

FASHION (non) SENSE

Assemblage of embodiment

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Wonne Scrayen

Student number: 01612602

Supervisor(s): Prof. Dr. Maude Bass-Krueger

Second reader: Dr. Aurélie Van de Peer

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What is the impact of catalogue culture on
the embodied experience of fashion?

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And then there is one more mention left... This dissertation was and is so much more to me than just an assemblage of some words and images, it manifested itself as a kind of therapy, granting me time and space to gain certain insights by which I could slowly start to say goodbye to a part of me that should not have been there in the first place. And although I am not there yet, *FASHION(non)SENSE* spurred me on to at least start...

What I wish for you ...

to be dreaded, yet embraced.

to be confusing, yet inspiring.

to be alien, yet comforting.

to be imperceptible, yet involved.

to be lived, yet cherished.

to be ... **SENSED**

PREVIEW



"Mirror, mirror..."

A repetition of a seemingly trivial word. However, finishing these words without any hesitation, this sentence is steeped with connotations in almost everyone's mind. What may seem as a rather innocent phrase, can be considered as just one of many links in a mind moulding chain within our society, favouring the external over the internal. Both as an industry as well as an everyday practice, fashion is one of many areas undeniably preoccupied with aesthetics.¹ More so, the visual image seems to take centre stage, recruiting garments at best as supporting actors, but more often as mere props.² As consumers and wearers of fashion in the twenty-first century, we unconsciously allowed a chasm to arise between our physical bodies and the artefacts adorning it. Living in a society saturated by visual images imposing this universal ideal to pursue, we are under the impression of thinking of ourselves as fully-fledged subjects yet have come to see our bodies as mouldable objects.³ In consequence of denying ourselves the right to truly exist as worthwhile subjects, we no longer acknowledge the agency of clothes, thereby unjustly reinforcing their object status.⁴ And although dismissed by many as mere frivolous to the point of outright materialistic, even as an object we rarely give a moment's thought to the material existence of clothing.⁵ Albeit that the possibility to blur the barrier between the physical body and the garments worn by this body may be concealed precisely within this material existence.⁶

We seem to have lost touch with fashion, first and foremost a literal loss in no longer appealing our senses when dealing with clothes. However, this sensorial disengagement entails the elimination of the affective dimension of fashion, which in turn prevents any sense of embodiment to emerge within the wearer.⁷ So equally, there seems to be a matter of figurative loss. Ultimately, both components of this "out of touch" are rooted in the objectification and estrangement of our physical selves.⁸ As rightly stated by Joanne Entwistle, dress cannot be understood without reference to the body, with which she deliberately steered in the direction of the "embodied practice" of fashion.⁹ Although crucial to the argumentation on which *FASHION(non)SENSE* will elaborate, these words equally should be interpreted as they are, namely the inextricable intersection of body and dress when it comes to fashion and fashion imagery.¹⁰ The objective of *FASHION(non)SENSE* is not, neither of the theoretical nor of the lived experience part, to obliterate the monolithic fashion image as known to mankind. The act of wearing simply implies a dependence from one to another, or thus from the wearer to the worn and vice versa.¹¹ Rather than to aspire a complete annihilation of normative fashion imagery, this dissertation will endeavour the possibility of a counterbalance to what has generally been interiorised as being

¹ Natalya Lusty, "Fashion Futures and Critical Fashion Studies," *Continuum* 35, no.6 (October 2021): 816, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2021.1993568>.

² Alison Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 23.

³ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 16.; Kate Haug, "Touching to See: Haptic Description and 21st Century Visuality," *LXAO*, October 10, 2016, <https://www.sfaq.us/2016/10/touching-to-see-haptic-description-and-21st-century-visibility/>.; Emma McClendon, "The Body: Fashion and Physique," Exhibition Brochure, Fashion Institute of Technology Fashion, 2017, <https://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/documents/the-body-fashion-and-physique-brochure.pdf>.

⁴ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 2.

⁵ Ellen Sampson, "Affect and Sensation," *Fashion Studies* 3, no.1 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.38055/FS030103>.

⁶ Haug, "Touching to See."; Julia Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes: Activating Wearer-Worn Engagements through Design" (PhD diss., Aalto University, 2019), 49.

⁷ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 16.; Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."

⁸ Shahidha Bari, "What Do Clothes Say?," *Aeon* (2016), <https://aeon.co/essays/why-does-philosophy-hold-clothes-in-such-low-regard>.

⁹ Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wissinger, "Keeping Up Appearances: Aesthetic Labour in the Fashion Modelling Industries of London and New York," *Sociological Review* 54, no.4 (November 2006): 791-792, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2006.00671.x>.

¹⁰ Susan Orbach, *Bodies* (London: Profile, 2009), 79.; Lars Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy* (London: Reaktion Books, 2018): 77.

¹¹ Alison Gill and Abby Mellick Lopes, "On Wearing: A Critical Framework for Valuing Design's Already Made," *Design and Culture Forum* 3, no.3 (2011): 311, <https://doi.org/10.2752/175470811X13071166525234>.

the norm. *FASHION(non)SENSE* is a venture on alternative imagery concerned with a renewed notice for the sentient nature of fashion, to hopefully broaden the scope of our sartorial perception. So by way of interweaving theory and (lived) experience, this dissertation will audit the disparity between sight and touch within fashion (imagery), with the aim to tilt the imbalance in favour of the sense of touch.

Within the broader field of fashion studies, the embodied practice of fashion seems to remain largely unexplored. Moreover, the research that has been done is primarily theory based, often preceded by psychological studies. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate exactly the sensory commitment of the wearer to the garment through their lived experience and how this could give rise to an alternative imagery of fashion, questioning if we can restore the being "out of touch" - both literally and figuratively - with fashion. By way of engaging with a pre-selected item, the participants will be asked to capture their particular experience with the garment - whether positive or negative - through an output of their choice. This could range from the written word to a visual impression, as long as it captures the embodiment between the self and the garment. Characterised by visual abstraction of both body and garment in a normative way, *FASHION(non)SENSE* enquires the possibility of a counterbalance to fashion imagery as we know it. This dissertation was very purposefully thought out from the viewpoint of fashion imagery, since - more often than not - the phenomenon of fashion comes to one's attention disguised as visual content. Considering the pervasive spell of imaging, a query of (normative) fashion imagery seemed a rather worthwhile stepping stone towards rethinking the fashion system as a whole. A narrative shift as such requires a thorough consideration of the (unjust) significance of the body as a mere physical phenomenon, a blueprint it owes to a "catalogue culture-mindset" - favouring sight/look/appearance. Rephrased, the research avenue of *FASHION(non)SENSE* aims at unveiling the impact of catalogue culture on the embodied experience of fashion.

This dissertation's envisioned close reading of the embodiment of fashion can be situated in the extensive research field focusing on the preoccupation with the body within fashion. When we think of fashion, we cannot help but almost immediately picture a certain body in our minds, as if the word seems to trigger an instant link to the human form. A historical retrospect by Chloe Wigston Smith on eighteenth-century trade cards, enlightened us with the perception of clothes without bodies.¹² Smith notes the then common perception of clothes detached from the body as "[...] threatening and promiscuous forms [...] in print and visual culture" due to either respectively a lingering embodiment or a sexual connotation ascribed to autonomous clothes.¹³ The zeitgeist of that time confirms just how inextricably intertwined clothes and the body have been since decades. Since neither can be excluded from the narrative, fashion studies should be preceded by a close reading of the body. An account on the former - clothes - can be found in both Yuniya Kawamura's *Fashion-ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, as well as in the edited volume *The Handbook of Fashion Studies*.¹⁴ To fathom the implications of the body in all its senses, Susie

¹² Chloe Wigston Smith, "Clothes without Bodies: Objects, Humans and the Marketplace in Eighteenth-Century It-Narratives and Trade-Cards," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 23, no.2 (Winter 2010-11): 347-380, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ecf.2010.0020>.

¹³ Smith, "Clothes without Bodies," 348.

¹⁴ Yuniya Kawamura, *Fashion-ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (Oxford: Berg, 2005).; Sandy Black, Amy de la Haye et al., eds. *The Handbook of Fashion Studies* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).

Orbach's *Bodies* can be pinpointed as a directory into understanding the human relationship to the body, with a prime focus on the importance of touch.¹⁵ The pursuit of tactility can also be found within the field of fashion curation. Voices such as Julia Petrov and Flavia Loscialpo addressed the static nature of museum and gallery spaces, depriving clothes of any physicality inherently crucial for a true display of fashion.¹⁶ This motive was also reflected in Karen Van Godtsenhoven's chapter "Affect, Haptics, and Heterotopia in Fashion Curation" included in *The Routledge Companion to Fashion Studies*, and endorsed in both Jeffrey Horsley and Lucy Gundry's theses dedicated to the practice of fashion curation.¹⁷ Besides the absence of touch from visitors to exhibit, the nature of mannequins also has a significant role to play. *Body Doubles: The Origins of the Fashion Mannequin* by Alison Matthews David unravelled the mannequin as "[...] an object that literally embodies dehumanization [...]," a notion which in turn speaks to the "self-objectification" phrased by Kristen Harrison and Barbara L. Fredrickson.¹⁸ This theory comes down to an approach of the body in terms of appearance rather than ability.¹⁹ The rising worship of the image comes with repercussions for the fabricated artefacts, a fashion Giorgio Riello deeply deplored.²⁰ A prominent voice when it comes to the dismissal of the visual in favour of the sentient in fashion is Joanne Entwistle.²¹ Her theoretical outline of clothes as "situated embodied practices" brought about a fundamental shift within fashion studies, granting credit to the eloquence of the sensory perception of fashion.²²

Contrary to the case of fashion in terms of the sensorial perception, reflections on the alliance between fashion and identity have been articulated, more specifically in the realm of social and psychological studies. Reconnecting with clothes on a deeper and more meaningful level implies a sense of self. As phrased by Colin McDowell in *The Anatomy of Fashion*: "The power of clothes is that they are tools in our constant quest to find a personality with which we are comfortable."²³ The essay "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration" by Aurélie Van de Peer in *Extra Extra* and Rebecca Smith and Julia Yates' "Flourishing Fashion: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of the Experience of Wearing a Happy Outfit" in *Fashion Studies*, both took a closer look at clothes as an extension of our "self," focusing on how clothes can make someone feel rather than how they make someone look.²⁴ By shifting the focus from the visual to the sentient, one can seemingly feel empowered

¹⁵ Orbach, *Bodies*.

¹⁶ Julia Petrov, *Fashion, History, Museums: Inventing the Display of Dress* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).; Flavia Loscialpo, "From the Physical to the Digital and Back: Fashion Exhibitions in the Digital Age," *International Journal of Fashion Studies* 3, no.2 (October 2016): 225-248, <https://doi.org/10.1386/inf.3.2.225.1>.

¹⁷ Karen Van Godtsenhoven, "Affect, Haptics, and Heterotopia in Fashion Curation," in *The Routledge Companion to Fashion Studies*, ed. Eugenia Paulicelli, Veronica Manlow and Elizabeth Wissinger (London: Routledge, 2021), 69-82.; Jeffrey Horsley, "Embedding the Personal: The Construction of a 'Fashion Autobiography' as a Museum Exhibition, Informed by Innovative Practice at Modemuseum, Antwerp" (PhD diss., University of the Arts London, 2012).; Lucy Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress in the Contemporary Exhibition Space" (PhD diss., Royal College of Art, 2020).

¹⁸ Alison Matthews David, "Body Doubles: The Origins of the Fashion Mannequin," *Fashion Studies* 1, no.7 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.38055/FS010107>.; Kristen Harrison and Barbara L. Fredrickson, "Women's Sports Media, Self-Objectification, and Mental Health in Black and White Adolescent Females," *Journal of Communication* 53, no.2 (June 2003): 216-232, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2003.tb02587.x>.

¹⁹ Kim Johnson, Sharron J. Lennon and Nancy Rudd, "Dress, Body and Self: Research in the Psychology of Dress," *Fashion and Textiles* 1, no.20 (November 2014): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40691-014-0020-7>.

²⁰ Birgitt Borkopp-Restle, Peter McNeil et al., "Museums and the Making of Textile Histories: Past, Present, and Future," *Perspective* 1 (2016): 44, <https://doi.org/10.4000/perspective.6297>.

²¹ Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson, "Introduction: Body Dressing," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 1-10.

²² Lucia Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed: Affect Studies and the Clothed Body," *Fashion Theory* 21, no.5 (2017): 577, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2016.1253302>.

²³ McDowell, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 8.

²⁴ Aurélie Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration," *Extra Extra*, October, 2020, <https://extraextramagazine.com/talk/identity-mind-body-and-acceleration/>.; Rebecca Smith and Yulia Yates, "Flourishing Fashion: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of the Experience of Wearing a Happy Outfit," *Fashion Studies* 1, no.5 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.38055/FS010105>.

to (re)build their identity.²⁵ Among comprehensive reference works surrounding fashion and psychology are *The Psychology of Dress* by Elisabeth B. Hurlock and *Fashion: A Philosophy* by Lars Svendsen.²⁶ For a thorough psychological analysis of the body we turn to *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and the Body*, a joint venture of Alexandra Warwick and Dani Cavallaro.²⁷ In the same vein, *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies: Psychoanalytical, Social, Cultural and Aesthetic Perspectives* proclaimed the imperative interaction between the self and the body.²⁸ Edited by Agnès Rocamora and Anneke Smelik, *Thinking through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists* highlighted several names relevant for the study of fashion as a multi-sensorial phenomenon, including philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Roland Barthes among others.²⁹ Without detracting from sociological and psychological covering on fashion, Shahidha Bari found it worthwhile to equally state the often still underestimated aspect of clothing within these research fields, one such publication being "What Do Clothes Say?"³⁰

The understanding of the sensory perception of fashion(curation) seems to be on the rise in recent years. The tendency towards e-textiles and the adjoint fast-paced rollout of technology, indicates the yearning to recoup a sense of sensation.³¹ In a 2019 revisit on his parallel between fashion and love songs - originally documented in *Vital Vogue: A Biosocial Perspective on Fashion* (2018) - Otto von Busch grasped the value of clothing beyond the negation as a mere "[...] form of luxury and excess."³² Todd Robinson in turn no longer referred to the body in terms of "pose" but rather of "poise," acclaiming the "lived body in fashion".³³ Stephen D. Seely's exposé on affective fashion in "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?" deepened the under-cultivated agency between dress and the human body.³⁴ The motive to reinstate the sensorial body as noteworthy can also be found in the work of Ellen Sampson and Bethan Bide, raising awareness for the disregarded value of respectively "affect and sensation" and "the signs of wear" of worn garments.³⁵ Not overlooking the "feeling of being dressed," Lucia Ruggerone enriched social and cultural studies on fashion, aiming at "[...] the way we feel about and in our clothes [...]"³⁶ Notwithstanding Ruggerone's amplification of the sociological scope on fashion, she still, however, adhered to a theoretical framework.³⁷

Although nominal, there has been record of some "lived experience" endeavours. Jessica Kennedy and Megan Strickfaden's publication "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne: Threads of Meaning Between Humans and Things (and Things)" in *Fashion Studies* was in fact one of the initial incentives for *FASHION(non)SENSE*. The piece entailed a detailed report of the relationship between a woman and a black dress over the

²⁵ Smith and Yates, "Flourishing Fashion."

²⁶ Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *The Psychology of Dress* (New York: Arno Press, 1976).; Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*.

²⁷ Alexandra Warwick and Dani Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and the Body* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).

²⁸ Ekaterina Sukhanova and Hans-Otto Thomashoff, eds., *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies: Psychoanalytical, Social, Cultural and Aesthetic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

²⁹ Agnès Rocamora and Anneke Smelik, eds., *Thinking through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016).

³⁰ Bari, "What Do Clothes Say?"

³¹ Ana Tajadura-Jiménez, Aleksander Väljamäe and Kristi Kuusk, "Altering One's Body-Perception through E-Textiles and Haptic Metaphors," *Frontiers in Robotics and AI* 7, no.7 (February 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3389/frobt.2020.00007>.

³² Otto Von Busch, "Love Songs: Fashion, Flirting, and Biosocial Growth," *APRIA*, June 3, 2019, <https://apria.artez.nl/love-songs-fashion-flirting-and-biosocial-growth/>.

³³ Todd Robinson, "Attaining Pose: A Movement-Based Lens Exploring Embodiment in Fashion," *Fashion Theory* 23, no.3 (May 2019): 441-458, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2019.1603876>.

³⁴ Stephen D. Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs? Affective Fashion and Nonhuman Becoming," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 41, no.1/2 (Spring/Summer 2012): 247-265, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23611788>.

³⁵ Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."; Bethan Bide, "Signs of Wear: Encountering Memory in the Worn Materiality of a Museum Fashion Collection," *Fashion Theory* 21, no.4 (February 2017): 449-476, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2017.1290204>.

³⁶ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 574.

³⁷ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed."

course of one year.³⁸ Other names worth mentioning in bridging the gap between mere theory and the lived experience of clothing, include Lisa Heinze and Alison Gwilt, both of which contributed to a special 2021 issue of *Continuum* edited by Critical Fashion Studies, an interdisciplinary research group based at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne.³⁹ *Becoming with Clothes: Activating Wearer-Worn Engagements through Design* in turn impersonated Julia Valle-Noronha's intent to unpick the "marginalisation of experience" within fashion studies - many of the thoughts that sparked *FASHION(non)SENSE* found a like-minded work in this.⁴⁰ Sheila Heti, Heidi Julavits and Leanne Shapton also drew from this sense of experience for *Women in Clothes*, a survey among hundreds of women which ultimately resulted in an ode to the individual narratives of these women.⁴¹

The absence of the affective nature in fashion studies is also denounced by Lily Lei Ye in her paper "Not Just 'The Look': Identity, New Materialism and Affective Clothing".⁴² Advocating for a New Materialist approach to clothing, she turned to homemade clothes and the emanation of an arising sense of self.⁴³ New Materialism as a conceptual framework applied to fashion engaged garments as not mere static objects, but rather as living matter equal to the subject, or thus the body.⁴⁴ Driving forces behind such an articulate emphasis on the interaction between the physical body and the garment worn by the body, were philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari, recurring voices within fashion studies focusing on the embodiment of fashion.⁴⁵ Broken down by Anneke Smelik in several publications, the intricacy of their theory is articulated profound yet intelligible.⁴⁶ Thomas Nail delved further into Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "assemblage," defining it as "a gathering of things together into unities," not "an arrangement or layout of heterogenous [sic] elements," but assemblage as a multiplicity.⁴⁷ The outlets distilled from the lived experience enclosed in *FASHION(non)SENSE* can be interpreted as self-assemblages, each of them capturing the identity's embodiment with the garment. Characterised by visual abstraction of both body and garment in a normative way, the eleven obtained images represent a counterbalance to fashion imagery as we know it, a venture on alternative imagery concerned with a renewed notice for the sentient nature of fashion. Assembled as a portfolio, these embodied images manifest an act of rebellion, defying catalogue culture. So, the objective of *FASHION(non)SENSE* is to unveil the impact of catalogue culture on the embodied experience of fashion, whilst giving rise to an alternative fashion imagery by way of implementing the innate bodily senses we as humans are endowed with.

However, such an embodiment tied to a garment is at odds with fashion's inclined predominance of sight over touch, an imbalance in which we can uncover an ambiguity

³⁸ Jessica Kennedy and Megan Strickfaden, "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne: Threads of Meaning between Human and Things (and Things)," *Fashion Studies* 2, no.1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.38055/FS020102>.

³⁹ Lisa Heinze, "Wardrobe Stories: Sustainability and the Everyday Aesthetics of Fashion Consumption," *Continuum* 35, no.6 (October 2021): 853-869, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2021.1993571>; Alison Gwilt, "Caring for Clothes: How and Why People Maintain Garments in Regular Use," *Continuum* 35, no.6 (November 2021): 870-882, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2021.1993572>.

⁴⁰ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 6.

⁴¹ Sheila Heti, Heidi Julavits and Leanne Shapton, *Women in Clothes* (New York: Blue Rider, 2014).

⁴² Lily Lei Ye, "Not Just 'The Look': Identity, New Materialism and Affective Clothing" (Paper, Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, China, 2019), 1-12, <https://fashioninstitute.mmu.ac.uk/assets/uploads/2019/07/119-Not-just-the-look-identity-new-materialism-and-affective-clothing-Lily-Lei-Ye.pdf>.

⁴³ Ye, "Not Just 'The Look,'" 1.

⁴⁴ Anneke Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze: Bodies-without-Organs in the Folds of Fashion," in *Thinking through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, ed. Agnès Rocamora and Anneke Smelik (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 172.

⁴⁵ Anneke Smelik, "New Materialism: A Theoretical Framework for Fashion in the Age of Technological Innovation," *International Journal of Fashion Studies* 5, no.1 (April 2018): 39, https://doi.org/10.1386/inf.5.1.33_1.

⁴⁶ Smelik, "New Materialism.," Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 165-183.

⁴⁷ Thomas Nail, "What is an Assemblage?," *SubStance* 46, no.1 (2017): 22-23, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/650026>.

in which fashion operates. Despite the evident merger of fashion and body, an incongruity seems to prevail when it comes down to the two principal bodily senses within fashion, namely sight and touch.⁴⁸ Considered to be an open-minded field, Stephen D. Seely discredited fashion as still holding on to “[...] a normative image of the human body.”⁴⁹ Olivier Saillard’s contribution to *Fashion Game Changers* (2016) – the catalogue to the eponymous exhibition at ModeMuseum Antwerp – in turn mentioned the implicit ordinance of prevailing body images over time.⁵⁰ Eugenie Shinkle’s “Uneasy Bodies: Affect, Embodied Perception and Contemporary Fashion Photography” in *Carnal Aesthetics* and Anna Pollice’s “Marks of Obsession: Appearance, Transformation, Pain and the Abject Female Body” testified to the attempt of defying such “monolithic fashion images.”⁵¹ A discussion on fashion diversity between Joanne Entwistle, Caryn Franklin, Natalie Lee and Alyson Walsh, recorded in 2019 in *Fashion Theory*, touched upon the input of consumers in terms of image production.⁵² Seizing the advantages of social media platforms to their own advantage, brands and magazines, however, subvert what could have been a way out of the normative.⁵³ Besides, the intrinsic two-dimensional quality of media seems to automatically diminish and dishonour the eloquence of the sensory perception of fashion – utterly three-dimensional by nature – therefore giving acclaim to the tendency of sight at the expense of touch.⁵⁴ More than ever, all that seems to matter is the visual picture; very unfortunate when thought of fashion as the summit of tactile art.⁵⁵ Invigorated by Marco Pecorari’s portrayal of haptic fashion images in *Fashion Remains*, Dries Van Noten’s disclosure of scanned fabrics tied to his autumn/winter 21/22 collection can be interpreted as a deviation from traditional imagery, an endeavour that will be further elaborated within the framework of *FASHION(non)SENSE*.⁵⁶

In order to restore the locus of embodiment within fashion, and more specifically fashion imagery, we have to address the platonic gap between mind and body, since this dualism is what prevents us from experiencing an embodied existence as it could occur.⁵⁷ *FASHION(non)SENSE* is therefore conceptualised as a triptych. The first part will assess the human perception towards the body, or thus what we think of as the corporeal existence. This will be followed by a section directed at the bodice, or – in a similar vein with the body – what we think of as the material existence. Once these two components are realigned, true embodiment is given free rein to emerge, provided that one is open to loosen and transcend the mind-body dualism engraved in their being.⁵⁸ Only when feeling empowered by such an open-mindedness, one will be able to experience embodiment, the third hatch that will emerge subsequent to and as the assemblage of the body and bodice hatches of the triptych.

⁴⁸ Valle-Noronha, “Becoming with Clothes,” 149.

