anthology of the best “waka” poems written by the most famous **poetesses** of the Heian and Kamakura period (*Nyōbō Sanjūrokkasen*).¹ The selection was probably inspired by another very famous one, that of the 36 immortal poetesses by Fujiwara no Kinto, “Sanjūrokkasen”.²

During the Heian period (794 - 1185), the Japanese court was famous for its sensitivity to art, poetry, and literature. Among the poetesses of the era, two in particular stand out: Ono no Komachi and Shikibu Murasaki, who was author of the most famous novel in Japanese literature: the *Genji Monogatari*, The Tale of Genji, written in the eleventh century and illustrated repeatedly from the twelfth century onwards. The miniatures in the book present women of high social class, belonging to the imperial court: hence their unusual dress style. They wear the *jūnihitoe*, a very elegant kimono comprising twelve layers of silk in different shades, which can be seen only in the sleeves and neck. These layers were added over the white underclothes, and closed by a final layer on top; in all, the *jūnihitoe* might weigh as much as 20 kg.

The book

This unique piece,³ made in the relatively common **concertina format** known as *orihon*, has a protective cover in the form of a case on which the title (*gedai*) is written vertically in black ink on a claret-coloured background. The binding may be made from *borugami* (a type of rigid paper or cardboard) or *itamegami* (starched *kozō* paper which made a rough but flexible cover), lined with plant fibre woven into taffeta and dyed green. The interior of the binding is in orange brown silk. The book is closed by four dark brown loops made of fabric to which an elongated buckle made of bone or ivory was added, though it seems to be lost. On the cover is a trace of a possible circular seal, also lost.

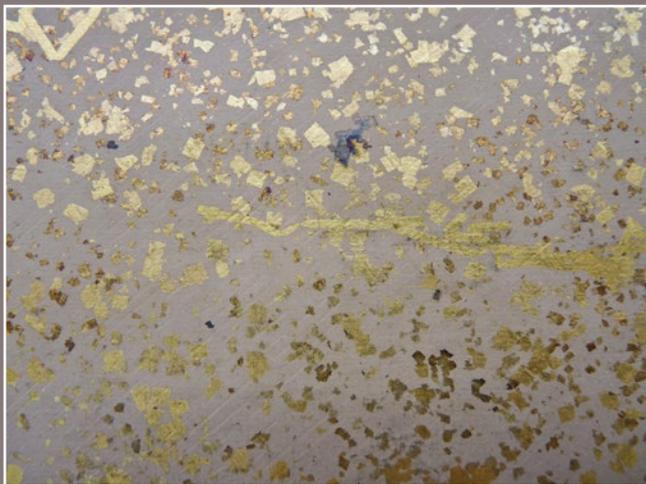
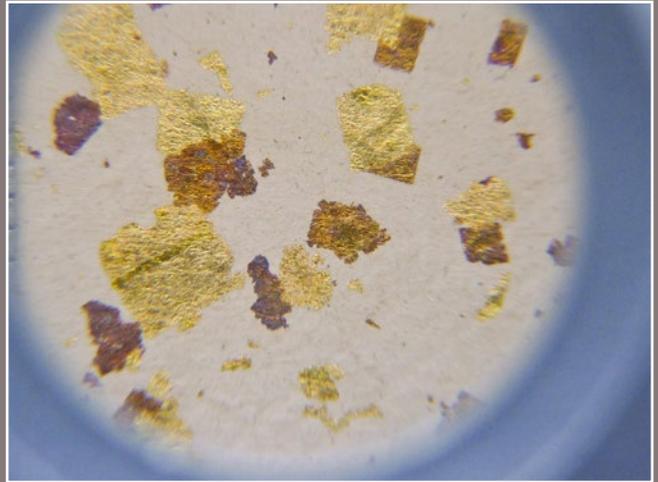
The body of the book is formed by rectangular pieces of cardboard glued together with strips that make them fold over each other, forming an accordion shape. The cardboard base has a pearly tone that makes the surface shiny (possibly mica spray applied with *funori*, a seaweed-based glue). The four corners of the block are decorated with gold paper. Japanese artists worked with this paper in a very personal way and applied different materials according to the effects they wanted to achieve, with the result that they are all different. *Dosa*, for example, is a preparation of alum which is mixed with *nikawa* (animal glue) to improve the support and gives the paper a more absorbent and consistent finish for the application of paint. The inner linings of the body of the book are decorated with gold mica applications in small squares. (On occasion – if the artist was sufficiently rich – gold, silver or copper might be added)⁴.

The left-hand side of the book contains text, 36 vertical poems written vertically in Japanese characters on different supports: paper or even on a very fine, thin tissue (resembling a plant fibre like bamboo or a palm leaf). The writing is in black ink and the decoration is made with gold or metallic inks (probably gold and silver mica powder).

Pearly tone of the base of the paper.



Fragments of mica or gold applied to the lining.



Mineral fragments adorning covers: gold or mica%.



One of the metallic pigments decorating the poems.

One of the poetesses. [See details.](#)



5 According to Anna Jackson of the V&A, real hair was occasionally used.

On the right-hand side, 35 women are depicted wearing kimonos created with original fabrics. (The fact that there are only 35 women may be because one is lost: the book was in an advanced state of disrepair when it arrived at the workshop). All the women have different faces and features. These pieces are inserted inside the book and do not protrude excessively, so the book may be closed easily. Like the women's faces, some of the fabrics are hand painted, imitating flowers or plant motifs. The delicacy and realism of these models is impressive; the artist even tried to imitate natural hair using dark silk fibre.⁵

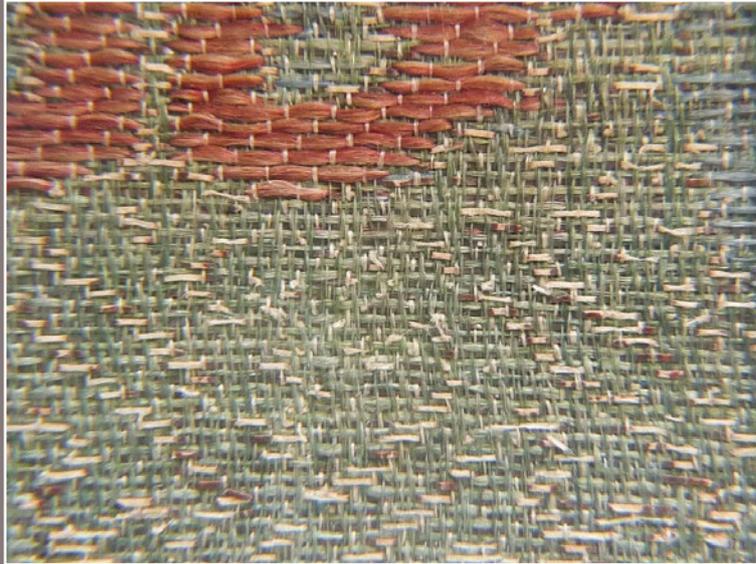
The book's condition

The piece was in a particularly delicate condition on arrival as the book was broken into several pieces or held in place by tape, making consultation impossible. There were also dark glue stains (possibly from a previous attempt sy repair) and some of the pieces were poorly glued or in the wrong place.

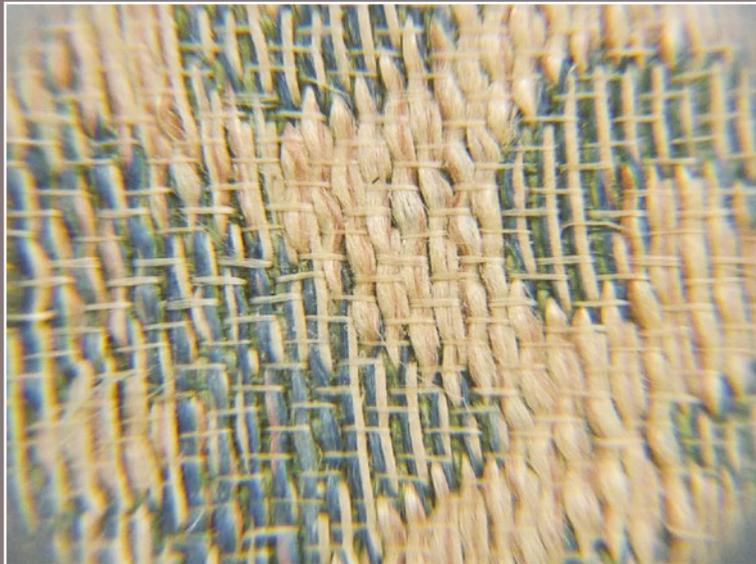
The covers of the book were made of a very delicate fabric and were broken and worn, especially around the perimeter. The fabric is a twill-based lampas which uses two warps with different silk wefts in green, red, rust, blue and white and one made with gold paper. The golden hue is almost entirely lost: only the red part that is the base for the gold is preserved.