⁴⁹ Seely, “How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?,” 258.

⁵⁰ Olivier Saillard, “Shadows of the Body,” in *Fashion Game Changers: Reinventing the 20th-Century Silhouette*, ed. Anabela Becho (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016), 191-201.

⁵¹ Eugenie Shinkle, “Uneasy Bodies: Affect, Embodied Perception, and Contemporary Fashion Photography,” *Carnal Aesthetics*, December 18, 2012, <http://www.eugenieshinkle.com/portfolio-item/uneasy-bodies-affect-embodied-perception-and-contemporary-fashion-photography/>; Anna Pollice, “Marks of Obsession: Appearance, Transformation, Pain, and the Abject Female Body,” *Fashion Studies* 3, no.2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.38055/FS030203>.

⁵² Joanne Entwistle, Caryn Frankling et al., “Fashion Diversity,” *Fashion Theory* 23, no.2 (2019): 309-323, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2019.1567065>.

⁵³ Entwistle, Frankling et al., “Fashion Diversity,” 315.

⁵⁴ Loscialpo, “Fashion Exhibitions in the Digital Age,” 243-244.

⁵⁵ Borkopp-Restle, McNeil et al., “Museums and the Making of Textile Histories,” 45.

⁵⁶ Marco Pecorari, *Fashion Remains: Rethinking Ephemera in the Archive* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), 146-147.

⁵⁷ Ruggerone, “The Feeling of Being Dressed,” 584-585.

⁵⁸ Valle-Noronha, “Becoming with Clothes,” 44.

Research avenues

What happens when...

confronted with a pre-selected garment over the course of three days?

asked to reflect on feelings instead of visuals?

asked to document embodiment in a non-picture format?

Garment quest

The implementation of a lived experience as envisaged came with the endeavour to sift through the abundance of garment choices that is out there. Quite a feat, since - although already oversaturated - with every day passing, the fashion scene dazzles us with even more choices. A premise of criteria to go by proved to be the way forward in order to narrow down this endless flood of possibilities to just about a handful of genuine contenders. As the senses are at the core of this dissertation - hence the title *FASHION(non)SENSE* - it seemed only fitting to adopt the senses as the main guiding principle when it came to the selection process. So for one, there was the manual of the senses. However, so as not to get overwhelmed, it was recommended for some sort of preselection to already be in place, namely in terms of the type of garment. Once settled on a certain category, the remaining garments could then be measured against one another by means of sensorial pattern-cards. But firstly, the challenge awaited me to filter through a dozen if not more mere garment types.

Pretty soon - against all odds - I made up my mind: it would be a spencer, in recent years otherwise known as a sweater vest. There is a solid reasoning behind the settlement on precisely this item. It certainly was no premature spur of moment, but rather a very deliberate consideration. Awarded the awe of the new it-piece of the season, many a fashion lover adopted what once was discarded as an old-fashioned "granddad vest" not worthy of a glance. Bombarded by a wide array of implementations, the spencer soon became ubiquitous, therefore hard to miss. However, the thing that struck me most about this particular piece of clothing - and which ultimately led to me setting my heart on it - was the parallel that could be drawn with the acquainted typology of the bodice. To me, the spencer as is today, goes disguised as a modern-day spin-off of the once oh-so ruthless bodice. The fashion of the latter has never been of passing nature, but rather of a dozing one, patiently waiting for its cue to resurface in full glory. By all means, something can be said for the backlash the bodice suffered - and for that matter still suffers up until this day - because of its constricting infliction. Nonetheless, the bodice never fully disappeared from the scene, only to find solace under a different guise, minus a few tweaks of course. Whereas the bodice's purpose was an almost complete immersion into the body, the spencer has a more relaxed approach to the body, therefore nullifying the constricting nature the bodice was - and often still is - resented for. However, just because this outward constriction is out of the question does not mean that there are no constricting behaviours at all. Once the designated eloquence of the bodice, nowadays it is the fashion industry that reigns supreme when it comes to the enrolment of stricture, manifested by trends and rages one has to conform to. Whereas in the past there at least was the self-awareness of one's subjection to the bodice, the current acquisition of certain trends and rages is hardly ever considered as imposed, but rather as if self-imposed. The fate of the spencer - as is the case for all it-pieces - is therefore all the more pitiful as its fashion is mere transient instead of sincerely cherished by its wearer. Although the spencer-bodice parallel may seem far-fetched to some, I believe there to be others who may have a genuine affinity with it. Not only did the link between spencer and bodice come naturally to me, it too seemed striking for the purpose of the envisaged lived experience. After all, the

bodice's *raison d'être* was a confinement of the body, or thus a matter of sacrificing how one felt in favour of how one looked. And as much as I - and many others with me I believe - would wish that this obsession with a visual picture was a zeitgeist thing, it seems to be more a spirit of all ages.

Settled on the type of garment for the lived experience, the time had come to single out that one singular piece at last. For this last hurdle, I let myself be guided by the senses, for the reason stated above. This one spencer by Emely Van Impe stood out to me from the very first glance, it somehow instantly struck me; all other contenders immediately dulled at the thought of it. So, I took the plunge and went ahead and ordered it. By way of retracing my thought process, I will now move on to a telling qualification of the "why" to each sense as well as how said sense is engaged in this sweater vest in particular.

Touch

As far as materials were concerned, I was unwilling to make any concessions on the composition of the final garment. Fully committed to the value of fashion as a tactile art, there was not a single fibre in my body that thought of synthetics as a viable option. They just would not make the cut, let alone even be considered. For the identities engaged in the lived experience to let go of the visual aspect of dress in favour of the prospect of an embodied feeling, the tactile experience had to be as gentle as possible. Whereas the lived experience was not at all set up as a free pass to comfort - especially the sense of sight acting as possible spoiler - I wanted the identities to at least find some sense of security in terms of the chosen material(s). The fact that the clothing label of the proposed sweater vest read "one hundred percent cotton" thus was a welcome stroke of luck.

Sight

Although the lived experience intended to shift the focus from the mere visual - that is, the physicality of the body - to the sentient, the sense of sight still was one to be considered. The overall look however, being anything but the main event. Rather in this instance sight alluded to the quality of the colour palette. From the start, I intended to single out an unmistakable item in terms of the chosen colourway. I could have opted for some sort of neutral shade or tone, whereby chances were that the identities would naturally feel more secure ahead of the lived experience. However, as long as the identities would not be forced to step outside of their comfort zones, the embodied outcome of the lived experience would never be as telling then if it would start off as a somewhat uncomfortable acquaintance. Hence my deliberate choice for - not one, but multiple - pops of colour.

Hearing

With the sense of hearing, not so much *sound* but more *resounding qualities* were alluded to. Contrary to the other four senses, hearing was one that was anticipated rather than appointed; the garment would act as a sounding board for the feelings of the identities instigated by the lived experience. The embodiment therefore not yet from the outset inscribed into the garment but cultivated as the experience would proceed.

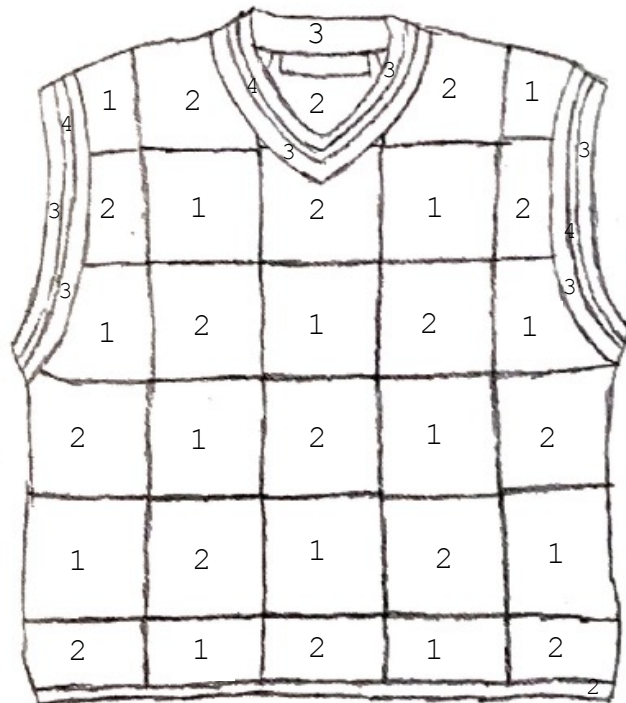
Smell

Scent wise there was no preliminary barrier to be met. Contrary to the sense of hearing, however, the sense of smell was a force to be reckoned with ahead of the lived experience. The difference here lies in the fact that the sense of smell inherently is variable, external factors such as fabric softener or perfume acting as possible intruders to the neutrality of the garment one would start the lived experience of with. Whereas some may use such means to make it their own, others might be put off by the usage of said fragrances.

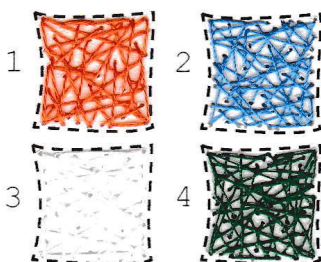
Taste

Taste being the least obvious sense when it comes to fashion, I interpreted it in terms of fashion sense. The reason as to why I allocated this notion is due to the Dutch vernacular used to express someone's great sense of fashion, namely "*smaak hebben*" which literally translates to "having taste." Overall, I would say that people tend to grant someone the aptitude to dress oneself when said one's appearance is practically flawless, someone with fashion sense as someone with the capacity of making every fit their own. So there is the association of taste with fit, the latter generally understood in the sense of a right cut. However, as will later be elaborated in a dedicated passage, fit entails more than a right cut. There also is another factor that comes into play, namely the feeling agency of what feels right. As will be thoroughly explained, one such feeling is comfort, which in turn will be linked to the concept of the fold as indispensable to *comfort*, therefore indispensable to *fit* - as contradictory as this now may sound. To not digress, comfort was thus at the forefront of my mind. That is why the sweater vest had to tick the box of an oversized fit - an additional benefit as it would fit many body types. This "oversizedness" being at odds with the narrow reading of a "right" fit - since miles away from a so-called "right" cut - it may seem as if the sense of taste is not taken into account here. However, in this instance, disobeying the sense of taste - here still understood in the narrow sense of a mere right fit or cut - is exactly the reason as to why the oversized sweater vest by Emely Van Impe was the perfect fit for the envisaged lived experience.

Sense by numbers



Own interpretation of *Harry* by Emely Van Impe.



Identi (ty) fication

Upon finishing one quest, the next one was already awaiting: drawing up a list of people that qualified for the lived experience, hoping that the names on the list would be willing to participate. It happened to work out that everyone on the list of potential names was up for the challenge. Not exactly sure what to expect, they all were willing to commit to this blind date with a yet "unsensed" garment, which - for three days - would turn into an arranged marriage. Whether or not the plot would end up in a happy ending or rather a divorce, could - for the time being - only be answered by a question mark.

It was a deliberate choice to opt for people who, in one way or another, have an affinity to the arts, that is, art in its broadest sense. Since the lived experience envisioned the creation of an embodied image, it made sense to reach out to those with a certain predisposition to abstract and creative thinking. Not to say that such an experience would be left with loose ends when entrusted to "dilettantes." Perhaps the outcome might have been even more interesting. However, since the lived experience as enclosed in this dissertation was up for its first trial, it seemed appropriate to think along the lines of open-minded personalities; although it must be said that there were some plot twists. Furthermore, it was as deliberate to choose people that are rather close to me. For the lived experience to be worthwhile, the participants had to be willing to open themselves up to an exceptionally internal experience, trust therefore of the utmost importance, something that could be guaranteed by our acquaintance.

Throughout this dissertation, the participants will consistently be referred to as "identities." Again it concerns a well-considered decision, since what sprung to mind when thinking of these names, was the common thread of a strong sense of identity - or at least, so it seemed. Either affirmative or rather of a debunking nature, the identities' experiences will engage in a dialogue with the theoretical framework on embodiment, in an attempt to make the abstractness of the mere theory more tangible. Not only does this methodology aim to give insight into the elaboration of embodied fashion theory, it equally aspires for the identities to gain insight in their (fashion)identity by how the logbook was drafted.

Terms & conditions

Catalogue culture /'kæt.əl.dʒ 'kʌl.tʃər/ • noun

A philosophy of life driven by sensorial favouritism in which the sense of sight is estimated most commendable, the more sentient share of life therefore side-lined

Sense of touch /sens əv tʌtʃ/ • noun

The ability to feel...

- I. Cutaneous, through contact with the skin
- II. Conscious, through affinity with emotions

Embodiment /ɪm'bɒd.i.mənt/ • noun

An intrapersonal sensation of the (dressed) self, elicited by the alignment of body and mind as well as body and garment

Comfort /'kʌm.fət/ • noun

A feeling of sincere contentment within the (dressed) self, unaffected by external noise

- - - - -

* Wrapping fabric (note: physical copy exclusive)

Deadstock fabric of Dries Van Noten

"Mirroring" the garment starring in the lived experience

* Fingerprints

Courtesy of the identities partaking in the lived experience

Middle finger as a statement to catalogue culture

* Broken glass (note: digital copy exclusive)

Picture courtesy of me, Wonne Scrayen

Taken at Verbeke Foundation (2016)

I. BODY

Final framing: fashioning the (in)animate

THOUGHTS

Fashion seems to have become something we take for granted, dishonouring the eloquence of sensory perception. The relationship we establish with a garment presumes what is generally seen as a subject-object relation, the subject being our body and the object the concerned garment. However, we seem to be out of touch with both components, perceiving our bodies as mere objects as well as losing our literal and figurative sense of fashion. Over time, we seem to have become acquainted with our bodies as inanimate matter, reinforced by our neglect of the animate nature of the clothes adorning the body.

a. Senseless perception

One cannot escape the body, it is the pre-eminently means of existence.⁵⁹ However, the body is not the sole beginning and end; there is more to it than what can be seen with the unaided eye.⁶⁰ Equipped with a sensorial toolkit, the bodily form can be brought to life, the extent to which one senses paramount to the degree of interaction of the body.⁶¹ And since the body is in the world, interactions will take place, which makes the senses invaluable.⁶² Looking at the bigger picture, an interacting body nearly always concerns a clothed body. In turn, the notion of a body is crucial to that of a garment.⁶³ So, it would not make sense to judge either one as an isolated case. Here, fashion arises as the playing field par excellence, with the senses as referee.⁶⁴

To be	↔	To sense
To "body"	↔	To embody

Rationally speaking, one would assume that as humans we can always revert back to our sensory perception. Yet what is envisioned as inherent to human nature, is repeatedly challenged by the mind-body dualism cultivated within our subconscious.⁶⁵ Where we think of ourselves as fully-fledged subjects in tune with our surroundings, often the opposite seems to be true.⁶⁶ From the moment we see the light of day, we are initiated into a societal framework intoxicated by the eloquence of rationality, regardless of its detriment to our intuitional experiences, as if the self obtains a corporeal existence void of neural pathways.⁶⁷ Seemingly unable to escape this sensible society - despite the fact that it has far from anything to do with the senses - we almost

⁵⁹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 141.

⁶⁰ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 14.

⁶¹ Pollice, "Marks of Obsession."

⁶² Pollice, "Marks of Obsession."

⁶³ Entwistle and Wilson, "Introduction: Body Dressing," 1.

⁶⁴ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 79.

⁶⁵ Orbach, *Bodies*, 40-41.

⁶⁶ Kennedy and Strickfaden, "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne."

⁶⁷ Orbach, *Bodies*, 40-41.

seem burdened with the implicit taboo of living as sentient beings.⁶⁸ As aptly articulated by Lucia Ruggerone in "The Feeling of Being Dressed," the discord between mind and body also entails repercussions for the experience of fashion: "Within this dualistic framework, the relationship between people and clothes cannot be regarded as other than an intellectual liaison, in which a thinking agent (a sense-making mind) adorns his/her body (the material, *natural* part of the ego) to give the world an intellectually orchestrated representation of the self. As a consequence of this approach, the meaning of dressing practices gets completely 'torn from the body,' in as much as it is not produced by the event of a body wearing a particular garment, but is rather transferred *onto* the dressed body from outside (the ideas or images in the wearer's mind)."⁶⁹ To reiterate, the mind-body dualism seemingly favours fashion as concept or image over fashion as experience. On behalf of fashion then, sight is estimated as the most rational of all senses, as if the dressed body is merely there to either be looked at or thought about. Preoccupied by a visual aspiration, the experience of fashion is side-lined, outweighed by the ratio of sight.⁷⁰ However, as will be discussed further on, the compatibility of ratio and sight proves to be not so infallible. Ultimately, the mind-body dualism comes down to a polarisation of materiality versus immateriality, the immaterial tissue of the mind as separate from the material carnality of the body.⁷¹ Here again, sight arises as the parameter. The degree of visuality - or lack thereof - is seized to justify the binary thinking in terms of body versus mind. Within New Materialism, a movement characterised by a non-dualist framework, binary language in its entirety was up for discussion.⁷² Under the spell of many dualisms, such as male-female and object-subject among others, fashion proves to be an eligible battlefield to break the binary codes to which we as humans are subject. Ultimately, fashion is about give-and-take between a body and a garment.⁷³ The New Materialist mindset was right then that, to get a sense of fashion for what it truly is, the need arises to distance ourselves from thinking in opposite terms. Garments are therefore approached as not mere static objects worn by a subject, but rather as living matter equal to the subject, or thus the body.⁷⁴

In order to smooth out the folds of this lopsided liaison between body and garment, the body must first be liberated from the clutches of sight. The overvaluation of the visual tarnishes all other senses addressed in fashion, in particular touch.⁷⁵ Even though if one sense were to be distinguished, it would most probably be touch, since the loss of this particular sense is rather rare compared to the other senses.⁷⁶ However, since we are born into a body-oriented culture, an all-round cultivation of the senses would seem to be expected.⁷⁷ Yet it is not the body as a whole that is of interest, but rather the mere shape of it.⁷⁸ Infatuated by the belief of outward appearance as all that matters, one's body experience is stripped of the experience feature, a "senseless" body therefore all that is left. With the visual spectrum as sole talisman, one lacks the sensorial toolkit to connect to the own body. Instead

⁶⁸ Ye, "Not Just 'The Look,'" 19.

⁶⁹ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 579.

⁷⁰ Orbach, *Bodies*, 145.

⁷¹ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 15.

⁷² Smelik, "New Materialism," 38.

⁷³ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 79.

⁷⁴ Smelik, "New Materialism," 39.

⁷⁵ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 216-217.

⁷⁶ Orbach, *Bodies*, 39.

⁷⁷ Orbach, *Bodies*, 72.

⁷⁸ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 77.

of a safe haven to revert back to in times of uncertainty, Susie Orbach argued that the body has become the object of objection: “[V]isual culture has cast our relationship to our body as a place of hyper-criticism.”⁷⁹ Living in what we could call a “catalogue culture” – preoccupied with visuals as explained in the “Terms & conditions” feature – one is deprived of the right of an individual body experience.⁸⁰ Instead, as we can read in *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies*, “[t]he image becomes the body at the expense of the flesh.”⁸¹ Although the image meant by Céline Masson in this instance specifically concerned medical imaging, the statement remains valid even in terms of fashion (imagery). This can be explained because of the high-profile role of ratio when it comes to medical imagery. In a way, the progress we owe to medicine and science simultaneously sets us back in time, the knowledge gained on the inside through imagery lost on the outside, as it were. Both medicine and science operate in a normative discourse, all bodies therefore interpreted in a uniform manner, with imagery as objective measure.⁸² However, the levelling of body and image often subverts medical complaints in terms of the senses.⁸³ Heedless of physical sensations, the diagnosis often is primarily image-based. In other words, medicine reinforces body image as a visual concept, the level of intimacy to the body of minor importance.⁸⁴ That is not to say that ratio should be omitted altogether, not within the medical field nor in day-to-day life; it has its rightful time and place. However, as stated earlier on, ratio and sight are not simply interchangeable.

Rationality / .ræf.ən'æl.ə.ti/ • noun

The quality of being based on clear thought and reason,
or of making decisions based on clear thought and reason⁸⁵

Based on the definition of rationality, sight cannot be justified as the pre-eminently means to a rational end. The explicit call for clearness cannot be reconciled with the nature of seeing as disclosed by Lars Svendsen in *Fashion. A Philosophy*: “Human perception never depicts neutrally, it interprets, and the interpretations depend on people’s perceptual habits: what we see when we look at something depends on what we have seen previously.”⁸⁶ This notion of a coloured perception was also highlighted by Eugenie Shinkle in “Uneasy Bodies: Affect, Embodied Perception, and Contemporary Fashion Photography.”⁸⁷ As humans, we unconsciously spent a lifespan curating a backlog of visual scraps, each and every one unique to its rightful curator. Human perception thus encompasses a predictive tendency based on one’s visual inventory gathered over time.⁸⁸ Despite the fact that no two mental catalogues will ever be the same, there is a uniformity concealed within all of them; since, due to globalism, the difference in terms of imagery around the globe is minor.⁸⁹ Patrizia Calefato therefore rightly

⁷⁹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 69.

⁸⁰ Orbach, *Bodies*, 75.

⁸¹ Céline Masson, “Modified Images of the Body: New Forms of Identity with a Note on the Cadavers of Gunther Von Hagens,” in *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies: Psychoanalytical, Social, Cultural and Aesthetic Perspectives*, ed. Ekaterina Sukhanova and Hans-Otto Thomashoff (New York: Routledge, 2015), 96.

⁸² Masson, “Modified Images of the Body,” 96.

⁸³ Masson, “Modified Images of the Body,” 96.

⁸⁴ Masson, “Modified Images of the Body,” 96.

⁸⁵ “Rationality,” Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/rationality>.

⁸⁶ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 78.

⁸⁷ Shinkle, “Uneasy Bodies.”

⁸⁸ Gundry, “Haptic Aesthetics of Dress,” 247.

⁸⁹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 88.

asked herself the following question: "To what extent do we perceive the clothed body, its form, its beauty, through the already-seen [...]?"⁹⁰ For centuries, a portrayed norm has been whispered into our society, a norm we as humans unconsciously act upon. However, just the fact that the aesthetic norm of today is not the same as what it once was nor what it once will be, brings to light the underlying irrationality of such a norm.⁹¹ A culture so intoxicated by the eloquence of rationality, is thus framed by the judgement of the eye. In *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress and the Body*, Alexandra Warwick and Dani Cavallaro captured the blind spot: "The belief in a single, correct way of seeing, corresponding to a single and likewise correct way of representing is, of course, untenable, since the disembodied eye/I simply does not exist. Vision, however idealised, is necessarily inscribed in contingent material bodies: not to mention the fact that each of a subject's eyes sees *differently*."⁹² In violation of what a norm is supposed to be, the portrayed standard by which society is captivated, turns out to be of a fictitious nature.⁹³ However, despite the undeniable, this does not detract from the credibility of sight as rational sense.⁹⁴ Driven by social persuasiveness, one's judgement of the self is outsourced to a portrayed ideal.⁹⁵ Fiction or not, the promise of a reliable body sustains the normative as an anchor to navigate through life.⁹⁶ However, this soothing promise burdens the own body with even more distrust. By outsourcing one's true feeling to a fictive feeling of representation, "[...] identity is not only shifting, but sometimes impossible," so it seemed to Renato Mattos-Avril and Jean-Michel Vives.⁹⁷ Here, a first parallel can be drawn to the lived experiences, more specifically to the experience of identity J.J. Following excerpt from her logbook clearly alludes to the tendency of substituting "sensing" for doubts rooted in a portrayed norm or standard: "[A]t the beginning of the three-day adventure I was quite soft and gentle for my body, not judging it as much. This was due to the fact that it concerned a new piece of clothing, so I had no point of reference as to how it should fit. Because of this, in my experience, the garment fitted the way it should. When it comes to new clothes, I'm always less hard on my body. Towards the end of the three days, however, I noticed that I became more aware of my body as well as how my body wore the garment. The judgmental part in me slowly reappeared: "Does it still fit the same as three days ago?," "Am I wearing it all right?," "Do I have the right body for this?"⁹⁸

More desirable would be to take a leap of faith and allow ourselves to just feel whatever may come to us, to no longer suppress our feelings in favour of mere appearance. Still, the allusion of reliability often outweighs one's own values. Preoccupied by what others see, we almost perceive our body as a passive possession instead of a "[...] social agent, the lived or sensing body [that] facilitates all of our interactions with other bodies and objects in the world, including the way it is observed and touched by others," as Anna Pollice went about the body in "Marks of

⁹⁰ Patrizia Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, trans. Lisa Adams (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 12.