The most damaged part was the binding. Exposed to friction and handling, it presented losses of the support, scratches, and general wear. The interior of the binding was partially detached, presenting some tears and holes.

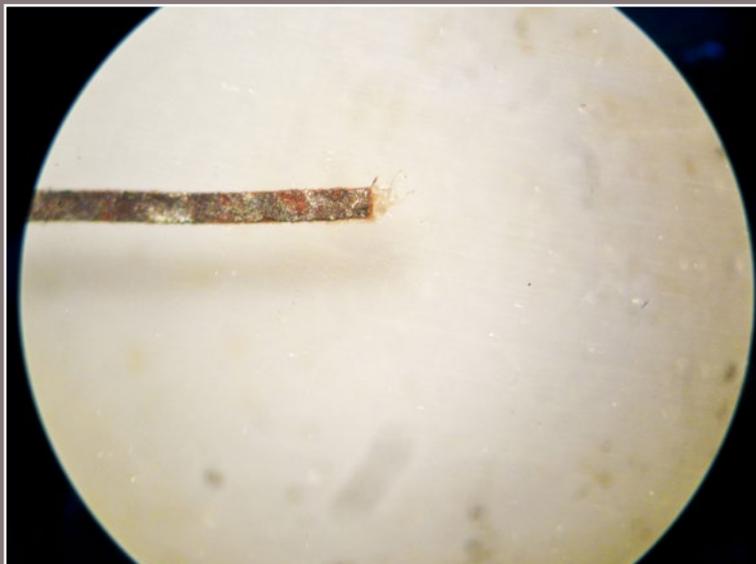
Reverse of the cover with coloured stripes. The paper is in very poor condition.



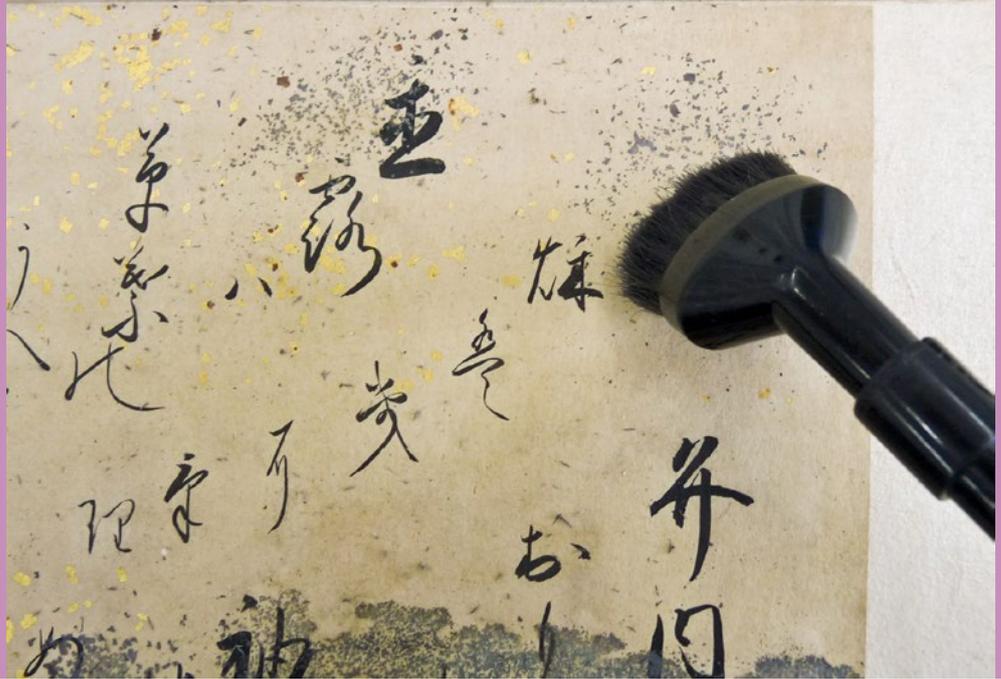
Reverse of the cover of the body.



View of the weft of the gold paper (X 20).



Cleaning of the supports.



Conserving the paper

We began by attempting to conserve the book by joining together the different parts. We cleaned the supports with the aid of stirrers, erasers, Wishab® sponges or aspiration, as required. Low suction aspiration was performed and delicate or broken parts were protected with a tulle screen. We removed the tape and the glue residue to be able to join the supports together.

Extraction of previous interventions using a bamboo spatula.



Consolidation of the body of the book with Japanese paper.



Separation of the cover from the binding using a bamboo spatula.



We tested several glues (wheat starch, rice starch, Tylose MH 300 ...) to see which was the most suitable and eventually chose wheat starch, due to its mordant and its flexibility. The grafts were made with Japanese paper similar to the original (Arakaji Natural 33 gr.). To provide consistency and to reinforce the hinge system, on occasion we had to glue two pieces of paper in the direction opposite to the fibre; this strengthened the accordion-like opening and closing action. The major challenge at this point was to maintain the tension to ensure the correct positioning and the opening of the cards.

We now treated the binding, reinforcing its support with Japanese paper. We removed the paper strip (*daisen*) of the cover and reinforced it with a sheet, gluing a thin piece of paper on the back with wheat starch. For the finish we added a small claret trompe l'oeil touch in watercolours. The cover was laminated with the Japanese paper, in pieces, to avoid tension. Excess moisture was removed with Reemays®, blotters and weights. We retouched the grafts with watercolours, applying colour to the reinstated part.

Cleaning blue stains with a scalpel and using a linen tester.



Conserving the fabric

In addition to the paper, the book's fabric was also in need of major repair. We used conservation techniques to clean up and consolidate the kimonos, the block covers, and the cover of the binding.

First we removed the dark glue stains that soiled certain points using a scalpel tip. The fabrics were cleaned mechanically with a low-suction vacuum, protecting sensitive areas with a tulle screen. The weaker or poorly glued parts were consolidated with wheat starch and, attaching the loose particles directly, a glass and a weight were applied to finish the process.

To ensure the conservation of the block covers, **we removed the card** to which they were attached with great care since the fabric was fragile and dry. The fabric was composed of two warps and wefts of different colours with a floral decoration and rust-coloured, green, and white stripes in a highly Oriental style. The removal was performed with a small bamboo spatula, exerting a little pressure. The glue applied originally (and in fact all the glues used in this book) were quite weak perhaps because the effect of the mordant is lost over time or because they were relatively light.

We cleaned the remains of the Japanese paper attached to the fabric, softening it with Tylose MH 300 gel, and then removed them using a spatula and applying moisture. We did not want to clean the piece too much, in case we damaged the fabric even more. We aspirated both the front and back of the two covers with low suction and protection. To avoid losing more gold paper weft, we decided not to immerse the fabric, but we did apply a slight humidification with cold steam to improve the rigidity and to even out the deformities before consolidating it on a support. To the new support, in green cotton, we added natural dye (coffee) to age the tone slightly. The tears and gaps were consolidated with conservation stitches (Bologna stitch or long and short, as required) with two-ply silk thread dyed with CIBA dye.

Correct placement of one of the dresses, using pegs.



Consolidation with wheat starch glue.



Fastening to a support with silk thread and conservation stitches.



The brown silk inside cover was aspirated and immersed in water several times to remove surface dirt. Once the warp and weft were aligned and the deformities removed, we applied a cotton support, dyed with natural dyes (coffee and tea) and added a crepeline to reproduce the colour more accurately. The consolidation was performed with conservation stitches as noted above.

Now that the parts were glued together, and perhaps due to addition of the cotton supports, the binding had a slight tendency to open (as in fact it did before the conservation work). To prevent this from happening we made two Melinex® strips of 75 microns about 3.5 cm wide, taped together to improve storage. For better conservation and safer storage in the future, we think that a case should be made to protect the entire book.

Conclusions

The conservation of this old Japanese book posed an interesting challenge because it is so different to the pieces we normally deal with, both in terms of the materials (the type of paper, delicate fabrics, and glues) and the technique used. We divided our intervention into two parts: conservation of the paper, and conservation of the fabric. The task has drawn our attention to new concepts of this complex and distinct culture, in which craftspeople worked with great patience without worrying excessively about the time taken, and had the skill to create such spectacular end results. As a result, we have been profoundly impressed by this philosophy and by the beauty and delicacy of this piece made by expert Japanese artists and bookbinders. ●

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The costume Museum. Costume history in Japan. The Heian Period.