⁹¹ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 83.

⁹² Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 21.

⁹³ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 83.

⁹⁴ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 83.

⁹⁵ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 19.

⁹⁶ Orbach, *Bodies*, 141.

⁹⁷ Renato Mattos-Avril and Jean-Michel Vives, "From Catharsis to the Cathartic: Toward a Post-Dramatic Theory of Representation," in *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies: Psychoanalytical, Social, Cultural and Aesthetic Perspectives*, ed. Ekaterina Sukhanova and Hans-Otto Thomashoff (New York: Routledge, 2015), 90.

⁹⁸ Jana Jonckheere, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 157.

Obsession.”⁹⁹ However, as Dennis Waskul and Philip Vannini stated, bodies reside in the sphere of both *doing* and *having*.¹⁰⁰ In line with this bodily ambiguity, Patrizia Calefato considered the body simultaneously object and subject, specifying the body here as clothed.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, the presence of an active component tends to be overlooked by the societal disdain of the body as merely rational and corporeal, therefore installing an unjust passiveness within us.¹⁰² With the dismissal of our sensorial capacities comes the sartorial disconnect, an oblivious experience since we seem to be ingrained by the belief that our bodies and minds are in fact aligned.¹⁰³ Throughout the lived experiences, this also shone through in the logbooks of the identities. Not all, but several among them were - and generally are - under the impression that they act from within themselves, whilst both their logging throughout the lived experience as well as some of their answers in the “Interview” and “Review” feature often suggested something different.¹⁰⁴ Broken down by Susan Orbach, it becomes clear that - despite one’s personal conviction - the estrangement from ourselves is what prevails, both on a physical and mental level: “We want to belong - to be inside, not outside, the global story - and the means to enter it is often by taking up its stylistic and visually oriented markers.”¹⁰⁵ As much as she would have liked to deny it, identity M.L. reluctantly admitted that her choices are indeed trend-led. Although she feels like she generally dresses for herself, she did recognise the entanglement of others’ perception in her subconscious.¹⁰⁶ This (unconscious) itch to belong featured even more beautifully in the logbook of identity M.V. When going out for dinner on the second day of living with the garment, she felt very aware of herself, but equally of everyone around her.¹⁰⁷ Because of the forced setting - after all it still concerned a pre-selected garment - this identity was not in a position to be part of the story as she perhaps would have liked to under normal circumstances, unable to take up stylistic and visual markers as described by Orbach.¹⁰⁸ Dressed in an outspoken garment, and very much self-aware of this affair, she noticed the dullness of others.¹⁰⁹ It almost felt as if her appearance caused nuisance in the meticulous stage directions of the evening’s narrative. She herself described it as if the others drew the line of how she could/should feel.¹¹⁰ This, she tried to capture in the double-sidedness of her embodied image (image annex 1-2). She deliberately chose to create a reversible work for the reason that it taps into the garment’s alienating effect/affect on her.¹¹¹ She felt unable to position herself, “[...] like a pawn on the wrong chessboard.”¹¹² Wearing something in which you stand out compared to your surroundings can be daunting enough as is, let alone if you find yourself in such a situation dressed in a garment that feels uncomfortable to you, for whatever reason that may be. Neither feeling at home nor belonging to the global story, the identity’s initial alienation towards the garment was amplified. So, in the process of becoming

⁹⁹ Pollice, “Marks of Obsession.”

¹⁰⁰ Petrov, *Inventing the Display of Dress*, 144.

¹⁰¹ Petrov, *Inventing the Display of Dress*, 151.

¹⁰² Orbach, *Bodies*, 40-41.

¹⁰³ Orbach, *Bodies*, 91-92.

¹⁰⁴ Wonne Scrayen, ed., *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks* (2022).

¹⁰⁵ Orbach, *Bodies*, 88.

¹⁰⁶ Margo Lenaers, “Logbook,” in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 94.

¹⁰⁷ Mirte Vieren, “Logbook,” in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 83.

¹⁰⁸ Orbach, *Bodies*, 88.

¹⁰⁹ Vieren, “Logbook,” 83.

¹¹⁰ Vieren, “Logbook,” 83.

¹¹¹ Vieren, “Logbook,” 87.

¹¹² Vieren, “Logbook,” 87.

acquainted with the piece, she had to surrender to the discomfort of feeling alienated, of not belonging.

Within Postmodernism - the movement that celebrated multiplicity - embodiment was obtained through the performance of the body as one desired it to be.¹¹³ But what would happen if we went back to outright embodiment, to an experience of the self in its purest form, instead of thinking in terms of belonging or desire? In psychoanalytic terms, the self covers two mechanisms: one of desire and one of identification.¹¹⁴ Paraphrasing Freud, Alison Bancroft argued in *Fashion and Psychoanalysis* that "[...] the operation of identification is the wish to be the object, while the operation of desire is the wish to have the object."¹¹⁵

Identification	↔	Desire
To be (the object)	↔	To have (the object)

Whereas Postmodernist thought classified embodiment as merely residing under the process of desire, Freud's interpretation of the self - in terms of desire as well as identification - broadens the action radius of embodiment within the self.¹¹⁶ The happening of embodiment is thus found at the hemisphere of the self, residing in the act of both *being* as well as *having* a body - here a parallel can be drawn with Waskul and Vannini's above-mentioned ambiguity of both *doing* and *having* a body.¹¹⁷ In other words, psychoanalysis complemented the Postmodernist performative element of embodiment with a share of the mind. As keystones for embodiment, body and mind must therefore be realigned in order for true embodiment to occur; the first hurdle to be tackled being the body itself.¹¹⁸ As opposed to our surroundings, for which we do to some extent rely on our senses, the human perception seems to be stilled or in some cases even muted when it comes down to our own physical selves.¹¹⁹ This sensorial restriction holds, as it were, the haptic qualities of fashion hostage. *FASHION(non)SENSE* initiates the possibility of a chain reaction towards revaluing the haptics and affect of fashion, set in motion by an individual return policy to one's self. The premise of this dissertation therefore reads: once body and mind are again realigned, and we thus allow ourselves to engage in a sensorial experience with our garments, this imploded mind-body dualism may even be transcended, giving free rein to an embodied experience of fashion.

¹¹³ Orbach, *Bodies*, 74.

¹¹⁴ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 23.

¹¹⁵ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 23.

¹¹⁶ Orbach, *Bodies*, 74.; Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 23.

¹¹⁷ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 23.; Petrov, *Inventing the Display of Dress*, 144.

¹¹⁸ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 24.

¹¹⁹ Haug, "Touching to See."

b. Self-objectification

As we can read in Céline Masson's contribution to *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies*: "The body of one's dreams is a body 'without' the body, without flesh and its many forms, but 'with' certain prostheses that help it 'be' beautiful."¹²⁰ Here, the body is indeed spoken of in terms of "being," which following on from the above, would seem to imply the mechanism of identification. However, gathered from the accompanying adjective "beautiful," this sense of "being" entails a preoccupation with appearance. So, although moving into the area of identification - the first hurdle of outward desire indeed overcome - it still concerns identification on an outer level. The body does not extend beyond the status of senseless frame to be looked at; no attempt is made to identify oneself with the body and garment as a whole.¹²¹ However, as one of the identities touched upon, fashion can precisely be the measure to counter a bodily focus. Actively trying to evade this focus, what otherwise could spiral to a hyper-focus on the body, identity L.V.L. offset by seizing fashion as "a healthier way to interact with my body and shine more 'light' on the parts of myself that I do love."¹²²

When fashion became more affordable and accessible to the general public - as a result of globalisation - the aura of exclusivity was under threat.¹²³ As a result, the fashion industry seized the body as the next it-bag of the season, marketing a very deliberate silhouette.¹²⁴ To quote Lars Svendsen in *Fashion: A Philosophy*: "Fashion does not actually have to introduce any new object at all; it can just as well deal with what one is *not* wearing, as when it became fashionable *not* to wear a hat."¹²⁵ Briefly returning to the negated ambiguity of both having and doing a body, Svendsen's words can be extrapolated to the mere passive approach of having a body as embedded by the fashion industry, which then would amount to the following: "Fashion does not actually have to introduce any new object at all; it can just as well deal with how one is *not* looking, as when it became *unfashionable* to look a certain way."¹²⁶ Labelling the corporeal existence as a consumer good, clothes were no longer the sole objects ordained by the fashion industry.¹²⁷ This shift enabled a lower threshold towards self-objectification, the instance in which people declare their bodies in terms of appearance over accomplishments.¹²⁸ This precedence clearly came through in the lived experiences. When asked how they perceive and would describe their body, the vast majority of the identities drew from physical qualities. For this exact reason, it was all the more noteworthy when identity M.L. responded with the words "healthy, soft, and feminine."¹²⁹ Nothing more, nothing less. With only one other identity deviating from an appearance driven answer - identity P.R.S. briefly touched upon her gratitude for all she has been able to experience thus far because of her body - appearance seems to be the unmistakable vector of self-perception, paving the

¹²⁰ Masson, "Modified Images of the Body," 97.

¹²¹ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 3.

¹²² Luna Van Laer, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 23.

¹²³ Joanne Entwistle, Caryn Frankling et al., "Fashion Diversity," *Fashion Theory* 23, no.2 (June 2019): 320, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2019.1567065>.

¹²⁴ Entwistle, Frankling et al., "Fashion Diversity," 320-321.

¹²⁵ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 14.

¹²⁶ Petrov, *Inventing the Display of Dress*, 151.

¹²⁷ Saillard, "Shadows of the Body," 201.; Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 76.

¹²⁸ Johnson, Lennon and Rudd, "Dress, Body and Self," 3.

¹²⁹ M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 94.

way for self-objectification.¹³⁰ The estimation of oneself as no more than an object implicitly reinforces the object status clothes are already burdened with.¹³¹ The body we seem to be after is a senseless frame, a thing.¹³²

Food for thought (of Patrizia Calefato)

“Rather than thinking of bodies that have become things, perhaps it would be more interesting to think of things that have become bodies, to think of objects as living bodies of high cultural, ethical and aesthetic definition. And so, to try to bring to life the fashion objects and signs that surround us, in the daily construction of a look, as bodies with which we enter into contact.”¹³³

In fashion imagery - discussed in more detail later on - even more than the clothes, the body seems to be the marketable good.¹³⁴ Under the pretext of selling a certain feeling, the fashion industry may give one the impression of having a sense of self as well as a sense of fashion. However, this is not a sincere sense, since what matters is not how one *feels*, but merely how one *looks*.¹³⁵ The negation of fashion outside the mere physical realm is something Fiona Dieffenbacher also deeply deplored.¹³⁶ In “The Future Body as Ultimate Dress” she explored the notion of what she called the “future body” as the ultimate state of dress, alluding to the post-dead or unclothed body.¹³⁷ Although Dieffenbacher’s predominant religious approach towards fashion studies is not applicable to *FASHION(non)SENSE*, her dismissal of the sheer physicality of embodiment within fashion studies is all the more noteworthy.¹³⁸ Fashion is more than the sum of its parts. A disengaged case study of either body or garment will never be sufficient to grasp the many facets contained within fashion. However redundant this intrinsic stratification may seem, fashion is pervasive in each and everyone’s life, even in the lives of those who consider themselves to be outside of fashion.¹³⁹ Reading between the lines, identity M.L. gained this insight when asked whether or not she would consider herself as someone with a strong sense of self when it comes to her style. Initially, she replied in a negated tone of voice.¹⁴⁰ However, although not that outspoken when it comes to her personal style, she nuanced her answer by saying that “[...] it does help to express myself and I feel better when my outfit fully represents how I want to be seen.”¹⁴¹ Reckoning herself among those who are neither highly fashion-orientated nor fashion-negated, fashion’s share in her life still exceeded her initial expectations.¹⁴² A wardrobe study conducted by Alison Gwilt on the degree of diligence when it comes to taking care of clothes, showed that the emotional attachment with garments also often goes unnoticed to the wearers.¹⁴³ What generally prevails as the main concern is the visual picture.

¹³⁰ Paula Rodriguez Sardiñas, “Logbook,” in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 66.

¹³¹ Fiona Dieffenbacher, “The Future Body as Ultimate Dress,” *BIAS. Journal of Fashion Studies* 7 (May 2020): 75, https://issuu.com/dresspracticecollective/docs/fashion_dealfull.

¹³² Paul Sweetman, “Shop-Window Dummies? Fashion, the Body, and Emergent Socialities,” in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 59.

¹³³ Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, 74.

¹³⁴ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 23.

¹³⁵ Gundry, “Haptic Aesthetics of Dress,” 80.

¹³⁶ Dieffenbacher, “The Future Body,” 75.

¹³⁷ Dieffenbacher, “The Future Body,” 75.

¹³⁸ Dieffenbacher, “The Future Body,” 76.

¹³⁹ McDowell, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 11.; René König, *A la Mode: On the Social Psychology of Fashion*, trans. F. Bradley (New York: The Seabury press, 1973), 52.

¹⁴⁰ M. Lenaers, “Logbook,” 94.

¹⁴¹ M. Lenaers, “Logbook,” 94.

¹⁴² M. Lenaers, “Logbook,” 94.

¹⁴³ Gwilt, “Caring for Clothes,” 878-879.

As verbalised by Peter McNeil, "[...] it is often fashion as 'image' rather than fabricated artefact, whether hand-made, part-crafted or made industrially - from textiles - that is at the forefront."¹⁴⁴ Although brought up in regard to the value of textiles within fashion exhibitions, the widespread predominance of sight over touch resounded in McNeill's words. Because of this imbalance, we have become acquainted with our bodies as inanimate matter that can be moulded according to the meticulously monitored image of a catalogue culture, that is, of that time.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, ever since fashion gained in importance, the image to be met has shifted every so often.¹⁴⁶ Regardless of the time, when engaged in any sort of visual fashion content, the outer manifestation is what - primarily, if not exclusively - takes centre stage.¹⁴⁷ Both the fashioned body and the fashion itself are considered self-contained objects one should strive after.¹⁴⁸ As a result of this declutched fashion, the degree of co-dependency between body and clothes shows cracks, despite generally mentioned in relation to one another.¹⁴⁹ Side-lined by the autocracy of sight over sense - both literally as touch as well as figuratively in terms of feelings - we seem to estimate ourselves as a mere physical presence; a phenomenon the lived experience as previously mentioned testified to. Fashion imagery can manifest itself as a magnifying glass of this phenomenon.¹⁵⁰ However, the "performance" of oneself confined within visual borders, is a psychoanalytic matter to begin with.¹⁵¹

For psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, the seed to this self-diminishing perception is planted from the very moment we face our own reflection.¹⁵² Up until our first encounter with a mirror, our sense of self is "selfless" as it were - selfless as in visually unfamiliar, not (yet) with a self. Lacan designated this as "the mirror stage" - *le stade du miroir* - a defining moment all humans will have to endure for the purpose of realising their existence in the world.¹⁵³ The first glance in a mirror evokes a tendency towards self-identification one cannot possibly fight nor should fight for that matter; it entails a crucial stage in the process of constituting oneself as an existing subject.¹⁵⁴ Prior to the visual unveiling of the self, one's perception of the self solely consists of fragmented experiences that are anything but visually adequate. During childhood - the stage of life generally associated with the happening of the mirror stage - our sensory perception draws up our sense of self-perception, with touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste acting as the feelers.¹⁵⁵ However, contrary to the above-mentioned societal cultivation of sight over touch, sight here seems to be only partially cultivated. Up to the mirror stage, we are deprived of the sight of our own gaze. Concealed within the reflection via an external medium (the mirror), we can literally capture the missing piece to complete the "self-puzzle."¹⁵⁶ However, as swiftly as this unified experience of oneself occurred, the

¹⁴⁴ Borkopp-Restle, McNeil et al., "Museums and the Making of Textile Histories," 45.

¹⁴⁵ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 76.

¹⁴⁶ Saillard, "Shadows of the Body," 191.

¹⁴⁷ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 76.

¹⁴⁸ Saillard, "Shadows of the Body," 201.

¹⁴⁹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 79.; Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 77.; Rachel Kinnard, review of *Fashioning the Body: An Intimate History of the Silhouette*, by Denis Bruna at the Bard Graduate Center, New York, *Fashion Projects*, April 20, 2015, <https://www.fashionprojects.org/blog/5045>.

¹⁵⁰ Emma McClendon, "The Body: Fashion and Physique - A Curatorial Discussion," *Fashion Theory* 23, no.3 (July 2019): 156, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2019.1603856>.

¹⁵¹ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 15.

¹⁵² Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 15.

¹⁵³ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 15.

¹⁵⁴ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 15.

¹⁵⁵ Pollice, "Marks of Obsession."

¹⁵⁶ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 24.

swifter it is again shattered. Within a span of a split-second, our experience of the self diverges from fragmented to unified, to collapsed and disjointed at last; the reason being that a child - convinced of being engaged in the self - is actually immersed in a mere reflection of the self.¹⁵⁷ We do not face our embodied double as such, but rather what Lucy Gundry specified as our "aesthetic double."¹⁵⁸ Indeed, one can now put a face to the lived-in body as well as grasp the body as the sum of all its parts.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the emerging alienation of oneself outshines the novelty of this sense of wholeness.¹⁶⁰ Through the mirror, we continuously negotiate our existence in the world as subjects: "[...] the mirror stage, once it occurs, does not stop occurring but becomes fundamental to the ongoing constitution and maintenance of the self."¹⁶¹ So, we could state that the mirror stage is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, in front of the mirror one is endowed with an overall picture of the self. On the other hand, that same one's sense of self as a unified subject immediately seems to tarnish once restrained from the visual recognition offered by the mirror. From the mirror stage onwards, we seem conditioned to mainly think of ourselves in visual terms, as if the "self" is only worthy when associated with an external manifestation: "The visual is privileged in the construction of the ego, and the mirror stage is the interface between image, identity and identification."¹⁶²

In a way then, with visibility and subjectivity at its core, fashion imagery can be understood in terms of the mirror stage, both offering what seems to be a credible image.¹⁶³ Seemingly, since neither can endure the disseminated image of a unified subject, but rather condemn us to the quality of "[...] a passive participant in visual currency."¹⁶⁴ Both mirror and fashion imagery employ the body as a surface without senses, the visual judgement of oneself in the mirror stage only magnified in the handling with fashion imagery.¹⁶⁵ But what tends to be forgotten when dealing with images is the quality of affect.¹⁶⁶ Even when unnoticed by many, an image is never devoid of affect. Here a link can be made with Lucy Gundry's "body problem" in fashion exhibitions.¹⁶⁷ Concerned with the question of haptics in the exhibition context, Gundry diagnosed the dress-body relation as "[...] one that is missing a 'self.'"¹⁶⁸ Even though in fashion imagery the mannequin is replaced by a living mannequin, the absence of a "self" remains. In the conversion from initial recording to final image, the body in front of the camera seems to fold into a flat surface, just as is the case with one's reflection in the mirror. The image one is presented with - whether as image or reflection - seemingly stripped of the self. So, going from three-dimensional to two-dimensional, the self-dimension is omitted. In other words, the visual is captured at the expense of the sentient. Or is it? As Eugenie Shinkle rightly stated in *Uneasy Bodies*: "Affect is a medium rather than a message - a dynamic modality by which new sensibilities and thought patterns make their way into representation. More than simply an accessory to meaning, affect is the 'force of

¹⁵⁷ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 24.

¹⁵⁸ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 95.

¹⁵⁹ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 95.

¹⁶⁰ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 24.

¹⁶¹ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 15.

¹⁶² Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 25.

¹⁶³ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 16.

¹⁶⁴ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 16.

¹⁶⁵ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

¹⁶⁶ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

¹⁶⁷ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 41.

¹⁶⁸ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 41.

potentiality' that brings life to representation. Affect animates, it fills signification; it is 'that which is imperceptible but whose escape from perception cannot but be perceived, as long as one is alive.'¹⁶⁹ So although the self may seem filtered out of the image, the image actually acts as a (visual) relic of the self's sentience. However, since it is non-compliant to the rational nature of society, it requires commitment to experience images beyond the mere visual, a view shared with Shinkle: "Fashion, by some accounts, exists only in the form of the image. Fashion photography, for its part, is said to treat the body as a semantic surface rather than a sensual object: 'a non-body that only exists as a constantly updated simulacrum.' The colonisation and privileging of the visual by fashion and the fashion media can be understood in the context of late modernity, and the specialisation of the senses as a political force designed to homogenise and normalise individual bodies. By re-functioning the senses individually, as utilitarian instruments, modernity sets aside the synaesthetic character of perception in order to accommodate it more easily within official and institutional narratives."¹⁷⁰ Without prior knowledge of Shinkle's words, identity V.V. unconsciously articulated the author's view in the notes on her embodied image. She anticipated the idea of transcending whatever is deemed right or wrong, to then be rewarded with the true experience of dress.¹⁷¹ According to this identity, in order to experience fashion for the phenomenon it is, one should be open to crossing all borders.¹⁷² She favours abundance over colouring within the confined lines, always.¹⁷³ Indeed, the abundance addressed by this identity still corresponds to a visual look. However, it concerns a mutual abundance between the garments, without mention of the body as the main character. So although the visual has a fair share in terms of the creation of what she called "a visual feast," fashion is given a fair chance to be sensed beyond the mere visual.¹⁷⁴ Precisely by breaking all visual boundaries, someone's initial (low) expectations could be exceeded beyond what was ever imagined possible. At the verge of being visually untenable, the experience of fashion reveals itself.¹⁷⁵ Whereas before deemed excessive, the visual abundance now seems to fall into its fold. Or as aptly captured by the identity: "[...] you can no longer grasp it, only experience."¹⁷⁶ For her embodied image (image annex 3-5) she therefore chose to break the two-dimensional boundaries of the surface, just like she generally aims to break the visual boundaries of fashion.¹⁷⁷ The proclaimed sensorial experience of fashion, she then transposed to her embodied image by addressing the third dimension. The convex strips of paper used for this spatial "eruption" fragment the underlying format of fashion imagery as we generally know it. The normative body-garment dimension is thus still brought into the embodied image yet withheld by the identity's added value of spatiality. Shredded to pieces, as it were, the conventional picture format of her looks is hidden from view; the viewer is therefore almost forced to omit the visual support and surrender to the senses. The identity's approach to both fashion as well as fashion imagery is thus

¹⁶⁹ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

¹⁷⁰ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

¹⁷¹ Véronique Vandriessche, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 15.

¹⁷² Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

¹⁷³ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

¹⁷⁴ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

¹⁷⁵ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

¹⁷⁶ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

¹⁷⁷ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

loud and clear: "It's about the sensation; explaining or deciphering is not necessary."¹⁷⁸ However, the power of the (rational) gaze silences - or in some cases even mutes - one's perception of the physical self beyond a non-visual sensory level.¹⁷⁹ What one lacks in terms of sensorial self-awareness, one will therefore most probably also fall short when it comes to sensorial awareness in images.