Library novelties and news

OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > [CATALÀ](#)

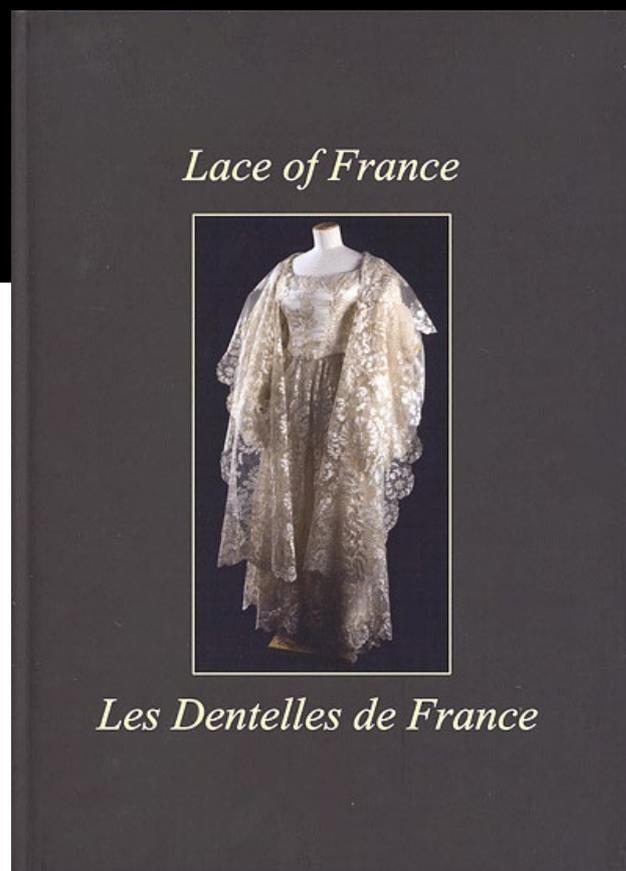
LES DENTELLES DE FRANCE (Lace of France)

Claudette and Michel Bouvot, OIDFA 2012

Caen

In July 2012, the 30th Congress of OIDFA, the International Bobbin and Needle Lace Organization, was held in Caen in northern France. [OIDFA](#) organizes an international conference every two years at which historical studies are presented and workshops and competitions are organized. The next Congress will be held in Australia in 2014. The association [Dentelles Blondes – Caen et Courseulles/mer](#) was the main organizer of the 2012 congress, and was responsible for the publication of the book *Les dentelles de France*.

Les dentelles de France is an extensive collection of all varieties of handmade and machine-made lace techniques carried out in France. Along with Belgium, France is one of the largest lace producers in Europe. The country has been host to the development of a range of techniques for both bobbin and needle lace which have been influential throughout Europe, and the stylistic and artistic evolution of its models is essential to the understanding of the evolution of European dress. The book is divided by geographical area and each section describes the handmade techniques applied in the different regions of France – Valenciennes, Lille, Bayeux, Alençon, and Argentan – all of which gained a reputation for excellence and were copied in many countries. The book also studies the great centres of machine-made lace, such as Calais, the home of the [Cité Internationale de la Dentelle et de la Mode](#). The



sections for each geographical area mention the museums, associations and schools working to recover the art of handmade lace. The last part of the book is devoted to the artists, lace makers and designers who are currently exploring new avenues in the world of lace production.

The book is an excellent collection of work, based mainly on visual images. Perhaps readers will miss a more extensive description of the characteristics and history of French art. Nonetheless, we congratulate the association *Dentelles et Blondes – Caen et Courseulles/mer* for their constant efforts to maintain and promote the heritage value of French lace. ■

Library novelties and news

OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > ESPAÑOL

BODYTECA HISTÒRICA A study of museum mannequins

Carmen Lucini

Monografies conservació preventiva de teixits, 4

Textile Museum and Documentation Centre, 2013
ISBN: 84-937764-2-8
(Catalan, Spanish and English)

Preserving and, above all, exhibiting historical costumes is no easy task. The pieces must be given proper support, without any stretching or malformations, but their display must also help to convey the historical and aesthetic ideas underpinning the exhibition. And it goes without saying that these pieces are usually extremely fragile and must be handled with the utmost care.