To perceive an image	≠	seeing + reading
To perceive an image	=	seeing + reading + feeling ¹⁸⁰

This sensorial restriction holds, as it were, the haptic and affective qualities of fashion hostage. Therefore, *FASHION(non)SENSE* precisely makes a plea for the implementation of an embodied dimension to fashion imagery. Set in motion by an individual return policy to one's body, the aim is to initiate a chain reaction towards revaluing the affect and haptics of fashion, with sensorial trust in the body as that which needs to be regained. The lived experience tied to this dissertation was set up to trigger the senses in order to restore the balance in favour of the experience of fashion, whether positive or negative. To experience embodiment, one must omit the visual currency, transcending the body as mere surface outline.¹⁸¹ Recapitulated by Susie Orbach: "We need to be able to experience our diverse bodies, in the varied ways we decorate and move them, as a source of taken-for-granted pleasure and celebration. We need bodies sufficiently stable to allow us moments of bliss and adventure when, sure that they exist, we can then take leave of them."¹⁸² By expanding both body and mind beyond the suppression of the senses, what is considered significant by society makes way for what is significant to the self. On the second day of the lived experience, identity L.V.L. logged the thought of the garment as perhaps being "too much."¹⁸³ Somehow aware of not seeing the wood for the trees anymore, she almost immediately collected and rectified her thoughts by honouring her authentic self. The silent force of this self-reflection shone through in her verdict on the second day of living with the garment: "I dress myself for myself and not for others and their opinions."¹⁸⁴ The significance one attributes to what can - or in hindsight of how catalogue culture operates, should - be seen/read, therefore exchanged for the sensation of what can be felt.¹⁸⁵ Ultimately - in pursuit of embodiment - *FASHION(non)SENSE* aims to push the narrow-minded boundaries of fashion imagery, and in the process not only validate the body but equally the garment.

Despite fashion's prevailing aesthetic nature, Lacan himself already identified it as a medium to counteract the alienated self-experience triggered by the mirror image.¹⁸⁶ Side-lining the authority and eloquence of fashion photography, there would be something to say for Lacan's view on fashion. As an isolated matter, dress is a multisensorial practice through which one can tune in to the self, however, fashion is far from an isolated matter.¹⁸⁷ Because of the roll-out of fashion imagery as we

¹⁷⁸ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

¹⁷⁹ Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."

¹⁸⁰ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

¹⁸¹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 78 and 145.

¹⁸² Orbach, *Bodies*, 145.

¹⁸³ Van Laer, "Logbook," 26.

¹⁸⁴ Van Laer, "Logbook," 26.

¹⁸⁵ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

¹⁸⁶ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 25.

¹⁸⁷ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 444.

know it, instead of seizing fashion as a way to tune in with ourselves, we are more inclined to match our so-called "selves" up to the images presented to us. In turn, the fashion system contributes to the already initiated alienation of the self. Remarkably enough, we seem to not only be affected by the fashion system in how we express ourselves, but equally by our inner circle. As it showed in some of the lived experiences, often it is the environment that points out the fact one does not look like oneself, as if the identity cannot determine solely for oneself what that "self-look" might mean. Several identities faced the wondering gazes of their inner circle, followed by the subsequent question as to why they looked different than usual. A recurring theme throughout the logbooks, this "accountability demand" almost seemed to be a natural reaction when confronted with a (slight) deviation in someone's appearance. And although none of the inquirers had bad intentions, their questioning was not as innocent as it may seem, since it can pose a danger to the integrity of the identity's self. The mere prospect of appearing different than usual can cause strain on one's open-mindedness when it comes to an "odd" or "alien" garment, therefore writing off the possibility of true embodiment. Upon receiving compliments, identity P.R.S. even felt compelled to justify the garment as not hers, as if anticipating the "accountability demand" she expected to be faced with. This predictive tendency of potential questioning looks of others can thus act as a sort of self-sabotage in the process of tuning in with oneself. Due to the forced setting with a pre-selected garment - therefore automatically more aware of both his physical and dressed self - identity E.V.d.H. noticed himself zooming out to the perspective of others.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, he felt a certain urge to ask others to describe him in the garment.¹⁸⁹ In other words, he almost felt compelled to angle for (self)reassurance, to ensure his "self" still shone through.

Neither in the mirror nor in fashion imagery one is faced with an adequate image to constitute the self as it could be, namely an entity in its own right.¹⁹⁰ The exposure to fashion imagery - a global stream of common imagery for that matter - instils in us a concept of what our body could, and therefore - "catalogue culture-minded" - should be.¹⁹¹ Reminded by the mirror of our body as *it is* instead of *as it should be* - that is, according to catalogue culture - we are all the more convinced of our body as flawed and inadequate.¹⁹² No longer guided by our innate bodily senses, fashion imagery seems to take the better of us. Endorsed by Lucia Ruggerone, this mind-body disconnect is what "[...] shapes the description of our relationship with clothes as mainly intellectual and our choices of garments as the result of a dialogue within our minds."¹⁹³ As pointed out by Aurélie Van de Peer, getting dressed - and by extension being dressed - morphs into something calculated: "Through the cognitive act of judging your outfit in the mirror, you look at yourself from a distance, but forget to sense how these clothes actually feel on your body and how this, in turn, impacts your experience of the self."¹⁹⁴ Fully immersed in a system that gives us finished objects which imply a focus on the "look," we are susceptible to the social

¹⁸⁸ Edgar Van den Heede, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 58.

¹⁸⁹ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 58.

¹⁹⁰ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 16.; Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration."

¹⁹¹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 73.

¹⁹² Orbach, *Bodies*, 73.

¹⁹³ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 573-574.

¹⁹⁴ Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration."

bias of look over feel, or thus of sight over touch.¹⁹⁵ Enclosed in *Women in Clothes*, Margaux Williamson's nineteenth statement of "How to Dress in Our New World" therefore rightly affirmed: "Mirrors are for amateurs. [...] We can use our bodies to feel what's happening."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Gill and Lopes, "On Wearing," 312.

¹⁹⁶ Heti, Julavits and Shapton, *Women in Clothes*, 247.

To remind. . .

Fashion + the body ≠ isolated matters

Mind-body dualism ⇔ fashion as experience

Ratio ≠ sight

Fictive ideal > one's feelings [**UNJUSTLY**]

Body // mind = true embodiment

Globalisation => body > garment

Fashion ≠ body + garment

= body // garment

Image > artefact ≈ sight > touch [**UNJUSTLY**]

Image perception = seeing + reading + feeling

From shell to subject: the sentient conscience

THOUGHTS

The question arises whether we can restore this being "out of touch" - both literally and figuratively - with fashion. By firstly paving the way to a reconnection with our individual bodies as worthy entities, the visual preoccupation within fashion imagery could be exceeded. Meaning we no longer consider our physical frame as a mere shell, but rather grant it the right to exist as a fully-fledged subject.

a. Disembodied consciousness

Shell /ʃel/ • noun

The hard outer covering of something¹⁹⁷

Subject /səb'dʒekt/ • noun

A thinking or feeling entity; the conscious mind; the ego¹⁹⁸

Overcoming the object status of clothing compels a reevaluation of the body as subject as opposed to sheer shell. However, the body as "matter" does encapsulate both a material as well as an embodied existence. Susan Kaiser's notion of "minding appearances" profoundly captured this twofold nature, grasping the mental as well as the physical aspect of dressing.¹⁹⁹ For this, she drew from Entwistle's narrative of dress as a "situated bodily practice," acting as a threshold between the body and the external world.²⁰⁰ The embodied image of identity M.L. revolved around this border zone taken on by clothes (image annex 6-9). For this, she wrote a poem using the metaphor of curtains, as a shield between inside and outside.²⁰¹ To her, both clothes as well as the body adorned by those clothes act as one's personal shielding barrier: "You can shield yourself from the world, hide certain aspects of yourself, but sometimes it pays to let others in. [...] Closed curtains can be misleading, presenting things more beautifully than they are (or vice versa). Therefore, to me, it seems worthwhile for some to open those curtains, even if only ajar."²⁰² From the point of view of this dissertation, I would argue to nuance this "letting in of others" by first and foremost letting oneself in. What is alluded to here is not to shut the curtains for others, but rather not to let others in just so they can interfere with one's sense of self. Opening the curtains for oneself can therefore be seen as corresponding to tuning in with oneself. In a way then, clothes should revel in this shielding quality, in the sense that it could act as a safeguard mechanism for oneself, a rebound almost for opinions and looks coming from the outside world. This nuance, however, is not a look of disdain on this identity's metaphor of curtains. Rather, it is a refinement in light of the knowledge obtained throughout this dissertation. Perhaps, a golden mean can be found in the shape of a mesh curtain, still there to shield the self of undue interference yet open to constructive and worthwhile interaction.

¹⁹⁷ "Shell," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/shell>.

¹⁹⁸ "Subject," Lexico, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/subject>.

¹⁹⁹ Susan Kaiser, "Minding Appearances: Style, Truth, and Subjectivity," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 79.

²⁰⁰ Kaiser, "Minding Appearances," 79.

²⁰¹ M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 101.

²⁰² M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 101.

In turn, Todd Robinson enriched the research of embodiment within the field of fashion studies by differentiating "pose" from what he stated as "poise."²⁰³ This slight yet significant nuance stresses the "[...] sartorial movement, temporality, and the interactions of the body that transpire at a micro-corporeal level."²⁰⁴ He disregarded the representational tunnel vision subjugating fashion, and instead understood dress as a non-static practice appealing to sensations invisible to the unaided eye.²⁰⁵ The human conscience is always there, however, as humans we have been taught to favour reason over sentience, therefore denying ourselves - albeit unconsciously - the experience of sartorial embodiment.²⁰⁶ This brings us back to Waskul and Vannini's above-mentioned statement of the body as - for lack of a better word - something we *do* as well as *have*.²⁰⁷ As stated, the allusion to the body as "something" does not cover the load as presented in this dissertation. The verb "to incorporate" - junction of the prefix *in* and the Latin *corpus* - itself seems to suggest the existence of substance beyond the manifestation of the body as "shell." As corporeal beings - mind the tonal resonance with the previously mentioned verb "to incorporate" - we experience both an internal as well as an external sense of being, but also of "becoming," a term first coined by New materialist voices Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.²⁰⁸ Anneke Smelik, profound for her enlightenment on Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy applied to fashion, commenced the tenth chapter of *Thinking through Fashion* with the following words courtesy of Deleuze and Guattari: "The self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities."²⁰⁹ As clarified by Simon O'Sullivan, "[b]ecoming is about creating alliances or encounters, not only with other living beings but also with art, fashion or popular culture."²¹⁰ This is closely related to Otto von Busch' parallel between fashion and love songs, in which he substantiated fashion as "[...] not a thing, it is not bound to clothes or goods, but it is a place you go, an emotional space you enter inside yourself and another. Fashion is a pleasure, a feeling of growth in between bodies as their emotional sensorium reach out, touch, play, and embrace."²¹¹ To attune body and mind in such a way to "become" - within *FASHION(non)SENSE* understood as an encounter with fashion - one must appeal to the animate and inanimate agency of the body, and thus address and acknowledge the emerging intimacy between body and garment.²¹² As such, Von Busch' "Love Songs" can be read as a plea for the bare necessity of sensorial perception: "To understand fashion as an emotional phenomenon of deep interpersonal connection, we should perhaps not only look to mood boards and fashion magazines but turn the search towards our own bodies, desires, and emotional journeys. We must start to understand fashion from the emotive agency of the body, from the draped soundtracks of our burning desires."²¹³ Not only did he pinpoint the overvaluation of fashion as a visual phenomenon, he also illuminated the capacity of fashion to tap into our very core, in a similar vein as music can accomplish by means of sound. Based on his emblematic parallel between music and fashion, Von Busch would most probably be

²⁰³ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 452-453.

²⁰⁴ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 453.

²⁰⁵ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 443.

²⁰⁶ Orbach, *Bodies*, 58.

²⁰⁷ Petrov, *Inventing the Display of Dress*, 144.

²⁰⁸ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 167.

²⁰⁹ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 165.

²¹⁰ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 167.

²¹¹ Von Busch, "Love Songs."

²¹² Kawamura, *Fashion-ology*, 14.

²¹³ Von Busch, "Love Songs."

touched by the commitment to embodied submersion of identity L.V.L. Guided by a carefully selected playlist whilst getting dressed - fitting with her mood - this identity did not only assemble her outfits, she also assembled the desire of her "self" concealed within both music and fashion which Von Busch so diligently strived for.²¹⁴ Subsequently, for the elaboration of her embodied image, she matched the paint colour palette to how she felt when wearing the garment, and thus to the corresponding musical flow of each day.²¹⁵ Music acted as a guideline to her embodiment. But, however natural the sensorial disclosure of music, all the more suppressed is our sensory perception on a sartorial level. In order to reclaim the latter, a comprehensive cultivation of our senses is key, in particular of our sense of touch.²¹⁶ This lack of sensorial instigation also shone through in the "Preview" feature of the logbooks. Asked to jot down their initial feelings when confronted with the garment, most identities reported on what they saw.²¹⁷ With a few exceptions here and there, their answers mostly echoed the sense of sight.²¹⁸ By analogy with the saying "to judge a book by its cover," the identities judged the garment (mainly) by its appearance. The garment's bold colourway and graphic checker design - the two most recurring mentions throughout all logbooks - may have had something to do with this. Besides sight, the sense of touch was indeed addressed as they unwrapped the garment. However, there was hardly any reflex among the identities to touch the garment for its tactility. So, how they felt towards the garment was mainly based on how they *visually* perceived it, even though the "Interview" feature of several identities took special notice of the *feeling* aspect when choosing and/or wearing clothes.²¹⁹ Within the "Review" feature, identity L.V.L. brought up that she did in fact engage with the garment beyond the visible: "One of the things I noticed when looking at the garment for the first time, was that I liked how it felt and how soft the fabric was."²²⁰ However, the "Preview" feature of her logbook did not take note of this tangible act.

Throughout this dissertation - and as accounted for in the "Terms & conditions" feature - touch is nuanced as both a literal and figurative sense, a refinement Lucy Gundry also included in her dissertation *Haptic Aesthetics of Dress in the Contemporary Exhibition Space*.²²¹ Literally speaking, touch as sense alludes to a physical act - articulated by Gundry as "a cutaneous experience" - whereas the phrase "to be touched by something or someone" is not entangled with the physical body as such.²²² Here, it concerns the metaphorical sense of touch, to be moved by emotions. As an act, this particular sense of touch takes place on the level of the consciousness, rather than on the surface of the skin. Gundry's distinct terminology therefore covered this particular experience of dress as *conscious* instead of *cutaneous*.²²³ Concerned with the question of haptics in the exhibition context, there is no doubt of Gundry's casting of touch - in both senses of the word - in the lead role. *Haptic Aesthetics of Dress* and *FASHION(non)SENSE* thus share a similar vision. In both cases the objective is to trigger the wearer's consciousness, with the senses

²¹⁴ Van Laer, "Logbook," 31.

²¹⁵ Van Laer, "Logbook," 31.

²¹⁶ Haug, "Touching to See."

²¹⁷ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

²¹⁸ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

²¹⁹ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

²²⁰ Van Laer, "Logbook," 29.

²²¹ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 22.

²²² Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

²²³ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

as common ground.²²⁴ However, there is a compelling contrast between both, instigated by the difference in context: the exhibition space versus the intrapersonal. The wearing consciousness Gundry was after was still very much rooted in the visual: "[...] I focus on the relationship between dress, body and self, and how this develops as a cutaneous and conscious experience of pulling dress onto my body to form a *wearing self-awareness* in the mirror."²²⁵ So, in order to cultivate a sense of self in the practice of getting dressed, Gundry took a visual detour, whereas *visuality* was the offside actor within *FASHION(non)SENSE*. As intermediate, to Gundry the mirror is there to enhance one's self-awareness in the physical act of dress with a visual registration alike. With a fair share of the sense of touch, Gundry's narrative of the wearing consciousness is indeed not solely stipulated by *visuality*. Still, the visual is always involved. Herein lies the main difference with the lived experience enclosed in *FASHION(non)SENSE*, which from the outset intended to push through to outright embodiment without any visual nuisance. Because of how the lived experience and the accompanying logbook were set up, hardly any - if not to say no - airtime was allocated to the visual registration of the identities nor their chosen outfits. As such, there was little interference from visuals to feelings. Ruling out the most obvious route of visual disclosure of both oneself and one's chosen outfit(s) was a very deliberate choice. Going the extra mile, *FASHION(non)SENSE* omitted visuals, and instead drew the feeling card. What mattered is what came to mind (and body) during the three-day encounter with the garment, visual images of the dressed self merely a possible by-product. There was no requirement of visual avoidance of the self to participate in the experiment, meaning that the identities were not asked to consciously avoid their own image. However, they were explicitly asked to reflect on what they sensed, to then create an image based on their particular sensation(s) - singular or plural depending on one's particular experience. So, there was indeed a visual component attached to the lived experience, albeit one characterised by visual abstraction of both body and garment. The final images all comply with the visual in their choice of medium, however, they act as a superlative given the missing link to fashion imagery as we know it, in which the body "[...] has often been conceived of as a hanger or peg for clothing."²²⁶ Notes on the submitted images will be discussed throughout the dissertation.

To come back to Gundry's dissertation, *FASHION(non)SENSE* sides with the premise that "[...] a wearer develop[s] a *wearing consciousness* through the haptic aesthetics of dress when it is worn on their own body [...]"²²⁷ Within *FASHION(non)SENSE*, that translates to the (re)alignment of body and mind in the best interest of true embodiment. However, the like-mindedness between both theses slightly faded as the premise progressed that "[...] this *wearing consciousness* allows the wearer to experience a *wearing empathy* when viewing not-worn dress exhibits in the exhibition."²²⁸ The dissonance between both is not a matter of scepticism towards Gundry's thesis, but rather the result of a difference in nature of the intended embodiment, namely the exhibition space versus the intrapersonal. Gundry's *Haptic*

²²⁴ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 4.

²²⁵ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

²²⁶ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 3.

²²⁷ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

²²⁸ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

Aesthetics of Dress instigated one's embodiment to then be projected outside of oneself, whereas *FASHION(non)SENSE* consciously circles back to one's very own embodiment. Throughout *FASHION(non)SENSE*, there runs the belief that by tuning in to the feeling agency, one will be (all the more) inclined to unfold oneself from physical shell to authentic subject. As Shahidha Bari addressed: "The anxiety of authenticity is never far away from dress. We seek clothes that 'are us,' and there is an implicit insolence in the ready-to-wear, off-the-rail garments we rifle through, that unsettle us in suggesting that our precise measurements might be generic, predictable and average."²²⁹ Intriguing to note, was how the authenticity merit manifested itself in the lived experience of identity P.R.S. Since, although she felt overwhelmed by the "anxiety of authenticity" spoken of by Bari, her anxiety provoking experience did not stem from the confrontation with a generic garment. Rather, it seemed as if the boldness and uniqueness of the particular garment affected her "self," saturated by "unauthenticity" almost.²³⁰ So on the second day - after much trial and error - she made the conscious decision to take off the garment by virtue of discrediting her authentic self.²³¹ So, although she may not have reached embodiment in the sense of feeling comfortable in the pre-selected garment, the fact that she took off the garment - having tuned in with her authentic self - vouched for her embodied self-epiphany. In other words, embodiment for her was to own up to the fact of not feeling herself instead of feeling forced to comply with what she felt was expected from her.

Allowing oneself to be open to sartorial embodiment as intended in the lived experience, implies opening oneself up to an exceptionally internal - therefore particular - experience, the expiration date of interchangeability passed, so to speak. At this point, the possibility of a dimension beyond the one of fashion as visual belonging arises, a dimension we can access through our ability to feel - both literally and figuratively. By way of sensing this dimension, the intimacy under threat of being lost by "[g]rounding identity in a reference to the image and the visible [...]" is back within reach.²³² In a frantic attempt to express identity, identity itself is often impersonated.²³³ Allowing ourselves to sense the intimacy between body and garment, grants us with a one-of-a-kind experience, a unique sensation not intended to be discerned outside one's own embodiment. Whereas Gundry's wearing empathy anticipated a recall of one's own embodiment when dealing with clothes in an exhibition context, wearing empathy in the instance of *FASHION(non)SENSE* is to be understood as more of an intrapersonal process - a turning inwards, unsusceptible to visual nuisance.²³⁴ Here, Renato Mattos-Avril and Jean-Michel Vives' take on Aristotle's catharsis in *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies* can be brought into the fold.²³⁵

²²⁹ Bari, "What Do Clothes Say?."

²³⁰ Rodriguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 69.

²³¹ Rodriguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 69.

²³² Angélique Christaki, "Body and Identity: Objects of Redemption in Today's Unrest," in *Body Image and Identity in Contemporary Societies: Psychoanalytical, Social, Cultural and Aesthetic Perspectives*, ed. Ekaterina Sukhanova and Hans-Otto Thomashoff (New York: Routledge, 2015), 19.

²³³ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 19.

²³⁴ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

²³⁵ Mattos-Avril and Vives, "From Catharsis to the Cathartic," 87.

Catharsis /kəˈθɑːsɪs/ • noun

The process of releasing strong emotions through a particular activity or experience [...] in a way that helps you to understand those emotions²³⁶

In a theatrical context as meant by Aristotle, catharsis emerges the very moment the body and mind meet, however, not by what one sees as much as by what one hears.²³⁷ Within psychoanalysis, this sparked Freud's measure of "the dismissal of the gaze for the benefit of listening."²³⁸ Drawing from both Aristotle as well as the field of psychoanalysis, *FASHION(non)SENSE* states that sartorial catharsis emerges in the (re)alignment of body and mind, not by what one sees but by what one senses, or "the dismissal of the gaze for the benefit of sensing."²³⁹ According to Aristotle, granting privilege to the visual dimension is to withdraw oneself from "the field of art and aesthetic delight."²⁴⁰ What he meant by this is that the art of theatre does not owe all its splendour to what can be seen on stage. Likewise, the art of dressing is not (solely) bound to what can be seen. In both instances, the visual dimension is of minor importance. Ultimately - to put it in a theatre-like manner - the intimacy between body and garment is what makes for the sartorial spectacle; a particular sought-after image should be out of the equation.²⁴¹ The art of dress should not be about the body as dressed, but rather what the dressed body is about. The nuance here lies in the sound sequence: "the dressed body" acting as a unity, as opposed to the more descriptive nature of "the body as dressed," which already in the wording incites a form of visualisation. Giving sensation the benefit of the doubt, body and garment are given the opportunity of *becoming* a unity, based on an inward rather than an outward concern. In other words, the act of dress should not revolve around one's physical silhouette, however, practice shows that often this is still the case.

²³⁶ "Catharsis," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/catharsis>.

²³⁷ Mattos-Avril and Vives, "From Catharsis to the Cathartic," 87.

²³⁸ Mattos-Avril and Vives, "From Catharsis to the Cathartic," 88.

²³⁹ Mattos-Avril and Vives, "From Catharsis to the Cathartic," 87-88.

²⁴⁰ Mattos-Avril and Vives, "From Catharsis to the Cathartic," 89.

²⁴¹ Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration."

b. Out-of-body experience

The attention span for affect in fashion (imagery) seems virtually non-existent.²⁴² Rather, the narrative is supervised by a visual attention span, focusing on how clothes make someone look rather than how they can make someone feel.²⁴³ Looking at fashion images, the mind tends to absorb the image rather than the feeling of the body in the garment. Irrespective of the outlet one turns to for the consumption of fashion content, the outer manifestation is what - primarily if not exclusively - takes centre stage. One's gaze is thus hardly ever reciprocated by an embodied representation of fashion. Ranging from shop windows and magazine editorials to the more recent phenomenon of fashion exhibitions, fashion seems to be trapped in a static corsage, stripped of its animate nature.²⁴⁴ So, if one did want to conceptualise embodied fashion, one is left to their own devices. The threshold is thus anything but lowered, since it may take a lot of resilience to let the eye wander off in favour of the yet unknown territory of affect, which clearly showed in some of the lived experiences. Off to a rough start, several identities attested to this balancing act, unsure how to strike a balance between the anchoring effect of the norm and a leap of faith into the unknown of affect.²⁴⁵ After all, one is supposed to stray away from what is displayed as the (one and only) norm.