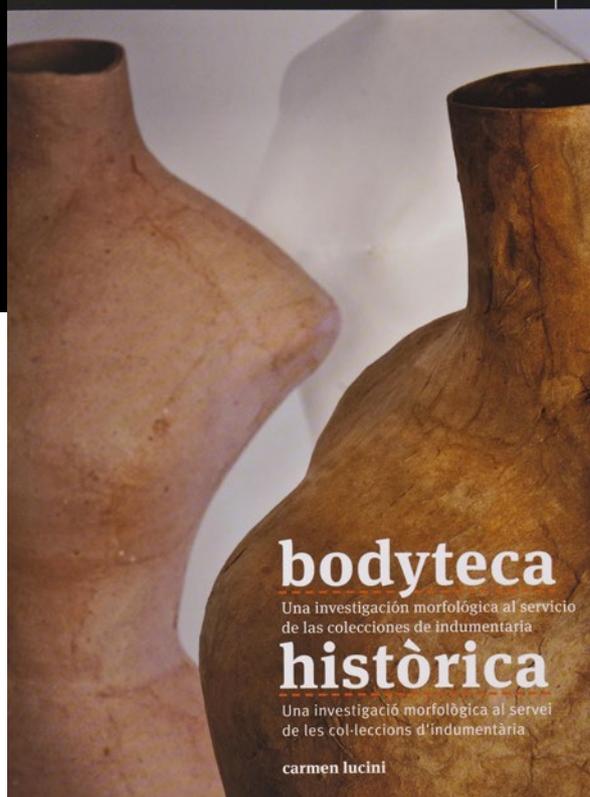
This is the problem that has prompted the author to investigate the evolution of the mannequin over history. In the process she has become the leading specialist in the field and has taken part in numerous exhibitions and museum studies. Because a costume is not just a silhouette, but something that moves with the body and gives it a spirit that we try to preserve when it is put on display in an exhibition.

The book is delightfully illustrated with drawings by Giovana Avanzi and by the author herself. In the first chapter, she recalls the figure of M. Lavigne, a nineteenth-century theorist who developed dressmaking techniques that could be applied to mass production and created three-dimensional models from which cardboard mannequins could be produced on a semi-industrial scale.

The text *Innovar, mostrar y valorar* – Innovate, display and value – focuses on the different roles of the mannequin in temporary exhibitions: either disappearing beneath the costume or becoming a sculpture with a specific ethnological

Monogràfics conservació preventiva de teixits
Publicació del Centre de Documentació i Museu Tèxtil

4



or anthropological design. Each project requires a different solution, but each one starts with a thorough knowledge of the history of clothing, of the evolution of anatomy, and of the materials and techniques available.

The *Bodyteca* was set up in 1992, building on research launched in 1988 and with the aid of the museums which have allowed Carmen Lucini to explore their stocks. Today all of this research is part of a European project, and has resulted in the creation of 70 original models for the bodies of men, women and children ranging from the early eighteenth century until the present day, and a computer programme. The author has now shared these materials with the CDMT and the French *Institut National du Patrimoine*, in order to promote further study and training in this field. ■

OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > [ESPAÑOL](#)

VENDRE EL PRODUCTE: PUBLICITAT I MARCA EN EL SABADELL TÈXTEL (*Selling the product: advertising and the brand name in the textiles of Sabadell*)

Museus Municipals de Sabadell, 2013
ISBN: 978-84-922173-3-5



Sabadell already has a significant track record in promoting exhibitions that present the city's textile history to an audience that has not experienced it first-hand. This is the most recent of these contributions, and it centres on the advertising that helped to create the fine reputation the city's fabrics enjoyed.

Supervised by Montserrat Llonch and Esteve Deu, curators of the exhibition and renowned experts in the field, the book explores several facets of the advertising produced by the manufacturers. Most of the information dates from the third quarter of the twentieth century, a period in which advertising also made huge strides forward in both design and forms of expression.

If Sabadell became synonymous with quality wool, it was because manufacturers and local government worked hand in hand to establish this reputation. Their collaborations ranged from advertising in the streets and in sports events, the design of campaign slogans and the creation of business stationery, catalogues and guides, advertising in the press and the media, sponsorships and merchandising.