Norm /nɔ:m/ • noun

An accepted standard, or a way of behaving
or doing things that most people agree with²⁴⁶

Indeed, living by the norm can feel imperative. It is, however, possible to redefine and even to reinvent the norm. Going by the definition, no mention is made of a commitment to the norm. In the instance of fashion, the only commitment one should be concerned with is the mutual commitment from body to garment. But although we reside *inside* our body, the mind-body dualism makes us more inclined to an *out-of-body* experience. The initial commissioning of mannequins fortified this inherently unattuned nature of man, causing even more interference to what already was a balancing act to begin with.²⁴⁷ As mannequins began to be used in fashion exhibitions and department stores in the nineteenth century, people began to create a duality between their own bodies and those of the mannequins. The precarious balance between body and self was thus even further exacerbated. The three-dimensional manifestation of the body through the use of mannequins to some extent nullified the physicality that comes into play when dressing, therefore facilitating a helicopter view of oneself.²⁴⁸ However, it concerns a perspective not of oneself but rather of what one internalises as the self they are supposed to portray according to the norm. Mannequins - whether in shops, editorials or exhibitions - do not live up to the expectation of the lived-

²⁴² Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 586.

²⁴³ Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration."

²⁴⁴ Ingrid Mida, "The Enchanting Spectacle of Fashion in the Museum," *Catwalk: The Journal of Fashion, Beauty and Style* 4, no.2 (2015): 47, https://www.academia.edu/40681255/The_Enchanting_Spectacle_of_Fashion_in_the_Museum.; Ellen Sampson, review of *Present Imperfect: Disorderly Apparel Reconfigured*, by Amy de la Haye and Jeff Horsley at the Fashion Space Gallery, London, *Fashion Studies Journal*, September 18, 2018, <https://www.fashionstudiesjournal.org/reviews-2/2017/7/31/present-imperfect-nzx12?rq=jeff%20horsley>.

²⁴⁵ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

²⁴⁶ "Norm," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/norm>.

²⁴⁷ David, "Body Doubles."

²⁴⁸ David, "Body Doubles."

in body. Or better, the lived-in body does not live up to the expectations of fashion mannequins. At least, that is what catalogue culture wants us to believe, to then act accordingly. What perhaps came from good intentions, seemed to backfire in the long run. Where mannequins once were useful tools, they soon became a directive, setting a precedent to the eyes directed at them.²⁴⁹ In recent times, there has been a curatorial shift towards rendering the mannequin to a minimum presence.²⁵⁰ Latently present, the spotlight is thus on the garment(s) on display. The aesthetic and practical concern of the body might be reduced to a minimum through this use of subtle garment supports, however, not with a body-garment symbioses in mind. Since, however well-intended, the intimacy of the body-garment intricacy is still missing. The bodily shape, once the *showpiece*, now has shed the "show" factor, however, not in favour of a connection to the garment(s), but rather to become a shell of itself, a *piece*.

This "[...] rendering invisible of the supporting form [...]" as Jeffrey Horsley described it, can lead to the other extreme, the main plot being the aesthetics and technicality of the displayed garments.²⁵¹ Whether very much or rather latently present, these bodily substitutes lack "a sense of attitude representative of the human presence that goes beyond physical corporeality."²⁵² For one because they are in themselves exanimate figures or forms.²⁵³ In addition, they are now also made virtually invisible. The allocation to an exanimate as well as an invisible support burdens the garments with a twofold disengagement from the living body.²⁵⁴ As previously mentioned, Lucy Gundry unravelled this "issue of liveliness" through the cultivation of a wearing consciousness, obtained through the haptic and aesthetic communication between oneself and one's aesthetic double in the domestic mirror.²⁵⁵ By becoming aware of the moving self in the act of getting dressed - both visually and haptically - one should feel enabled to see through the static displays inherent in fashion exhibitions.²⁵⁶ So, according to Gundry, one's haptic and visual knowledge of the self can be employed when entering the exhibition space, allowing someone to sense movement and embodiment despite the static nature of display; the degree of liveliness is therefore determined by one's own input.²⁵⁷ There can indeed be a sense of nostalgia at play when facing a certain garment or silhouette.²⁵⁸ However, Gundry imposed the considerable condition of estimating the self as a fully-fledged subject, unaffected by the "norm" one is faced with. For - whether in a retail, editorial or curatorial context - "[t]he mannequin's body follows the postmodern destiny of being transformed into a thing, an object through which values, meanings and desires are circulated."²⁵⁹ The mannequin therefore is, as it were, both the sign as well as the symptom of a catalogue culture; a culture that wants to pass for "rational" for that matter. But as seen, the fact that the aesthetic norm of today is not the same as what it once was nor what it once will be, brings to light the underlying irrationality of it.²⁶⁰

²⁴⁹ David, "Body Doubles."

²⁵⁰ Horsley, "Embedding the Personal," 247.

²⁵¹ Horsley, "Embedding the Personal," 250.

²⁵² Horsley, "Embedding the Personal," 253.

²⁵³ Saillard, "Shadows of the Body," 191.

²⁵⁴ Loscialpo, "Fashion Exhibitions in the Digital Age," 228.

²⁵⁵ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 39 and 82.

²⁵⁶ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 82.

²⁵⁷ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 174.

²⁵⁸ Petrov, *Inventing the Display of Dress*, 160.

²⁵⁹ Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, 74.

²⁶⁰ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 83.

In a societal framework so invigorated by the prevalence of reason over sentience, there seems to be a malfunction to this precept of rationality when it comes down to the appearance one must meet. Published in 1913, *Le Vrai et le Faux Chic*, a short satirical fashion book made by the illustrator Sem, is a prime example of the victimisation of women - and by extension men - in visual culture, ridiculing their pursuit of fashionable dress.²⁶¹ As opposed to what one might assume to be deemed right or wrong - *vrai ou faux* - it is not the ensembles but the depicted bodies that are stigmatised as being faulty or inferior.²⁶² Persuaded by the idea of our bodies as "something to be modified," instead of diagnosing the fashion system as unjust, we seem to sentence ourselves to an existence dedicated to self-reproach.²⁶³ This ruthless self-disgrace was something identity L.V.L. was confronted with on day one of the lived experience. As she did not immediately figure out the garment - which often is the case when getting accustomed to a new piece of clothing - she recalled feeling "doubtful and disappointed" in herself.²⁶⁴ Without first giving herself some time to get accustomed to the garment, she went straight into self-reproach mode. However, she picked up on this behaviour, reframed her attitude and eventually got over this feeling.²⁶⁵ She allocated herself some much needed time to tune in with herself as well as with the garment, listening to both. This way, what she initially blamed herself for, in the end turned out to be an incentive to think more outside the box.²⁶⁶ But despite our vigilance, our sense of self is often cultivated in relation to the infinite stream of normative fashion imagery that floods us on a daily basis. However, we could question how far fashion - as in the garments - actually has a share in this visual typology. Whereas Roland Barthes theorised that mannequins (human models) signified the garment and not the body, nowadays the opposite seems to be true.²⁶⁷ A cultural shift resulted in fashion being no longer exclusively preoccupied with the adornment of the body with garments, but rather inclined to the body itself.²⁶⁸ As a result, today's fashion consumption amounts to both clothes and bodies.²⁶⁹ But as pointed out by Joanne Entwistle in her introduction to "The Dressed Body" in *Body Dressing*: "[...] human bodies are *dressed* bodies."²⁷⁰ In other words, one cannot refer to the body without mentioning clothing, fashion's prime concern. Since taking up such a large share of fashion, where then exactly do garments come into play?

Captivated by the alleged malleability of the body, clothing seems to be seized as mere means to an end, the end being a decisive modification of one's physical appearance. This can range from minor tweaks such as shoulder pads, to more drastic measures, among which tightly laced corsets.²⁷¹ As for one of the identities, one of the prime criteria when dealing with a garment, was whether or not it complimented her body.²⁷² Not necessarily by drastically changing it, but rather to cast it in the most favourable light. Since the lived experience concerned a pre-selected garment, the bodily emphasis she had come accustomed to faded. However, because of the

²⁶¹ McClendon, "The Body: Fashion and Physique," 160.

²⁶² McClendon, "The Body: Fashion and Physique," 161.

²⁶³ McClendon, "The Body: Fashion and Physique," 148.

²⁶⁴ Van Laer, "Logbook," 25.; Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 164.

²⁶⁵ Van Laer, "Logbook," 25.

²⁶⁶ Van Laer, "Logbook," 25.

²⁶⁷ Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, 73.

²⁶⁸ Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, 73.

²⁶⁹ Saillard, "Shadows of the Body," 201.

²⁷⁰ Joanne Entwistle, "The Dressed Body," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 33.

²⁷¹ McDowell, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 9.

²⁷² M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 94.

oversizedness of the garment, which did not emphasise parts of her body that she usually tried to highlight, she felt indifferent or neutral towards the garment in terms of how it made her body look.²⁷³ We could say garments are recruited as supporting actors to the body, itself a puppet of the fashion industry. Instead of tuning in with ourselves to get a sense of what it is that makes us *feel* good, we turn to the fashion system to help us *look* good or even *superior*, the same system that made us feel *inferior* in the first place. Ultimately, this preoccupation with the physical silhouette causes one to become estranged from the physical self. No matter how innate the body, without any kind of alignment between the physical and the mental – with the senses acting as intermediary – the body becomes an alienated entity. When asked about the perception and description of his body, identity J.B. mentioned a (sometimes) alienesque perception towards himself.²⁷⁴ Asked the same about her body, identity J.J. labelled it as “[a] clumsy thing, a human cage almost. Something that itches, therefore always aware of it. Different from that of others.”²⁷⁵ She talked about her body as if her “self” was the outcast, living in exile in something that does not seem to fully belong to her. In *Bodies*, Susan Orbach wrote exactly about this surpassing of the body as merely existing: “Our bodies are a lot more than an executed blueprint given by our DNA.”²⁷⁶ Although Orbach mainly pinpointed an engaging surrounding as vital for one’s sensorial cultivation, her approach to the bodily senses as innate, but also a work in process – or “a beautiful work in progress” as identity E.V.d.H. described his body – grasped the significance of a sensorial allocation of the self as initiated by *FASHION(non)SENSE*.²⁷⁷ “[W]e may not feel that our bodies really belong to us – we will look at them as though from the outside, as a project we have to work on,” Orbach wrote in an echo of her psychotherapy background.²⁷⁸ The mirroring of oneself to norm-affirming imagery should be avoided if one is to truly come to terms with the “self.”

However, fashion and its imagery are intertwined into a complicated relationship. One way or another, the visual spectrum is always involved when it comes to fashion. Whereas words often tend to fall short in describing garments, images turn out to be a more rewarding account of fashion. The problem with fashion images, however, is how they subordinate clothes to the body, as well as how generalising and conformist the final images often are.²⁷⁹ Generally, a normative message is sent out into the world stripped of affect, affect overlooked since considered redundant. In the end, fashion imagery has a picture-perfect outcome in mind. But as already mentioned, “[a]ffect is a medium rather than a message [...]. More than simply an accessory to meaning [it] brings life to representation.”²⁸⁰ Needless to say, affect is thus anything but superfluous. Especially with the multifaceted interpretation of the term “medium” in mind.

²⁷³ M. Lenaers, “Logbook,” 100.

²⁷⁴ Jonas Branswijck, “Logbook,” in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 137.

²⁷⁵ Jonckheere, “Logbook,” 151.

²⁷⁶ Orbach, *Bodies*, 41.

²⁷⁷ Van den Heede, “Logbook,” 52.; Orbach, *Bodies*, 40-41.

²⁷⁸ Orbach, *Bodies*, 40-41.

²⁷⁹ Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, 73.; Orbach, *Bodies*, 88.

²⁸⁰ Shinkle, “Uneasy Bodies.”

Medium /'mi:.di.əm/ • noun

- I. A method or way of expressing something²⁸¹
- II. A substance that something grows in, lives in, or moves through²⁸²

Affect is not trivial. To deny it, would be to deny a vital part of the body. Like dress, affect is to be considered a partner of the body rather than an add-on.²⁸³ This viewpoint of dress as “an equivocal partner” articulated by Warwick and Cavallaro, runs counter to Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins and Joanne Eicher’s definition of dress, which they enlightened as “[...] an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body.”²⁸⁴ Reasoning from a premise of partnership between body and garment, *FASHION(non)SENSE* sides with Warwick and Cavallaro’s redraft of dress. Moreover, this dissertation enlightens affect as a partner of the body alike. And more than a secondary layer to the image, affect is decisive for the message conveyed. Affect does not equal the message; it is there even before there is a message. However, this omnipresence often seems to go unrecognised. Prevented by the mind-body dualism, one is denied an authentic experience of the self. So, virtually (made) unsusceptible to the recognition of one’s own feelings and sensations, feelings and sensations outside of the self will likely not be intercepted. One’s self lives in and moves through affect. By way of allowing oneself to sense through affect, one’s awareness of the authentic self can grow. As to the images of the lived experience, the message conveyed is an embodied rather than a normative one, since the images are not shaped by the “previously seen.”²⁸⁵ Instead, the images emerged from the identities’ commitment to honour their sensorial qualities, rather than blindly – albeit imbued by visuality – going along with what is familiar. However, although all up for the challenge – such a withdrawal from the conventional turned out to be less self-evident than anticipated. Whereas some identities cut all ties to visual references of a body and/or garment, others reinterpreted one or both elements in an unconventional way, body and/or garment therefore not completely eliminated.²⁸⁶ Omitting aesthetic considerations altogether would be unrealistic nor was it the objective of the lived experience. Rather, the identities were asked to give a thought to what they were wearing irrespective of any visual pictures. Ruling out visual self-control as the most obvious route, they faced the task of being guided by sensorial self-control. By allowing themselves to experience the intimacy between body and bodice, their (fashion)sense of self was given room to grow, becoming a subject who lives by affect, rather than an object living by the norm. From this point of view, the seemingly trivial question whether or not the experience taught them something about their (fashion)identity, suddenly seems far from trivial. Following excerpts taken from the identities’ logbooks illustrate the “coming to terms with the self” throughout and by the end of the lived experience:

²⁸¹ “Medium,” Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/medium>.

²⁸² Cambridge Dictionary, “Medium.”

²⁸³ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 117.

²⁸⁴ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 117.; Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins and Joanne B. Eicher, “Dress and Identity,” *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 10, no.4 (June 1992): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X9201000401>.

²⁸⁵ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 78.

²⁸⁶ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

"It confirmed fashion and self-expression through fashion as my second nature."²⁸⁷
- V.V.

"[...] I learned that I feel even more connected to fashion than I previously
thought."²⁸⁸
- L.V.L.

"I have started to think more consciously about my choices and how I feel. Your
clothes should not be beautiful or match together nicely. As long as you feel good
about it, it's just fine."²⁸⁹
- H.B.

"It made me appreciate the way I dress to flatter my body more. I'd started to take
for granted the way I dress, and this experiment made me aware of my sense of self
and how it is linked to my physical appearance."²⁹⁰
- P.R.S.

"It reminded me of why I started to wear less colour in the first place. I feel like
when you stay in your comfort zone for a long time, you kind of lose sight of your
own identity. This experiment reminded me why I dress the way I do, which I really
appreciated."²⁹¹
- M.V.

"Perhaps it made me realise just how good I feel in my own clothing style, and that
it is what I need to stick to and further develop it."²⁹²
- M.L.

"In the run-up to the experiment, I recall being afraid I'd have to wear an ultra-
feminine garment. And how relieved I felt when that turned out not to be the case at
all. Ahead of the experiment, I wasn't really aware of this 'fear' so to speak."²⁹³
- J.J.

²⁸⁷ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 14.

²⁸⁸ Van Laer, "Logbook," 29.

²⁸⁹ Hadewijch Bosmans, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 44.

²⁹⁰ Rodriguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 72.

²⁹¹ Vieren, "Logbook," 86.

²⁹² M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 100.

²⁹³ Jonckheere, "Logbook," 157.

To remind. . .

Body = material + embodied existence

Shell > subject [**UNJUSTLY**]

Touch = literal + figurative

= cutaneous + conscious

The dressed body > the body as dressed

Norm ≠ commitment

The lived-in body >< fashion mannequin

Mannequin ≈ sign + symptom

Affect ≠ add-on to the body

= partner of the body

II. BODICE

Beyond the object: co-mmitment

THOUGHTS

With restoring the relationship with our bodies comes the opportunity to rekindle our lost sense of fashion as a tactile and sensory art. The reestablished mind-body liaison entails a scope to dismantle the objectification of clothing, focusing on the sensory commitment between a wearer and a garment. By no longer identifying clothes as pure objects, one can seemingly feel empowered to establish a much deeper and more meaningful approach towards fashion and oneself, rather than starting from the obvious visual point of view. Transcending the normative dualism of subject-object therefore requires a commitment towards our physical bodies as well as to the garments adorning it. Only by way of tuning in with both body and bodice, true embodiment can emerge.

a. Turning inside out

As paraphrased before, “[...] human bodies are dressed bodies.”²⁹⁴ However, made up of both components, fashion never seems to have considered the possibility of a sincere symbioses between body and clothes. It just so happens that at this very moment - when body and garment come together as one - one’s authentic self could be reflected.²⁹⁵ Like Frances Corner specified in *Why Fashion Matters*, when engaged in visual fashion content, one may have reservations on fashion as seemingly “[...] ephemeral, lightweight, even shallow, the antithesis of authentic.”²⁹⁶ But - as also amplified throughout this dissertation - Corner seized authenticity as not at odds with fashion, but rather as the ultimate gateway to fashion’s significance.²⁹⁷ As long as fashion is understood as a mere visual phenomenon, its relevance is jeopardised, not giving off even the slightest impression of its importance. This representational tunnel vision subjugating fashion can, however, be circumvented precisely by the aspect of human authenticity. This amounts to a consonance between one’s inside and outside - the absolution of one of many dualisms in spirit of the later on discussed movement of New Materialism.²⁹⁸ In order to obtain such self-consonance - synonymous to an authentic self - one must tune in with both the inner and outer self, or thus realign mind and body. Once this is accomplished, fashion can become a manifestation of one’s authentic self, a token of one’s true process of turning inside out. This pivotal role for authenticity recalls the momentary “break” from the garment by identity P.R.S. in the course of the lived experience.²⁹⁹ The reason being that, to her, wearing the garment felt like a discredit to her “self,” a diagnosis she was only able to make because of tuning in with both herself and the garment.³⁰⁰ In this particular

²⁹⁴ Entwistle, “The Dressed Body,” 33.

²⁹⁵ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 18-19.

²⁹⁶ Frances Corner, *Why Fashion Matters* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2014), 130.

²⁹⁷ Corner, *Why Fashion Matters*, 130.

²⁹⁸ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 18.; Smelik, “New Materialism,” 34.

²⁹⁹ Rodriguez Sardiñas, “Logbook,” 69.

³⁰⁰ Rodriguez Sardiñas, “Logbook,” 69.

moment - honouring all senses - identity P.R.S. felt empowered to take off the garment for the right reason, that is, to stay true to herself. As pointed out by Lars Svendsen in *Fashion: A Philosophy*, the fact remains that clothing is vital to one's custom sense of self.³⁰¹ In turn, this dissertation adds the premise of clothing as equally vital to one's sense of self-comfort. Since, fashion should not be rational, or even practical for that matter. Ultimately, it should be about comfort, that is, comfort as interpreted by each one's particular self. Irrespective of one's singular and subjective interpretation of comfort, the common thread seems to remain a "second skin-like" experience or sensation - whether that is literally or figuratively.³⁰² The measure as to what comfort meant to the identities testified to this. As many as seven out of eleven identities mentioned something along the lines of a certain premise of freedom.³⁰³

Freedom / 'fri:.dəm/ • noun

The condition or right of being able or allowed to do, say, think, etc. [sense?] whatever you want to, without being controlled or limited³⁰⁴

For some this meant physical freedom, to not be restricted in any way, shape or form, being able to move to one's heart's content without having to think twice.³⁰⁵ Throughout the wardrobe examinations reported on in "Wardrobe Stories," Lisa Heinze equally noted the physical aspect as a highly esteemed quality to comfort among her participants.³⁰⁶ Back to the lived experience tied to this dissertation, other's interpretation of the word steered more towards mental freedom, to be free of - both external as well as internal - judgement.³⁰⁷ However, several identities' answers were telling of a general overlap between the physical and the mental, which in turn testified to the pursuit of a mind-body alignment, ultimately at the heart of this dissertation.³⁰⁸ And then there were those who specifically pinpointed the role of the senses.³⁰⁹ Been linked to the following quote of Shahidha Bari, the excerpts from three logbooks reinforce Bari's and subsequently this dissertation's deep-rooted premise of sensorial awareness as the leverage point to self-comfort, and thus to embodiment:

"And there are garments we can feel, that itch and chafe, that make apparent the difference of their textures to that of the surface of our skin, as though we and they are not one. In these, we are alert to the experience of being in our bodies, in a way that seems at odds with the rest of the world gliding past, apparently immune to discomfort. In such garments, too, we are always alert to the ever-present physicality of our bodies."³¹⁰

- Shahidha Bari

³⁰¹ Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 19.

³⁰² Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 116.

³⁰³ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

³⁰⁴ "Freedom," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/freedom>.

³⁰⁵ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 8.; Bosmans, "Logbook," 38.; Birte Lenaers, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 109.

³⁰⁶ Heinze, "Wardrobe Stories," 862.

³⁰⁷ Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.; Jonckheere, "Logbook," 151.

³⁰⁸ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 52.; M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 94.

³⁰⁹ Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.; Rodriguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 66.; Vieren, "Logbook," 80.

³¹⁰ Bari, "What Do Clothes Say?."

"When the fabric of a garment doesn't feel right, I won't feel comfortable when wearing it."³¹¹
- L.V.L.

"To me, comfort is being unaware of what is happening, not having to worry or fuss about details, feeling satisfied not having to read between the lines."³¹²
- P.R.S.

"[...] to me comfort means I don't want to be aware of any clothing on my skin during the day. If so, chances are I will rarely, if ever, wear it."³¹³
- M.V.

One identity's comfort quandary in particular I would like to highlight, namely that of identity N.H. As above-stated, fashion should not be rational, or even practical for that matter. Ultimately, it should be about comfort, that is, comfort as interpreted by each one's particular self. In turn, without detracting from a physical aspect to comfort, identity N.H. is positive that "comfortable clothing" - understood in its generic sense - is not the sole beginning and end of feeling comfortable.³¹⁴ Comfort might as well arise from an aspect of originality - rationality and practicality perhaps less relevant yet the garment's comfort therefore not necessarily less relevant.³¹⁵ Unaware of his phrasing nor he of mine, both seem to exist in close proximity. In short, one cannot - and therefore should not - realise someone else's concept of comfort. And then there was identity L.V.L. whose answer touched on the remembrance quality of clothing, or how wearing a certain garment could give rise to a sense of comfort by recalling a specific memory, event, person, etc.³¹⁶ This in turn resounded with Jessica Kennedy and Megan Strickfaden's account on objects as having "[...] the ability to provide comfort to humans."³¹⁷ However, as exemplified in this dissertation, the term "objects" to refer to garments detracts from the garments' agency to which we can attribute this "comforting quality." As concluded by Gill and Lopes in "On Wearing," as *subjects* we are granted the ability to give time back to *objects* (things).³¹⁸ In other words, we can grant them the right to "subjectify" instead of "objectify." By virtue of one's willingness to fully commit, garments are (finally) entitled to the life they truly deserve, unburdened by a label of disposability or interchangeability. However, deprived of the open-mindedness of a wearer who is willing to fully commit to embodiment, garments will remain alien: "The garment as a vessel of otherness, a place where the identity of one's body is confused, an indistinct zone between covering and image."³¹⁹ This alienating effect/affect also featured in Aurélie Van de Peer's enlightenment on the innate nature of clothes in "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration": "[...] clothes function in a two-fold, contradictory manner: both cognitive and affective, both alienating and intimate."³²⁰ Fashion, however, should be neither one nor the other, that is, not a covering as negation of the body nor an image as substitute for the body. As already mentioned,

³¹¹ Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.