Brand differentiation, both individual and corporate, and the international promotion of business associations guaranteed the success of the local textile firms.

The creators of advertising tend to be forgotten, but here the illustrators, advertising agencies and photographers receive the recognition they deserve.

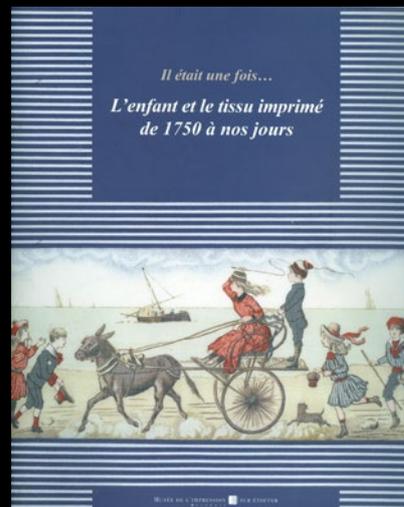
This is a fine example of what a city can do to preserve its DNA and to bring it to the attention of the new generations who, unbeknownst to them, carry this textile heritage inside them. ■

Library novelties and news

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IL ÉTAIT UNE FOIS. L'ENFANT ET LE TISSU IMPRIMÉ DE 1750 À NOS JOURS

Exhibition at the Musée de l'Impression sur Étoffes, Mulhouse. Catalogue edited by Isabelle Dubois-Brinkmann. ISBN 978-2-915626-89-6



“Dès notre naissance, nous sommes au contact de textiles. Cependant, il est rare que nous nous souvenions d’une étoffe, d’un vêtement, d’un décor qui nous a marqué dans notre plus jeune âge”

Fabrics with figurative images have always been of interest in the history of printing. France has a long tradition in the study of fabrics printed with figurative scenes, and this book extends the field of study by focusing on images of children and their clothing.

The book, a catalogue published for the exhibition held at the Musée de l'Impression sur Étoffes Mulhouse until 2012, opens with a text by Jacqueline Jacqué, former director of the museum. Jacqué presents the museum’s fabrics collection and traces the evolution of the design of prints for children through their collections, which includes the production of various US and European companies, from 1750 until the present day.

In the second chapter, Jean-Francois Keller proposes a thematic journey entitled “De l’enfant littéraire à l’enfant marketing”, which stresses the educational nature of the early printed fabrics for children and shows how these fabrics bore moral lessons from the late nineteenth century onwards. Keller also notes that with the success of cartoons, the visual world takes on a new dimension: characters like Mickey Mouse, for example, become the protagonists of handkerchiefs or bedclothes.

In the first part of the chapter “Un âge d’or de vêtement imprimé pour enfant: les années

1880-1940”, Isabelle Dubois-Brinkmann analyses children’s clothing from a study of printed samples. The fabric becomes a document for the recognition of different fashions. In the second part, on the motifs that decorate the clothes, remarks the importance of friezes decorated with scenes of children’s games, especially rich in details.

Anne-Rose Bringel continues with a study of handkerchiefs for children in “Deux siècles d’histoire du mouchoir illustré pour enfant”, a technical and stylistic analysis that introduces us to the printing processes and the dynamics of production in the factories. Again, Bringel states that these accessories are a reflection of the tastes and habits of the society of the time. Also, as a curiosity, she presents a handkerchief from the Pfaff sewing machine factory, with the first stitches that must have been made by a young girl practising with the new machine (p. 65). All these examples attest to the task of research that the authors have carried out.

In the second part of the book, Anne-Rose Bringel, Isabelle Dubois-Brinkmann and Jean-Francois Keller bring their knowledge together to make an extensive catalogue with careful descriptions of some of the most representative pieces. Outstandingly comprehensive and entertaining, the book provides readers with many fascinating references and objects which may well take them back to their own childhood. ■

Summary Datatèxtil 30

Renaissance embroidery in Burgos

A. BARÓN

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MERCÈ FERNÁNDEZ

Bobbin lace during the modernista period. In search of Europe and modernity

JOAN MIQUEL LLODRÀ

Working girls: a pictorial view of the textile revolution in Catalonia

JUAN BEJARANO VEIGA

Kima Guitart, unpublished

ASSUMPTA DANGLA

The Triste textile workshop

SÍLVIA CARBONELL AND SÍLVIA SALADRIGAS

Simplification as the norm: common ground for Chanel and Balenciaga

ANA BALDA

Library novelties and News





Circuit de Museus Tèxtils i de Moda a Catalunya

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Eulàlia Morral, Neus Ribas, Marta Prevosti