³¹² Rodriguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 66.

³¹³ Vieren, "Logbook," 80.

³¹⁴ Nand Haegeman, "Logbook," in *FASHION(non)SENSE: Logbooks*, ed. Wonne Scrayen (2022), 123.

³¹⁵ Haegeman, "Logbook," 123.

³¹⁶ Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.

³¹⁷ Kennedy and Strickfaden, "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne."

³¹⁸ Gill and Lopes, "On Wearing," 323.

³¹⁹ Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, 60.

³²⁰ Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration."

fashion is more than the sum of its parts. Therefore, a disengaged case study of either body or garment will never be sufficient to grasp the many facets contained within fashion. Isolating the body from the garment, neither will ever reach its full potential. Through the practice of wearing, body and garment are subjected to what is at the same time a physical as well as a sensorial process, a happening as such.³²¹ Paraphrasing H el ene Cixous, Lars Svendsen clarified that "[...] clothes [are] not primarily a shield for the body but function rather as an extension of it," a crucial element in three identities' estimation of fashion.³²² All of them decisively defined their clothes as an extension of themselves.³²³ In *Why Fashion Matters*, Frances Corner in turn paraphrased Quentin Bell on a similar matter: "Our clothes are too much a part of us for most of us ever to be entirely indifferent to their condition: it is as though the fabric were indeed a natural extension of the body, or even the soul."³²⁴

Fabric considered as an extension of the self, the sensation of touch can be seen as the threshold between body and garment, each subject in their own right. Although he acknowledged fashion as an extension of the subjective body, Theodor Adorno did not yet go as far as to deem fashion as a subject in its own right: "In the age where the subjective spirit becomes even more powerless in face of social objectivity, fashion announces the surplus of the latter within the subjective spirit, painfully alienated from it, but a corrective to the illusion that the subjective spirit is pure Being-in-itself [...]"³²⁵ To Adorno, fashion was more an assimilation of object into subject.³²⁶ Ellen Sampson's narration of wearing as "[...] the transposition of thing into person and person into thing [...]" on the other hand, endorsed the long-held subject-object division as no longer tenable.³²⁷ Since the intention of garments is to be worn, fashion never exists in isolation of a body. According to Sampson, in the act of wearing, garments become more bodily.³²⁸ However, in a world saturated by visual images - defined as seemingly objective for that matter - we are often denied this intertwined experience of dress. Playing sight off against touch, we miss out on the significant dimension of physical touch, eminently the binding agent between a body and a garment.³²⁹ Favouring external looks over internal sensations led to an alienation from our haptic aptitude. So, there is indeed power in tactile commitment yet to be cultivated.³³⁰ This too became apparent in the lived experience part, as the identities showed little tactile engagement upon meeting their "blind date." Most of them processed the garment by means of their retina, with very few exceptions. The rarity of acting from tactility - which really should not be a rarity but rather a normality - of one of the identities, could perhaps be accounted for by her professional background. As a boutique manager for over twenty years, identity V.V. attaches great importance to the feeling of a garment.³³¹ She would never settle for anything less than a pleasant wearing experience, both in terms of a

³²¹ Julia Twigg, "Fashion, the Body and Age," in *The Handbook of Fashion Studies*, ed. Sandy Black, Amy de la Haye et al. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 78.

³²² Svendsen, *Fashion: A Philosophy*, 19.

³²³ Rodriguez Sardi as, "Logbook," 66.; B. Lenaers, "Logbook," 109.; Van den Heede, "Logbook," 52.

³²⁴ Corner, *Why Fashion Matters*, 45.

³²⁵ Ulrich Lehmann, "Tigersprung: Fashioning History," *Fashion Theory* 3, no.3 (1999): 310, <https://doi.org/10.2752/136270499779151379>.

³²⁶ Lehmann, "Tigersprung," 310.

³²⁷ Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."

³²⁸ Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."

³²⁹ Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."

³³⁰ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 33.

³³¹ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 8.

garment's haptic qualities as well as its expressive qualities.³³² As the following excerpt affirms, the exploration of haptics within fashion is on the rise, particularly in the novelty field of e-textiles: "While the outer layer of the garment or textile is meant for being exposed to the world outside of ourselves, there is also the inner, very intimate and hidden side of each textile/material. It exists only for the wearer, and it is in constant touch with our body [...]"³³³ Within the object-based domain of fashion studies, touch is one of the components in what Daniel Miller described as "luxuriating in the detail."³³⁴ Along with colour and flow, touch guards the study of garments of being phlegmatic.³³⁵ The indispensable appeal of "[...] the tactile, emotional, intimate world of feelings" as reiterated by Miller, corresponds to Stephen D. Seely's formulation of affective fashion, fashion that "[...] engages the body in a mutual becoming in which their differentiation is no longer significant."³³⁶ By bringing our haptic abilities into play when getting dressed - and equally once we are dressed - the opportunity arises to transcend the encountered boundaries between body and garment.³³⁷ As the self enters into dialogue with both body and garment - that is, through the senses - mutual commitment is carried out. For this, I would like to refer back to the previously discussed lived experience of identity L.V.L. who allocated herself some much needed time to tune in with herself, and by doing so equally with the garment; the liaison to which she committed only to intensify over the course of the two remaining days of the lived experience.³³⁸ Fully present in every passing moment of the experience, she could gradually sense the garment becoming a part of her true self.³³⁹ Whereas Alison Gill and Abby Mellick Lopes' redefinition of fashion as "committed wearing" alluded to the act of wearing a same garment over the course of a certain period of time, commitment in the instance of *FASHION(non)SENSE* is representative of the act of dress as the junction between a physical and a sentient agent at work.³⁴⁰ To make such a commitment, one must reconnect with the senses, tactility for one.³⁴¹ Elaborated by Kate Haug in her column "Touching To See," the basic act of touch reinstates a sense of reality within us.³⁴² So, tactility serves to a twofold reconnection: to our very own selves as well as to the external world. Touch taps into the essence of what it is like to be(come) - which in turn can be associated with the process of becoming, a fundamental principle within New Materialism set out by Deleuze and Guattari discussed later on.³⁴³ As the binding agent between body and garment, this innate yet uncultivated sense of touch is what needs rekindling in order to experience dress on a sentient level. Because - although exposed to a rich palette of senses - fashion seems to remain a primarily visual matter. However, indeed "matter."

To wear implies to deal with matter, to enrol oneself in a mutual exchange from one entity (oneself) to another (garment). Putting together an ensemble can thus be assimilated to initiating a dialogue between body and garment. On the one hand there

³³² Vandriessche, "Logbook," 8.

³³³ Tajadura-Jiménez, Våljamäe and Kuusk, "Altering One's Body-Perception."

³³⁴ Agnès Rocamora and Anneke Smelik, "Thinking through Fashion: An Introduction," in *Thinking through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, ed. Agnès Rocamora and Anneke Smelik (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 14.

³³⁵ Rocamora and Smelik, "An Introduction," 14.

³³⁶ Rocamora and Smelik, "An Introduction," 14.; Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?," 250.

³³⁷ Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?," 248.

³³⁸ Van Laer, "Logbook," 25-26.

³³⁹ Van Laer, "Logbook," 27.

³⁴⁰ Gill and Lopes, "On Wearing," 319.

³⁴¹ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 22.

³⁴² Haug, "Touching to See."

³⁴³ Haug, "Touching to See."

is the vitality of the body that radiates at the garment, and on the other hand there is the body as recipient of the vibrancy passed on by the garment.³⁴⁴ It is up to us to recognise and acknowledge this twofold occurrence, do we want to be able to execute the embodied commitment as it could be. Besides what Agnès Rocamora and Anneke Smelik appointed as "a bodily practice of dressing," fashion also depends on a material embedded existence, just as is the case for the physical body.³⁴⁵ Drawn from Jane Bennett's infamous phrase "matter is 'vibrant,'" New Materialism insisted on the absolution of dualisms such as material versus immaterial and human versus non-human among others.³⁴⁶ When applied to fashion, this implied the approach of garments as not mere static objects but rather as living matter equal to the subject, or thus the body. Both components are therefore perceived as identities in their own right, however, neither was seen as absolute. Emphasis on the interaction between the physical body and the garment worn by the body was at the core of this conceptual framework, and rightly so it seems.

³⁴⁴ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 14.

³⁴⁵ Rocamora and Smelik, "An Introduction," 14.

³⁴⁶ Smelik, "New Materialism," 34.

b. (Two)fold

The act of dress is thus twofold - consisting of a body and garment(s) - yet always operating as equals in relation to one another. Concerned with traces of use and wear of worn garments, Ellen Sampson stated that precisely these outer manifestations "[...] disrupt the binaries of there and not there, of animate and inanimate, of person and thing."³⁴⁷ In a similar vein with wrinkles and scars manifested on the human skin, clothes can start to show signs of use and wear, which we can come to see as a token for clothes as living matter. These traces act as visual markers of sartorial life, a sartorial syntax. However, the established intricacy of the body-garment interaction - grasped as mutually affective - unfolds in a more self-contained record: the fold. A side note that has to be made in reference to the notion of fold in this instance, is that it is not primarily concerned with the fold as a deliberate design choice. Rather, it is to be understood as the disclosure of a physical merger between a body and a garment, that is, folds of undeliberate nature. Initially coined within New Materialist thought, the fold was broken down to "[...] a continuous dialogue between inside and outside."³⁴⁸ So, in the process of initiating a dialogue, body and garment supposedly collide in what we identify as folds. However, this collision is not one that causes strain on the embodied experience of dress by magnifying dualities such as human versus non-human, on the contrary. The fold must be given significance as an outward manifestation of the subversion of the unjust incompatibility of animate subject and inanimate object, therefore a contribution to the prospect of embodiment rather than the eyesore.³⁴⁹ As Lucia Ruggerone strikingly articulated in "The Feeling of Being Dressed" - an enquiry into the vital yet often dismissed aspect of the way we feel in and about our clothes - the feeling of being dressed is singular: "What cannot be anticipated [...] is the event formed by the body and the dress and by my so dressed body and the other bodies partaking in the event."³⁵⁰ One such event can be perceived in the manifestation of the fold. Just like the feeling of being dressed happens to us, equally folds come to us in an unguarded moment, unaware of their implementation. Neither feeling nor fold can be staged as one would want it to. However, there seems to be a crucial sensitivity concealed within the discourse of feeling upon fold. Whereas the fold seems to take on the role of silent partner, the feeling agency is precisely there to be recognised and acknowledged ahead of the event, as if a third party. As this dissertation makes a case for embodiment of fashion by (re)cultivating human susceptibility to the senses - in particular touch - one must thus *actively* pursue the reconnection with the senses in order for embodiment to occur on a more *passive* yet mindful level. In other words: an active anticipation by the self of the most optimal conditions of the senses, in order to enable the mutual commitment of body and garment as seemingly imperceptible, which then would account for the "passiveness". As a counterpart then, there is the fold which manifests itself utterly unbeknownst of the self. Notwithstanding that the self is at the heart of it, seeing as the fold is a joint venture of body and garment made possible by a sensorial anticipating self.

³⁴⁷ Sampson, "Affect and Sensation."

³⁴⁸ Smelik, "New Materialism," 44.

³⁴⁹ Smelik, "New Materialism," 44.

³⁵⁰ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 584-586.

In an attempt to make this raised feel-fold nuance more tangible, comfort can be seized as designated precedent. According to Alison Gwilt "[...] the lifespan of a garment can be extended further if it is comfortable, functional and aesthetically pleasing."³⁵¹ As established in both theoretical writings as well as the lived experiences, despite what one might think, comfort exceeds the expectations of a mere right fit.³⁵² Aptly captured by Todd Robinson, "[a] sense of 'fit' is not only a technical achievement of the pattern-cutter, but an embodied sense of what feels right."³⁵³ Robinson's plea to substitute "pose" for "poise" - bringing a micro-corporeal attention focus to fashion - thus reconciled comfort in its broadest sense with what he identified as "poise": "[...] a somatically experienced sense of physical and/or social comfort."³⁵⁴ In short, the author summons the reader to disengage from the posed body, and instead channel the senses. One's professional occupation may really have a say in the degree of sensorial awareness. The identity whose logbook already testified to a natural interest in the haptic qualities of a garment as a boutique owner herself (identity V.V.), corresponded to the one that equally disclosed the importance of fit in a Robinson-like manner.³⁵⁵ Based on her notes, "fit" is to be understood as a mutual relationship between garments: "Thoughtful cuts and original details, a little bit of optimism, and humour are things I can really appreciate. Mostly, it is the overall look I find important. That's why I think it's important how the garments 'fit' or 'fall,' the mutual relationship and the way in which [...] you combine them on top of or under each other."³⁵⁶ Indeed, she explicitly mentioned the importance of "fit," however, her interpretation resonated with Robinson's notion, not starring the body but rather the senses evoked *in* and *by* the garment. In order to put a stop to this blind faith in our bodies as mouldable objects, it is mandatory to let go of the premise of a supposedly universal physicality. More desirable would be to take a leap of faith and allow ourselves to just feel whatever may come to us, to no longer suppress our feelings in favour of mere appearance.

Food for thought

Why don't we transpose the concept of malleability from body to mind?

Once we can debunk this myth of bodily malleability, the opportunity arises to rewire the connection between mind and body, a more truthful experience of fashion therefore (back) within reach. Ultimately, an *active* implementation of the feeling agency is required to bring about the mutual commitment of body and garment. However, the commitment itself is of a more *latent* nature, in that we don't really have a say in how we will feel in and about a garment. Fast forward to the lived experiences, where this magnitude of contingency became all the more absolute as we saw the identities completely at the mercy of their emotions and senses.³⁵⁷ Feeling-wise, many identities were surprised by a quick turnaround, tossed from one extreme into the other over the course of just three days, sometimes even in the span of one day.³⁵⁸ It would be a

³⁵¹ Gwilt, "Caring for Clothes," 874.

³⁵² Horsley, "Embedding the Personal," 253.

³⁵³ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 452.

³⁵⁴ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 452.

³⁵⁵ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

³⁵⁶ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

³⁵⁷ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

³⁵⁸ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.; Bosmans, "Logbook," 40-42.

slippery slope to say that because one can actively choose *to feel*, one can therefore actively choose *how to feel*. One can indeed choose what to wear, however, not how to feel in the chosen garment; feelings simply are insusceptible to meticulous planning. Comfort then - the elite feeling to strive for in fashion - belongs to a special category, a feeling we experience precisely due to a lack of experience.³⁵⁹ Allowing ourselves to operate by feeling - as opposed to being driven by a visual picture - we create for ourselves the possibility to experience fashion as "something else."³⁶⁰ Stephen D. Seely pinpointed this open-ended concept to grasp fashion beyond the mere aesthetic: "Fashion need not be seen only as that through which we make ourselves more attractive, adorn, or enhance ourselves. It need not be seen as (only) that which creates and sustains ideals of feminine beauty. Rather, fashion can be that 'something else' that leads to our own becoming-otherwise, that actualises the virtual capacities that we were not even aware of, that puts us in touch with what is least human in us, that opens our bodies to a virtual field of limitless creativity, intensity, sensation, and transformation."³⁶¹ In other words, going beyond the obvious route of aesthetics includes the instigation of the feeling agency. As a feeling, comfort will manifest itself when body and garment seem to merge - as if a second skin - which amounts to a certain degree of imperceptibility of the considered garment. Here, we can recall the previously featured excerpts of the identities whose concept of comfort initiated an extent of sensorial balance, comfort directly related to as little sensorial awareness as possible.³⁶² Hence comfort as a non-experienced experience.

How then does comfort relate to the fold? No longer restrained to (literally and figuratively) feel, one can pursue fashion in terms of sensation over appearance. When it comes to the practice of dress, there is the animated body on the one hand and the (unconsciously) animated garment on the other hand.³⁶³ Clothes may appear as purely aesthetic - mind the tonal resonance with the word "static" - however, it concerns living matter just like the body.³⁶⁴ The discrepancy between both fashions of vitality being that the one of the body is visually manageable, whereas the vitality of clothes occurs at a microscopic level - the above-mentioned imperceptibility of comfort the telltale sign of the unconsciously animated nature of garments to its full extent. Guided by an actively engaged feeling agency, one can reach a near perfect level of micro-corporeal and microscopic alignment, or thus respectively the alignment of body and garment. At this point comfort arises, even though it is hard to "sense" for that matter.

Retracing what Robinson understood under "a right fit" - a concern beyond the cut in favour of an embodied element of what feels right - the fold seems to be a matter of course tied to the sense of comfort.³⁶⁵ Despite the perhaps common assumption of bespoke garments as the pinnacle of comfort one could experience, comfort exceeds this mere quality of a flawless cut.³⁶⁶ More so, a reversal of Robinson's above-mentioned reasoning - which would amount to "an embodied sense of what feels right contributes to a sense of right fit" - would assent to the occurrence of a sincere

³⁵⁹ Tajadura-Jiménez, Väljamäe and Kuusk, "Altering One's Body-Perception."

³⁶⁰ Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?," 263.

³⁶¹ Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?," 263.

³⁶² Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.; Rodríguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 66.; Vieren, "Logbook," 80.

³⁶³ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

³⁶⁴ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 33.

³⁶⁵ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 452.

³⁶⁶ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 221.

feeling as the preferred point of reference when it comes to comfort.³⁶⁷ As we have seen, comfort is the outcome of a near perfect balancing act between a body and a garment. In turn, we have come to understand the fold as an outward manifestation of the animated body-garment intricacy. Taking all this into consideration then, the fold seems almost indispensable to comfort, both unconscious statements of the mutual commitment of a body and a garment.

Comfort = body // mind
Fold = manifestation of body // mind
⇒ Comfort ≈ fold

Whereas the concept of the fold initially may have seemed at odds with the concept of fit, a deep dive into the sense of comfort countered this premise. However, first and foremost this feature on comfort was conceived as a gradual elaboration of the above-mentioned feel-fold nuance, for which it was necessary to first have insight into the innate correlation between comfort and fold. To recap the feel-fold nuance, it concerned a supposed sensitivity concealed within the discourse of feelings upon folds: the *active* cultivation yet *passive* anticipation of feelings as opposed to the utterly unintended nature (passiveness) of folds. So, one can perceive comfort if and only if one's feeling agency is cultivated. Meaning that one made the conscious (active) choice to allow oneself to feel/sense. Subsequent to this installed sentient awareness, the self is rewarded with the possibility of embodiment, which itself is not actively but rather passively anticipated in body and garment - albeit because of one's active allowance to feel/sense. However, regardless of this cultivated sentient awareness, folds will come to the surface anyway. As an outward manifestation of the body-garment intricacy, they don't require the precondition of a cultivated feeling agency. As a visual phenomenon, folds appear unbeknownst of the self. Therein lies the difference with comfort, and by extension feelings. This is not to say, however, that the conscious implementation of a feeling agency is not at all applicable to the concept of the fold. Since, in order to look beyond the common perception of folds as visual noise, it is precisely this sense of agency that is indispensable to realise that folds do not come to the detriment of comfort. Redeemed of the reading of folds as visually disturbing, the practice of dress is restored in its affective honour, no longer solely revolving around a visual picture.³⁶⁸ The fact that identity V.V. - not at all aware of the above-stated findings, so in no way guided by them - briefly touched upon one's personal preference whether or not to iron a garment, was an unexpected yet all the more pleasant surprise.³⁶⁹ Without realising herself, she was ahead of the "embodied" game, so to speak.

³⁶⁷ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 452.

³⁶⁸ Ye, "Not Just 'The Look,'" 3.

³⁶⁹ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 15.

To remind. . .

Authenticity = inner self // outer self
= mind // body

Comfort \approx second-skin

Wearing = physical + sensorial practice
 \approx cutaneous touch + (un)conscious touch

Folds, creases // scars, wrinkles

Feelings + folds happen to us

Right fit: right feel > right cut

Body \neq mouldable object

Comfort \approx non-experienced experience

Merging matter: unity in diversity

THOUGHTS

We seem to be inclined to the obvious sense of sight over touch, giving a cold shoulder to the physical as well as sentient sensation a garment can evoke. One could say we do not look after our bodies sensibly, in the sense that - due to a mind-body dualism - the immaterial tissue of the mind is distanced from the material carnality of the body. In turn, the prospect of intimacy between one's body and a garment is in jeopardy.

a. The matter of matter

As briefly mentioned in the analysis of the fold, sartorial signs of use and wear can be seen as a resemblance of what is defined as the syntax in linguistics, the fold being one such sartorial sign and the syntax a subdivision of semiology. Therefore, a link can be established between the fold and semiology, namely the fold as part of semiotics. The equation of language and clothes can be traced back to Roland Barthes, who was of the opinion that fashion - and by extension fashion photography - operated within a semiotic framework.³⁷⁰ Known for his linguistic approach to fashion, Barthes predominantly alluded to the semiotic nature of garments, in the same vein as he did for language.³⁷¹ Applied to the fold, this would mean that the fold is one of many contributing components when it comes to the notion of garments. However, concealed within Barthes' portrayal of "image-as-text," there is an implicit incitement to fashion as a universal and constant language, of which anyone can master the basic signs.³⁷² Indeed, as stated by Anneke Smelik and Agnès Rocamora, fashion entails features of a signifying system.³⁷³ However, they rightly offset this by the vitality of fashion as an embodied practice.³⁷⁴ Ultimately, fashion as a phenomenon emerges from the individual perception of the designated wearer. And although a linguistic approach can be a stepping stone to get a certain sense of fashion, engaging with clothes as we do with language would still amount to a framework favouring ratio over feeling. One could say that we must dare to look beyond the obvious (of language), when actually it is precisely the obvious (of fashion) that we tend to miss. Drawing an outright parallel between language and fashion, would detract from the material agency of the latter. That is not to say, however, that the parallel should be omitted altogether.³⁷⁵ Rather, the opportunity of a dimension beyond the one of fashion as mere language arises, a dimension we can access through the ability to feel, both literally and figuratively. So, there is a fine line between fashion and language. To revert back to the fold, this outward manifestation of the body-garment intricacy implies the reading of a material manipulation, the fold therefore recognised in both its linguistic as well as its materialist worth.

Broadening Barthes' linguistic framework as such by the implementation of the sense of touch, brings the material agency back to the fore, the affective dimension

³⁷⁰ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

³⁷¹ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 20.; Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

³⁷² McDowell, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 147.

³⁷³ Rocamora and Smelik, "An Introduction," 13-14.

³⁷⁴ Rocamora and Smelik, "An Introduction," 13-14.

³⁷⁵ Rocamora and Smelik, "An Introduction," 14.

of fashion therefore restored. Although the fold as unravelled in this dissertation slightly deviates from the concept as initiated by New Materialist voices Deleuze and Guattari, in both instances it is the leverage point to redeem materiality in its broadest sense: “[...] turning - or returning - to the matter and materiality of things and objects, including human bodies and identities.”³⁷⁶ In other words, Barthes’ mere semiotic judgement of fashion as image fell short, seeing as it restrained fashion from its innate material nature.³⁷⁷ It would be a disservice to go about a garment in terms of either-or, meaning either object or subject. Instead, garments act from material agency, a word cluster that challenges Alison Bancroft’s principle argued in *Fashion and Psychoanalysis* that a garment “[...] exists only when it is in the process of being worn [...]”³⁷⁸ Indeed, for the experience of embodiment to occur, there is the need of both a body and a garment. However, it is a bridge too far to draw the conclusion that a garment therefore does not hold value in its own right, nullifying the materiality. A quick recap reminds us of the alignment of body and mind for the purpose of embodiment, with the senses as intermediary. However, the senses need material to get started with in the first place.³⁷⁹ In this instance, “material” can be taken literally, as in the textile of a garment.

Bringing materiality - therefore the sense of touch - into play, the focus shifts from the *decipherment* of clothes to the *experience* of clothes. Or to reiterate the sharp-mindedness of identity V.V.: “It’s about the sensation; explaining or deciphering is not necessary.”³⁸⁰ Within Barthes’ linguistic framework, fashion’s “[...] very materiality has disappeared into the textual, the linguistic and the discursive,” fashion as experience therefore a dimension never to be “touched.”³⁸¹ We should, however, note that fashion is evermore burdened with the predicament “[...] to grasp the nonverbalized experiences and to translate the nonverbalized experiences of clothes in use into written academic language.”³⁸² Something that cannot be fully rectified by neither a linguistic nor a materialist approach. Despite this, however, it is still worthwhile to surrender to a more materialist mode, since thinking of fashion in terms of language obstructs the experience of fashion altogether. Committed to a system of ratio over feeling, Barthes’ linguistic tendency to decipher garments as one would decipher language, simply impedes the possibility of embodiment. Just like “[t]here is no already pre-given body [...],” there is no such thing as a pre-given signifying system when it comes to the (adorned) body.³⁸³ Equally pointed out by Susie Orbach in *Bodies*, we do indeed have the capacity to read other’s bodies, however, “[...] what we read from the body we translate into the terms of the mind.”³⁸⁴ Language therefore proves to be too restrictive and rigid to grasp the subtlety of fashion. The sensory palette on the contrary, is tailored to the individual, cultivated by one’s experiences - in the same vein as Orbach argued that *bodies* are shaped by experiences.³⁸⁵ Since fashion as a phenomenon emerges from the individual perception of the designated wearer, the engagement of the senses proves to be

³⁷⁶ Smelik, “New Materialism,” 36.

³⁷⁷ Smelik, “New Materialism,” 36.

³⁷⁸ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 2.

³⁷⁹ Valle-Noronha, “Becoming with Clothes,” 62.

³⁸⁰ Vandriessche, “Logbook,” 15.

³⁸¹ Rocamora and Smelik, “An Introduction,” 12.

³⁸² Ingun Grimstad Klepp and Mari Bjerck, “A Methodological Approach to the Materiality of Clothing: Wardrobe Studies,” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 17, no.4 (2014): 374-375, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2012.737148>.

³⁸³ Orbach, *Bodies*, 57.

³⁸⁴ Orbach, *Bodies*, 58.

³⁸⁵ Orbach, *Bodies*, 58.

worthwhile, which in turn speaks in favour of a more materialist approach as initiated by *FASHION(non)SENSE*, both in the theoretical and lived experience part. There is, however, the tacit acceptance of fashion as a materialistic occupation, tied to a connotation of frivolousness.³⁸⁶ Yet even in this view the immaterial triumphs over the actual materiality. Indeed, as a stand-alone concept fashion appears as an immaterial thought, nevertheless at all times manifested through a material discourse.³⁸⁷ Anneke Smelik's enlightenment on the theory of Gilles Deleuze also clearly set forth this "in-between" state: "Fashion [...] moves between the imaginary realm and the material object."³⁸⁸ In *Fashion-ology*, Yuniya Kawamura did not blatantly deny there to be a frivolous nature to fashion. She did, however, categorically specify fashion not to be trivial.³⁸⁹ Kawamura was joined in her vision by sociologist René König, who already in 1973 said the following: "Fashion is indeed an unacknowledged world power. Even in the great clamour of world history it guides man with a soft yet insistent voice."³⁹⁰ Within fashion discourse, the allusion to a "voice" is not a one-time occurrence. In her dissertation *Haptic Aesthetics of Dress in the Contemporary Exhibition Space*, Lucy Gudrun even went as far as to dedicate a whole chapter to the "dress voice," which she initiated with the following words courtesy of Freddie Robins: "I do think dress has a voice [...]"³⁹¹ Because of its linguistic connotation, this spotlight on the "voice" might seem at odds with the above-mentioned designation of materiality over language as unsung quality. However, the voice could be interpreted as an extension of materiality, with the material of a garment vouching for the tone of voice of a garment. So, to consider materiality is to put a stop to the silencing of garments. With the actual material now fully available to the senses, the assumed dialogue between body and garment can be performed.

Gathered under the term "wardrobe stories" there has been record of some lived experiences exploring this supposed dialogue, albeit rather sporadic. These endeavours did, however, slightly deviate from the lived experience tied to this dissertation. With the participants' own wardrobe as take-off point, these "wardrobe stories" in a way entailed a higher degree of intrinsic motivation, whereas the identities involved in *FASHION(non)SENSE* were confronted with a pre-selected item. Either way, the objective was fixed: to open all registers of fashion beyond the mere visual.³⁹² Jessica Kennedy and Megan Strickfaden's publication "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne" in *Fashion Studies*, was in fact one of the initial incentives for *FASHION(non)SENSE*. It regarded a detailed report of the relationship between a woman and a black dress over the course of one year.³⁹³ Other names worth mentioning in bridging the gap between mere theory and the lived experience of clothing, include Lisa Heinze and Alison Gwilt, respectively focused on the everyday aesthetics of fashion and the maintenance of garments.³⁹⁴ *Becoming with Clothes: Activating Wearer-Worn Engagements through Design* in turn impersonated Julia Valle-Noronha's intent to

³⁸⁶ Entwistle and Wilson, "Introduction: Body Dressing," 1.

³⁸⁷ Robyn Healy, "Immateriality," in *The Handbook of Fashion Studies*, ed. Sandy Black, Amy de la Haye et al. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 325.; Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 55.

³⁸⁸ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 170.

³⁸⁹ Kawamura, *Fashion-ology*, 13.

³⁹⁰ König, *A la Mode*, 51.

³⁹¹ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 204.

³⁹² Borkopp-Restle, McNeil et al., "Museums and the Making of Textile Histories," 53.

³⁹³ Kennedy and Strickfaden, "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne."

³⁹⁴ Heinze, "Wardrobe Stories," 853-869.; Gwilt, "Caring for Clothes," 870-882.

unpick the "marginalisation of experience" within fashion studies.³⁹⁵ Sheila Heti, Heidi Julavits and Leanne Shapton also drew from this sense of experience for *Women in Clothes*, a survey among hundreds of women which ultimately resulted in an ode to the individual narratives of these women.³⁹⁶ These "wardrobe stories/studies" may make it appear as if it concerns an emerging cultural shift towards materiality, a sign of recent times.³⁹⁷ However, the cry for recognition of materiality can be traced back to a movement already touched upon, namely New Materialism. This conceptual framework insisted on the absolution of deep-rooted dualisms such as human and non-human and material and non-material among others.³⁹⁸ When applied to fashion, this implied the approach of garments as not mere static objects but rather as living matter equal to the subject, or thus the body. Synonymous with a non-dualist frame of mind, New Materialism perceived both components as identities in their own right, however, neither was seen as absolute. As previously mentioned, fashion is more than the sum of its parts. A disengaged case study of either body or garment would therefore never be sufficient to grasp fashion's many facets. Instead, the emphasis on the interaction between both as equals needs to be stressed, materiality therefore a prime concern within New Materialist thought.

The recognition of matter as not limited to the body testifies to the agency of both body and garment, more specifically material agency. In turn, it shows that just like matter is not limited to the body, agency is not limited to the human subject.³⁹⁹ In short, there is "[...] a shift from human agency to the intelligent matter of the human body as well as the materiality of fabrics, clothes and technology."⁴⁰⁰ So, New Materialism comprised a clear disassociation from anthropocentrism, of which the central perception seems all too one-sided to begin with. If, and even if, humans would be the centre of the solar system, at all times a third party would be required to even be defined as the centre - the sun is only considered to be the centre because of its position in relation to the planets. Without the latter, the sun would simply not be able to take centre stage. In a similar vein then, human agency equally needs such a third party to define itself. Or as Alison Bancroft in *Fashion and Psychoanalysis* stated: "The subject is central to fashion, just as fashion is central to the subject [...]"⁴⁰¹ To enter the stage of central identity, a sense of material reality has to be invoked, which can be fulfilled by "matter" of a garment.⁴⁰² This in turn relates to the premise at the beginning of this dissertation, that by shifting the focus from the visual to the sentient, one can seemingly feel empowered to (re)build their identity. Rebecca Smith and Yulia Yates even went as far as to say that "[...] when we love our clothes they influence our sense of self," a premise that again showed in the lived experiences.⁴⁰³ Here, I would like to quote two identities in particular who vouched for the spontaneous and self-evident yet thoughtful approach to fashion one should pursue:

³⁹⁵ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 6.

³⁹⁶ Heti, Julavits and Shapton, *Women in Clothes*.

³⁹⁷ Kennedy and Strickfaden, "Entanglements of a Dress Named Laverne."

³⁹⁸ Smelik, "New Materialism," 34.

³⁹⁹ Smelik, "New Materialism," 33.; Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 54.

⁴⁰⁰ Smelik, "New Materialism," 33.

⁴⁰¹ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 20.

⁴⁰² Smith and Yates, "Flourishing Fashion.;" Julia Twigg, "Fashion, the Body and Age," 78.

⁴⁰³ Smith and Yates, "Flourishing Fashion."

"Other people might feel different about how I dress, but that is - simply put - not my problem. I should not have to worry about how others perceive me and my fashion identity. I feel like I have the right to be proud of it precisely because it's so personal and intrinsically linked to my self-identity."⁴⁰⁴

- L.V.L.

"[...] your style is a reflection of how you feel and who you are. Regardless of any external influences forcing things upon you, it's important to remain true to yourself."⁴⁰⁵

- N.H.

This brings us to the state of becoming, the process of surpassing dualist existence by identifying the concern of *material* entanglement between people and things.⁴⁰⁶ In New Materialist terms, the world was understood "[...] as made up of complex and intensive assemblages where humans, animals and things connect and interrelate in a variety of ways," fashion being one such assemblage.⁴⁰⁷ So, to fully understand fashion for the phenomenon it is - a commitment between a wearer and a garment as equal partners alike - calls for a non-dualist framework as initiated by New Materialism. Since, to talk about (human) agency is to talk about material agency. In what follows, the concept of becoming - in terms of fashion - will be further specified.

⁴⁰⁴ Van Laer, "Logbook," 29.

⁴⁰⁵ Haegeman, "Logbook," 129.

⁴⁰⁶ Smelik, "New Materialism," 39.

⁴⁰⁷ Smelik, "New Materialism," 49.

b. Counterpoise: becoming > befitting

One of the most striking sentences of the literature study executed for this dissertation must have been one by Colin McDowell in *The Anatomy of Fashion*: "To some extent, all dress is fancy dress [...]"⁴⁰⁸ Because of the allusion to a metamorphic quality within fashion, the phrase lingered in my mind. A similar transformational nature also came up in "Worn With Love," a portfolio of six testimonial records on the "transformative power of getting dressed" published in *Harper's Bazaar*.⁴⁰⁹ Equally, Aurélie Van de Peer's essay "Identity, Mind-Body, and Acceleration" disclosed the notion of fashion-as-disguise, a bourgeois strategy going back as far as the eighteenth century.⁴¹⁰ In full recognition of the close-knit relationship between dress and identity, this dissertation joins in with the above, however, with a slight note of caution, namely the wording as a source of possible friction.

Fancy dress /ˌfæŋ.sɪ ˈdres/ • noun

The special clothes that you wear for a party where everyone dresses as a particular type of character or thing⁴¹¹

Disguise /dɪsˈɡaɪz/ • noun

Something that someone wears to hide their true appearance⁴¹²

Taking in these definitions, the act of fancy dress and disguise seems to allude to building a wardrobe of alter egos, in both instances cultivated by an outward concern. Therefore, both seem to testify to what will be termed "befitting": dressing to fit a certain pattern of (visual) expectations - the antithesis of "becoming," which is the process of surpassing the dualist mindset of people versus things by identifying the concern of material entanglement. Anneke Smelik identified "What does fashion do?" as the main query of fashion.⁴¹³ The sub-questions following on from this respectively pointed to becoming on the one hand and befitting on the other hand: "Does dressing in a certain way enable you or me to develop new parts of identity?" and "Or does it fix you or me in a role?"⁴¹⁴ In other words, the discrepancy between both states could also be stated as follows:

Befitting

Body and garment there for (validation of) others

Becoming

Body and garment there for itself and for oneself⁴¹⁵

As identified in the previous chapter, since both body and garment are made up of matter, both are to be considered equal - "becoming" being the process of interaction between those equal matters. However, a slight nuance is in order. Rather than speaking in terms of an equal partnership, "unity in diversity" seems to cover the load more adequately. Drawing from Jane Bennett's infamous phrase "matter is 'vibrant,'" matter

⁴⁰⁸ McDowell, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 10.

⁴⁰⁹ "Worn with Love," *Harper's Bazaar*, September, 2019, https://www.shahidhabari.com/wpcontent/uploads/2019/08/FEATURE-FASHION-MEMOIR-V2_pdf_spread.pdf.

⁴¹⁰ Van de Peer, "Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration."

⁴¹¹ "Fancy dress," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fancy-dress>.

⁴¹² "Disguise," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/disguise>.

⁴¹³ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 167-168.

⁴¹⁴ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 168.

⁴¹⁵ Orbach, *Bodies*, 72.

is ascribed a certain vibrancy.⁴¹⁶ So all matter, whether carnal or sartorial, is equal in that it vibrates at a certain frequency. However, the resonance will differ depending on the matter concerned. Anneke Smelik's wording of "[p]eople and things are not separate entities but constitute one another in the process of becoming," encompassed this subtle nuance.⁴¹⁷ Simply by opting for the verb "to constitute," Smelik alluded to the symbiotic nature of a body and a garment in the process of becoming. Aware of this nuance, "becoming" can be rephrased as a symbiosis between body and garment, both recognised in their equality as vibrant matter yet distinct by their specific type of matter. Where someone may experience some difficulties to perceive oneself equal to so-called "objects," this threshold is lowered by the nuance of equal yet distinct matter. A recognition as such paves the way to the state of becoming. So, interaction remains key: becoming entailing a nuance of equal yet distinct and this nuance in turn a stepping stone to the process of becoming.

Treated equally as matter in the process of becoming, body and garment relate to each other as communicating vessels: entities in their own right yet mutually committed, interaction being key.⁴¹⁸ Initially, Colin McDowell's portrait of the act of dress may seem to measure up to this understanding of becoming: "[...] ultimately we do not dress for other people; we dress only for ourselves and what we perceive as our physical inadequacies and imperfections [...] we dress to reinforce how we see ourselves, to give us comfort, help us to belong (or not) and to instil a feeling of well-being and confidence when facing the world."⁴¹⁹ However, the question arises to what extent we are in fact exempt from the gaze of other people. Although McDowell mentioned comfort (the feeling to strive for in fashion), the sense of comfort spoken of here is obtained by the visual, instead of by engagement in the tactile.⁴²⁰ Unconsciously then, one limits the self to a supposed and/or narrow sense of comfort. Instead, this visual concern towards the body should be redirected to a material/tactile concern of both body and garment. To obtain comfort in the truest sense of the word, a sensitivity to matter of both components cannot be ignored. With matter as the binding agent, the process of becoming is the first step towards an experience of comfort.

Comfort = matter of body + garment

Becoming = material entanglement of body + garment

⇒ Comfort ≈ becoming

Lucia Ruggerone described the experience of wearing as an illustration of "[...] perpetual becomings, events in which our bodies transform as a result of encounters with other bodies (human and non-human)."⁴²¹ What she described here under the term of becoming, can be seen as the more authentic way of dress. In the process of becoming, one is not concerned with fitting a certain mould, as is the case with befitting. Ultimately, what one is after is a sense of comfort.⁴²² However, consumed

⁴¹⁶ Smelik, "New Materialism," 34.

⁴¹⁷ Smelik, "New Materialism," 39.

⁴¹⁸ Smelik, "New Materialism," 39.

⁴¹⁹ McDowell, *The Anatomy of Fashion*, 9.

⁴²⁰ Tajadura-Jiménez, Väljamäe and Kuusk, "Altering One's Body-Perception."

⁴²¹ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 580.

⁴²² Tajadura-Jiménez, Väljamäe and Kuusk, "Altering One's Body-Perception."

by this introjection of a (visual) mould, true comfort will remain out of reach. When dressing for others (befitting), it concerns social comfort. Whereas when dressing for oneself (becoming) - and in the process of doing so acknowledging both the body and garment(s) as matter, therefore as agencies - comfort in its truest form is given the opportunity to arise. As mentioned earlier on, Todd Robinson's "poise" absorbed comfort in its broadest sense: "[...] a somatically experienced sense of physical and/or social comfort."⁴²³ However, despite the (more than right) reconciliation of comfort with experience, Robinson addressed physical as well as social comfort, which he juxtaposed by the conjunction "and/or." In doing so, Robinson suggested the possibility of social comfort in a singular sense. However, since there would be no sense of physical comfort, and thus no presumption of any form of material engagement, Robinson's "either-or" reading side-lines becoming in favour of befitting. In other words, having conceptualised "poise" precisely to restore fashion in its sensorial honour, Robinson's thinking in terms of "either-or" seems rather counterproductive. That is not to say, however, that social comfort cannot be achieved outside a state of befitting. Becoming can feature physical as well as social comfort, albeit not in any random order. Since interaction between (equal) matter is what defines the process of becoming, the primary comfort zone is evermore allocated to physical comfort, to be understood as the joint effort of being in tune with both body and garment. In a natural course of events then, social comfort may arise subsequently to this sense of feeling good in oneself, albeit a more intrinsic cultivated social comfort, as opposed to the docile nature of befitting. So, becoming entails the prospect of both physical and social comfort, the "and" part of Robinson's conjunction therefore indeed feasible.

To speak in terms of "prospect" here is a very deliberate choice. Despite "becoming" generally mentioned in proximity to comfort, the two are not intrinsically linked. Indeed, comfort can be seen as the ultimate state of becoming. However, starting to dress for oneself powered by an awareness for matter as twofold (body-garment) - the self thus "becoming" - is not to say that one will automatically be met with a sense of comfort. To put it in a fashion-like manner, there is no one size fits all, neither in fit as mere cut nor in fit as both cut and feeling. What is being alluded to here, is the perpetuity of becoming, which in itself is contained in its continuous tense. As reflected in Otto von Busch' "Love Songs" - folding back to Georg Simmel's phrasing that "[...] fashion *never is*, it is *always becoming*" - the only tense endured by fashion is the continuous tense.⁴²⁴ This "maintenance" side to fashion surfaced beautifully in the "Interview" feature of identity L.V.L.⁴²⁵ Asked whether or not she would consider herself as someone with a strong sense of self when it comes to her style, she reflected on both the past and the present, indicating her self-journey from "befitting" to "becoming."⁴²⁶ But although no longer as easily mouldable as she once was, to not fall back into the habit of *befitting*, she has to actively maintain the *becoming* state of mind. After all, it is a lifelong balancing act. By his record of a feeling agency, Robinson's "poise" equally testified to this ongoing nature. Feelings namely do not comply with cues, as was covered extensively in the

⁴²³ Robinson, "Attaining Pose," 452.

⁴²⁴ Von Busch, "Love Songs."

⁴²⁵ Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.

⁴²⁶ Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.

lived experience. Whereas some did reach the point of comfort, others did not.⁴²⁷ However, that is not to say that those in the second category did not “live up to the expectation.” Since - hence the wording of “prospect” - there never was a promise of comfort upon agreement to participate in the lived experience. Not once the identities were told they would be met with comfort from the very start nor at the end of the line. Indeed the prospect was there, yet how it would eventually turn out could - for the time being - only be answered by a question mark. Just like one cannot force genuine happiness, neither can one evoke comfort on demand. Moreover, comfort is given meaning according to one’s individual requirements, as was also shown in both the *FASHION(non)SENSE* lived experience as well as in the wardrobe stories conducted by Lisa Heinze: “‘Feeling comfortable’ can mean you ‘feel like yourself’ or that the garment fits the occasion, but participants most often discussed physical comfort.”⁴²⁸ So comfort cannot be forced neither is it a universal experience, not even for one and the same person, since fashion is no isolated matter.⁴²⁹ There is a social aspect to fashion that cannot be ignored nor fully regulated.⁴³⁰ The way of handling this social aspect is, however, open to interpretation. Therein lies the difference between befitting and becoming.

Befitting

Social aspect: leading role

Becoming

Social aspect: supporting role

As previously discussed, the social aspect is not exclusive to the state of befitting. However, it does concern a slightly different casting. In *Fashioning the Frame*, Warwick and Cavallaro used the following metaphor to frame the role of the social aspect in the process of becoming: “As in the phenomenon of contagion, in the process of transmission of affects between dress and the body, what is at stake is never a singular entity but rather a collectivity. Transmission inevitably occurs on a communal scale, since the individual body, besides being exposed to the direct material influence of the clothes it literally wears, is also open to contamination by other individuals’ clothed bodies [...]”⁴³¹ In a state of befitting, one lets the social get the better of oneself, therefore dressing to fit a certain pattern of (visual) expectations, confirmed by courtesy of Van de Peer: “Because intimacy becomes very difficult when everyone else is a potential judge, the dominant view of clothes as a resource to represent ourselves in a competitive world blinds us to the intricate relation clothes have with the body, and ultimately to the way clothes hold the potential to open up an affective horizon of experience where people sense the capacity of dress as an intimate encounter between the self, object and the other.”⁴³² Living up to such expectations, one is under the impression of feeling comfortable, when in fact it concerns a sense of social comfort triggered by external validation. Although identity M.L. felt like she deviated from the matter, her brief footnote on the discomfort of wearing a bra could not have been more apt.⁴³³ Driven by social sentiment,

⁴²⁷ Scrayen, *Logbooks*.

⁴²⁸ Heinze, “Wardrobe Stories,” 862.

⁴²⁹ Von Busch, “Love Songs.”

⁴³⁰ Karen Tranberg Hansen, “The World in Dress: Anthropological Perspectives on Clothing, Fashion, and Culture,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (October 2004): 373, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143805>.

⁴³¹ Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 118.

⁴³² Van de Peer, “Identity, Mind-Body and Acceleration.”

⁴³³ M. Lenaers, “Logbook,” 94.

the act of wearing a bra can feel as an imperative norm. However, as seen, a norm does not imply an inevitable commitment. In the instance of fashion, the only commitment one should be concerned with is the mutual commitment from body to garment. In the comfort of her own home, identity M.L. will feel inclined to give in to such a mutual commitment, shedding the restrictiveness of the bra she endured during the day.⁴³⁴ However, this mutual commitment is confined within the domestic walls, hidden from potential lurking eyes expecting her to live up to the norm. Unlike with becoming, the only sense that seems to matter here is sight. Whereas with *befitting* one is after external validation, when it comes to *becoming* one is more self-centred, however, in a non-egocentric way. Rather, this self-centeredness is to be understood as a turning inwards, as opposed to one's concern of an external gaze. In her concluding thought on the lived experience, identity H.B. aptly covered this somewhat novel reading of self-centeredness, encouraging others to perform a similar experience to "[...] dwell on their emotions and not on others' opinions. This should not be considered as selfish, but rather as an act of self-care."⁴³⁵ Fashion in terms of "becoming" is to dress without engaging in pre-cut patterns, omitting any sense of "fitting in" as is expected. If there is to be a feature of social comfort within the state of becoming, it will arise as an offshoot of physical comfort. When one feels good - powered by (material) alignment of both body and garment (becoming) - this sense of feeling good tends to be transmitted to one's social environment. So in the instance of becoming, social comfort comes from within.