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Tel. 34 93 731 52 02 - 34 93 731 49 80

E-mail: scarbonell@cdmt.es

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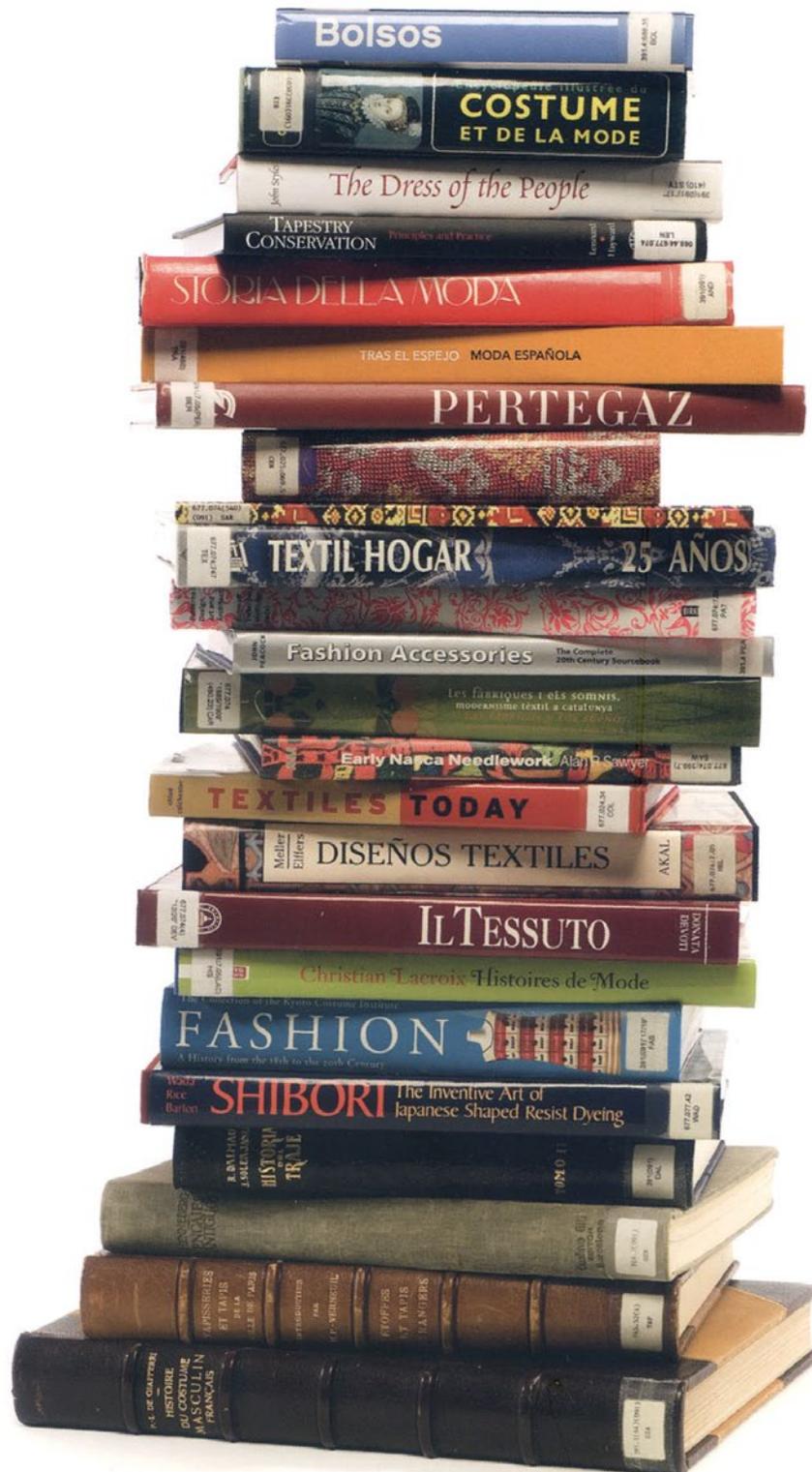
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