Befitting

Social comfort > physical comfort
 ⇨ Outward concern

Becoming

Physical comfort > social comfort
 ⇨ Inward concern

On the second day of the lived experience, identity N.H. felt socially targeted because of his garment "choice" - in quotes as it was more like a directive than it was a choice. Whereas the situation he found himself in might have "cursed" someone else - less in tune with oneself - with the desire to blend in with the crowd, because of his strong sense of self, identity N.H. could not have felt any less indifferent.⁴³⁶ What struck him most was not others' perception of him as much as the mere fact of others' bother to form such a perception.⁴³⁷ There is no social pressure at the root of his (fashion)identity. As he put it so eloquently: "Personally, I know what I don't want, the rest comes from chance and creativity."⁴³⁸ This diligence to his "self" also shone through in his embodied image (image annex 10), on which he noted the following: "This illustration shows exactly what wearing this garment, my own style and who I am mean to me: an individuality in the midst of a grey crowd, a grey crowd that doesn't shy away from criticising that which is different and unknown. It's a conscious choice to be myself, not so much to be 'different' but simply because it feels right to me."⁴³⁹ If identity N.H. was to answer the following question, the first option would most likely not even cross his mind.

⁴³⁴ M. Lenaers, "Logbook," 94.

⁴³⁵ Bosmans, "Logbook," 44.

⁴³⁶ Haegeman, "Logbook," 126.

⁴³⁷ Haegeman, "Logbook," 129.

⁴³⁸ Haegeman, "Logbook," 129.

⁴³⁹ Haegeman, "Logbook," 130.

What is considered desirable?

- A. For a garment to shape the body?
- B. For a garment to merge with the body?

Alternatively then, befitting and becoming can each be allocated to a particular verb:

Befitting	↔	Becoming
To shape	↔	To merge

As we can read in Julia Valle-Noronha's "The Body within the Clothes," it is argued by some that "[...] humans shape things, and things shape humans [...]." ⁴⁴⁰ If this was to be applied to fashion, this would mean the recognition of fashion as a commitment rather than a one-way transaction. Taking note of both body and garment, it seems fitting to assume a state of becoming is concerned here. However, despite what seems to echo some sort of body-garment interaction, the phrase inclines more to *befitting* than it does to *becoming*. In order to grasp the process of becoming in all its nuances, it would seem more beneficial to speak in terms of *merge* rather than *shape*. Rephrased, this would amount to "humans *merge with* things, and things *merge with* humans." ⁴⁴¹ What distinguishes becoming from befitting, is the interaction between body and garment as equal yet different matter. ⁴⁴² To be shaped by clothes is no ideal to pursue. Rather, a body and a garment should interact on equal footing, neither one ever claiming the lion's share: "People and things are not separate entities but constitute one another in the process of becoming." ⁴⁴³ Body and garment should merge into a whole, without loss of dignity on either side, the garment being as much part of one's persona as one's persona part of the garment, as articulated by identity J.B. ⁴⁴⁴ Shifting from a mindset of befitting to one of becoming, one is enlightened with the experience fashion truly is: an embodied sensation, dress as mere act eclipsed by dress as overall experience. Kaj Ilmonen spoke in terms of a "work of hybridization," clarified by Alison Gill and Abby Mellick Lopes as "[...] the mutual making of self and world in acts of use in which neither practice, nor artefact, remain intact." ⁴⁴⁵ Although this may seem at odds with becoming as the merger of body and garment, "not intact" should be understood as in "no longer self-reliant." Because of the interaction that is key to the process of becoming, body and garment become intertwined in the act of dress, therefore no longer "intact" as previously known.

As both components merge, one is engaged in more than the simple act of dress. Becoming implies a degree of involvement beyond the mere wearing, a practice including everything else that comes with it. An equal for this state of mind can be found in critical fashion studies, seeing as this field "[...] also remains attuned to the everyday and sometimes more mundane practices and activities of fashion, such as falling in love with a garment, curating a wardrobe, navigating value beyond monetary

⁴⁴⁰ Julia Valle-Noronha, "The Body within the Clothes: A Case Study on Clothing Design Practice from a Practitioner Viewpoint" (Paper, Aalto University, School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Finland, 2017), 15, http://artofresearch2017.aalto.fi/papers/16_Valle.pdf.

⁴⁴¹ Valle-Noronha, "The Body within the Clothes," 15.

⁴⁴² Smith, "Clothes without Bodies," 348.

⁴⁴³ Smelik, "New Materialism," 39.

⁴⁴⁴ Branswijck, "Logbook," 144.

⁴⁴⁵ Gill and Lopes, "On Wearing," 309.

worth, or repairing and caring for one's clothes."⁴⁴⁶ In this regard, fashion in terms of "becoming" borders more on the notion of *performance* than on that of mere *act*.

Act /ækt/ • noun

Behaviour that hides your real feelings or intentions⁴⁴⁷

Performance /pə'fɔ:.məns/ • noun

An action or type of behaviour that involves a lot of attention to detail or small matters⁴⁴⁸

This brings us back to the metaphor of fancy dress at the beginning of this paragraph. The ambiguity thereof - due to the echo of building a wardrobe of alter egos untrue to oneself - can now be further distinguished in fancy dress as either *act* or *performance*, with "act" conform to befitting and "performance" conform to becoming. In both instances, one "acts" from a dress-up box of egos. However, there is indeed a significant difference. In the case of befitting, one builds a wardrobe of costumed alter egos, dressing to fit a certain pattern of (visual) expectations, whereas becoming at all times concerns one's very own ego.

Befitting

Acting on a norm

Becoming

Performing oneself

This sense of self or ego will, however, also differ - albeit according to the experienced feeling that arises in the process of becoming. Since a same garment will not always add up to one and the same (and perhaps desired) effect/affect.⁴⁴⁹ During the intense engagement with the pre-selected garment, identity N.H. on his turn came to a similar realisation: "It made me realise that a garment, no matter how specific, is not decisive for a certain style. Rather, one's interpretation in combination with their personality is what makes for a unique whole."⁴⁵⁰ So in a way, to dress (up) is to play dress-up. Whether the outcome will be a case of becoming or befitting will depend entirely on one's incentive, respectively to please oneself or to please others. And that perseverance pays, can be highlighted by the "self-unfolding" of identity H.B. Admittedly (yet) too insecure to truly dress for herself, the discomfort she initially experienced gradually made way for a sense of comfort, as she focussed less on her body and how it looked and more on how she herself felt.⁴⁵¹ Whereas on day one she was still very much acting from an alter ego - the mindset she had gotten accustomed to - the lived experience put her in touch with her embodied self/ego. In other words, she went through the discomfort of "befitting" to ultimately be rewarded with the comfort of "becoming." What once felt like a sincere or true ego to her, in hindsight turned out to be a (befitting) alter ego, trying to comply with social expectations. Instigated by the forced setting of the lived experience, identity H.B. felt enlivened by a transformative feeling: "[...] as if I could reinvent myself by way

⁴⁴⁶ Lusty, "Fashion Futures and Critical Fashion Studies," 6.

⁴⁴⁷ "Act," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/act>.

⁴⁴⁸ "Performance," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/performance>.

⁴⁴⁹ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 85.

⁴⁵⁰ Haegeman, "Logbook," 129.

⁴⁵¹ Bosmans, "Logbook," 38.

of sensing the outfit."⁴⁵² Her embodied image - a diptych (image annex 11-12) - vouched for this sensorial turnaround, twists and turns alternating with leeway to wonder.⁴⁵³ At the other end of the spectrum, identity E.V.d.H. is always open to "self-seek" discomfort with the aim of challenging himself: "I try to rediscover myself every time I assemble an outfit. When a piece of clothing feels like an adventure, it's the right one."⁴⁵⁴ And although the pre-selected garment felt like quite a fail-safe match to his style, it proved to be much more of a challenge than he anticipated.⁴⁵⁵ His candid confession of the experience as surprisingly confronting is to be considered very touching and valuable to this dissertation:⁴⁵⁶

"In hindsight, having to identify the impressions and feelings of clothing is more difficult than I initially thought. The trial and error of the description process allows you to "discover" your unconscious embodied experience of clothes as well as the physical experience in general. Very confronting, surprisingly confronting actually. In a way, the embodied sensation is very clearly perceptible as an abstract emotion in your head. However, having to put a name to something so obvious to you, that I found very difficult. Since the garment blended in so well with my everyday style, this experience seemed all the more confronting. By consciously dwelling on the garment and the embodied feeling, I was then challenged to consciously think about my general embodied experience with clothes. Deeply rooted feelings/emotions that had become so obvious to me on an unconscious level, I now had to suddenly identify, a challenge to say the least."⁴⁵⁷

- E.V.d.H.

⁴⁵² Bosmans, "Logbook," 45.

⁴⁵³ Bosmans, "Logbook," 45.

⁴⁵⁴ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 59.

⁴⁵⁵ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 59.

⁴⁵⁶ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 59.

⁴⁵⁷ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 59.

To remind. . .

Language ≠ fashion

Garments = materiality + agency

Experience of clothes > decipherment of clothes

Material ≈ tone of voice of a garment

Fashion "matters"

Befitting >< becoming ≈ external >< internal validation

Body + garment = equal yet distinct matter (INTERACTION)

Becoming ≠ fitting the mould

= a sense of comfort (first physical, then social)

Comfort ≠ universal experience

III. EMBODIMENT

Open-minded versus mono-minded

THOUGHTS

Although considered to be an open-minded field, fashion in itself seems to sustain a normative image of the human body. As progressive of an industry in terms of designs, the more persistent fashion seems to be when it comes to the physical silhouette flaunting these designs. Therefore, it seems more valid to surrender this so-called virtue of open-mindedness and instead think of fashion as maintaining a rather mono-minded mindset in terms of the physical silhouette.

As established from this dissertation, both body and garment are indispensable to the achievement of embodiment. Within fashion imagery, however, the requirement of both is often taken too literally. As a result thereof, it is precisely the embodiment that is lacking.⁴⁵⁸ In imaging, the key factor is not - and never was for that matter - the sartorial wearing experience.⁴⁵⁹ What is considered significant is not the framing of a body-garment inflection, but rather the framing of a (unconscious) body-garment infliction.⁴⁶⁰

Inflection /ɪnˈflek.tʃən/ • noun

Change in the quality of the voice, often showing an emotion⁴⁶¹

Infliction /ɪnˈflɪk.tʃən/ • noun

The action of forcing someone to experience something very unpleasant⁴⁶²

Imaging does not convey the mutual commitment of body to garment as it does the visual currency of both components. The entangled interaction that could make for the awakening of embodiment seems to be beside the point. Instead, fashion imagery almost burdens us with visuals of a forced symphony. What is conveyed through the image as known to us, is not fashion at its best. Just like Otto Von Busch made the case for music, he stated that "[...] when fashion works best, we feel it in our bodies."⁴⁶³ Drawing from his parallel between love songs and fashion, Von Busch touched on the importance of a feeling agency within fashion. When no feeling notice is taken - body and garment therefore as the sole two, and above all absolute, actors of the framing - fashion's aesthetic harmony will add up to a static composition, intangible in its embodied affect.⁴⁶⁴ Quoted by Lucy Gundry in *Haptic Aesthetics of Dress in the Contemporary Exhibition Space*, Gabriele Brandstetter's work on the pose - and more specifically her paradox of the pose - asserted to this "static-ness" - pose defined as "no more than a brief moment of stillness that carves definition for a figure out of a flowing and undefined state of blended motions."⁴⁶⁵ Here, the alternative imagery as intended by *FASHION(non)SENSE* can be seen as an attempt to increase the shutter speed of the lens by calling forth the feeling agency, therefore more movement to be

⁴⁵⁸ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

⁴⁵⁹ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 80.

⁴⁶⁰ Sweetman, "Shop-Window Dummies?," 59.

⁴⁶¹ "Inflection," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/inflection>.

⁴⁶² "Infliction," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/infliction>.

⁴⁶³ Von Busch, "Love Songs."

⁴⁶⁴ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 37.

⁴⁶⁵ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 184.

captured. Of course it concerns a figurative sense of acceleration, since the extra dimension of movement is derived from the emotional, the motional lack of "pose" therefore on the mend. So, in the spirit of *FASHION(non)SENSE*, pose could be redefined as that which "carves definition for an identity out of a flowing and undefined state of blended emotions."⁴⁶⁶ As the saying goes, it takes two to tango. Likewise, it takes two to embody - the "two" of embodiment referring to a body and a garment. However, in both instances there is the tacit third partner of feeling(s).

Tango	=	body	+	body	+ feeling(s)
Embodiment	=	body	+	garment	+ feeling(s)

The lack of feeling conveyed in imagery instils in consumers of fashion - both of content as well as goods - a (unconscious) sense of loss precisely of this feeling component. Affirmative to the definition of "catalogue culture" - coined in the "Terms & conditions" feature prior to this dissertation - the focal point always seems to be the look, not the feel.⁴⁶⁷ Knowing that embodiment supposes three components - body, garment(s) and feeling(s) - the missing link of the latter is bound to have an effect on one's embodied perception. Through the lived experience, the identities gained insight in Susan Kaiser's question as to how one can recognise whether or not - in terms of oneself - the look is the prime focus.⁴⁶⁸ In turn, the data of their logbooks provided insight into the impact of catalogue culture on the embodied experience of fashion. Thrown off course by what Susan Orbach described as "[...] an obsessive cultural focus on the body," we find ourselves in a culture of judgement, both reflected as well as replicated in fashion imagery.⁴⁶⁹ There is, however, a transformative lining to fashion, which is profoundly captured in Frances Corner's manifesto-like publication *Why Fashion Matters*: "The fashion industry should remember this: fashion has the power to make us feel good about ourselves. Imagine if the messages that greeted us every time we opened up a fashion magazine were diverse and overwhelmingly positive - how different would we feel?"⁴⁷⁰ However, fashion's diagnosis is one of stubbornly clinging on to a normative body image, this norm then marketed to sell a look.⁴⁷¹ Regardless of "look" interpreted either in terms of appearance or as a certain outlook, it goes hand in hand with the sense of sight. And although "[v]ision [...] is necessarily inscribed in contingent material bodies [...]," if we are to believe the fashion industry, the notion of a singular measure of seeing and representing remains tenable.⁴⁷² However, orchestrated by the soundtrack of monotonous bodies, fashion may need some desperate retailoring in its department of supposed open-mindedness.⁴⁷³

Living in what seems to be a three-dimensional world besotted by the two-dimensional, we tend to project our lives onto picture planes. Instigated by the fashion-marketed body image, the body folds into a flat surface. Indeed not a body but *the* body, since fashion mostly turns to a generic bodily physique.⁴⁷⁴ In the

⁴⁶⁶ Gundry, "Haptic Aesthetics of Dress," 184.

⁴⁶⁷ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 15.

⁴⁶⁸ Kaiser, "Minding Appearances," 79.

⁴⁶⁹ Orbach, *Bodies*, 72.; McClendon, "The Body: Fashion and Physique," 156.

⁴⁷⁰ Corner, *Why Fashion Matters*, 94.

⁴⁷¹ Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?," 258.; Gill and Lopes, "On Wearing," 312.

⁴⁷² Warwick and Cavallaro, *Fashioning the Frame*, 21.

⁴⁷³ Sweetman, "Shop-Window Dummies?," 59.

⁴⁷⁴ Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 200.

conversion from initial recording to final imaging, what already was a flat body even in three-dimensional terms, now is flattened even more to fit the canvas, whether that is the pages of a magazine or a digital screen. This flattening unfolds in two ways, literally as in omitting a physical dimension, as well as figuratively as in being stripped of sentience. This in turn has a knock-on effect on the worn and portrayed garments, which as a result thereof have to surrender to a shallow draft of an object, when in fact they deserve the right to be treated like a subject alike.⁴⁷⁵ All too often, however, fashion as image triumphs over the "props" that actually inhabit those fashion images.⁴⁷⁶ So, body and garment may be portrayed fair by norms of aesthetics, they are far from treated fair in terms of their existence.

Fair /feə/ • adjective

I. Beautiful⁴⁷⁷

II. Treating someone in a way that is right or reasonable⁴⁷⁸

The turn from analogue to digital - what could have been the start of a revolution - soon became just another tool of the institute targeted in this very revolution. As quoted by Alyson Walsh in a published panel discussion on *Body and Physique*, an exhibition courtesy of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York: "[...] social media has revolutionized the fashion industry. It's really changed, it's shaken it up, it's much more diverse now, but [...] brands have sort of jumped in on the bandwagon and then it's gone back to almost being like a magazine."⁴⁷⁹ Social media are the magazines of this era, the difference being the substitution of paper touch for touchscreens. And although the medium may have changed, the content mostly remained of a similar nature, as did the consumption of this content. The common denominator of traditional and novel fashion media - respectively magazines and social media - is and remains a flat image surface. In recent times, this "surfacing" even trickled down to the curatorial field. Not spared of the digital turn, museums ventured out to fathom the alternative of virtual exhibitions.⁴⁸⁰ However, as Flavia Loscialpo picked up in Mary Anne Staniszewski's work on the topic of display, there is - in a similar vein with magazines and social media - "[...] a disembodiment from the self, for the physical interaction with an object is absent."⁴⁸¹ Like Loscialpo, Kate Haug turned to the phenomenon of curatorial digitalisation, reflected in "Touching to See."⁴⁸² Gathered from Haug's account on "twentieth century visuality," art is to be consumed or absorbed in the real world, not through a virtual replica; if not, art risks being casted in a monotonous and generic mould.⁴⁸³ Following phrase courtesy of Haug coincides with the common thread that runs throughout *FASHION(non)SENSE*: "If a picture is worth a thousand words, then it is probably missing a million sensations."⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁷⁵ Hansen, "The World in Dress," 387.

⁴⁷⁶ Borkopp-Restle, McNeil et al., "Museums and the Making of Textile Histories," 45.

⁴⁷⁷ "Fair," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fair>.

⁴⁷⁸ "Fair."

⁴⁷⁹ Entwistle, Frankling et al., "Fashion Diversity," 315.

⁴⁸⁰ Loscialpo, "Fashion Exhibitions in the Digital Age," 225.

⁴⁸¹ Loscialpo, "Fashion Exhibitions in the Digital Age," 240.

⁴⁸² Haug, "Touching to See."

⁴⁸³ Haug, "Touching to See."

⁴⁸⁴ Haug, "Touching to See."

Within the art domain that is fashion, there has been - scarce yet notable - record of some endeavours to counterbalance this affective "deficiency," stemming from a sincere fervour to broaden the scope of sartorial perception.⁴⁸⁵ Among those resilient voices is Belgium designer Dries Van Noten, who fulfils the conditions of what Marco Pecorari in *Fashion Remains* defined as "a haptic fashion image."⁴⁸⁶ Images of this nature surpass the mere optic visuality in favour of an incentive of tactility.⁴⁸⁷ The viewer is spurred on to get a sense of certain garment qualities instead of blindly assimilating the image features.⁴⁸⁸ Illustrated by Pecorari by means of Dries Van Noten's autumn/winter 06/07 collection, Van Noten's more recent disclosure of scanned fabrics tied to his autumn/winter 21/22 collection, too could be interpreted as a deviation from traditional imagery.⁴⁸⁹ In a time span of fifteen years, the designer's approach to imagery unfolded from optic-haptic montages in catalogues to optic-haptic montages on social media. Indeed, in both instances the haptic image - respectively sensorial close-ups of fabrics and finishes and scanned prints of fabrics and garments - is chaperoned by a "generic" body-garment constellation.⁴⁹⁰ Yet there is a difference in that the autumn/winter 06/07 catalogue shows both images simultaneously in a double page spread (image annex 13), whereas on Instagram they are separated by means of a carousel post, the "generic" image therefore hidden up until one click to the right or swipe to the left (image annex 14-19).⁴⁹¹ However, it remains clear that Van Noten's intention - as is that of *FASHION(non)SENSE* - was and is not to omit but rather complement optic fashion imagery. Vetoing optic visuality altogether would be unrealistic, since fashion will always be tied to the visual to some degree.⁴⁹² However, through the lived experience, *FASHION(non)SENSE* further elaborated on the cultivation of alternative fashion imagery by granting it a third option, namely that of embodied images. Whereas the objective of haptic images like those of Dries Van Noten is to evoke a literal sense of touch within the viewer, embodied images as can be found in the logbooks mainly want to give a voice to affective touch.⁴⁹³

Haptic fashion image

Physical feeling of a garment⁴⁹⁴

Haptic ≈ cutaneous touch

Embodied fashion image

Affective feeling of a garment

Embodied ≈ conscious touch

Straying away from the affirmative relation between garments and bodies in "generic" fashion imagery, the lived experience tied to this dissertation was not set up as leeway to a pleasant experience of embodiment.⁴⁹⁵ Ultimately one's heart should be set on reaching a level of embodiment where mind and body coincide, one's self therefore honoured in all its senses. However, far more interesting and illustrative within the framework of this dissertation, was to push the identities out of their individual comfort zones, precisely to make them aware of their own comfort zone and its very

⁴⁸⁵ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 146.

⁴⁸⁶ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 146-147.

⁴⁸⁷ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 147.

⁴⁸⁸ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

⁴⁸⁹ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 146.

⁴⁹⁰ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 146.

⁴⁹¹ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 146.

⁴⁹² Valle-Noronha, "Becoming with Clothes," 15.

⁴⁹³ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 147.

⁴⁹⁴ Pecorari, *Fashion Remains*, 146.

⁴⁹⁵ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

nature, whether positive or negative. In the "Review" feature of her lived experience, identity M.V. acknowledged this: "I feel like when you stay in your comfort zone for a long time, you kind of lose sight of your own identity. This experiment reminded me why I dress the way I do, which I really appreciated."⁴⁹⁶ Already succeeded in its purpose for at least one person, *FASHION(non)SENSE* also anticipated what could have resulted in eleven images of mere embodied *comfort*. The meticulous quest for a bold yet charming garment came through in eleven images of sincere embodiment, culminating in a good balance of both *comfort* as well as *discomfort*. With the lived experience plotted as comfort-defying rather than comfort-soothing, the affective touch of fashion was given scope to be experienced as it otherwise never would, that is, beyond the obvious route of visual disclosure of both oneself and one's chosen outfit.

This "visual suspension" was then extrapolated to the embodied images the identities were asked to assemble. The only condition they had to comply with was that their final image would not comply with any conditions of "generic" fashion imagery. They were given free rein to turn to any outlet and medium of their choice as long as they stayed clear of a mirroring interpretation of both body and garment. Anneke Smelik's concluding entry on Gilles Deleuze in *Thinking through Fashion* captured as no other why the lived experience was drafted out this way: "The main point of Deleuze's thought is to understand the prevailing regime of affect today, and fashion may be one of the best entries to take the temperature of the present. The next step is to search for possible pockets of resistance; how and where does fashion resist the present? For Deleuze resistance can be achieved by creativity. [...] The act of thinking is for Gilles Deleuze an encounter with what you do not know (yet). It is therefore always a creative act [...]"⁴⁹⁷ In other words, the question of fashion (imagery) can be rephrased as a question of invention.⁴⁹⁸ Unburdened by normative rules of conduct in terms of visual framing, the identities started with a *tabula rasa*, seen as both a blessing and a curse. In a way, they had to break free from all that was previously known to them, letting go of the obvious without knowing where it would lead to. In an almost surrealist-like manner, they found themselves in a position to frame their embodied narratives as Lucia Ruggerone envisioned, that is, with the permission "[...] to use styles of expression produced either on the spur of the moment [...] or creatively suggested with the aid of metaphors, pictures, drawings, analogies etc."⁴⁹⁹

Surrealism /sə'ri:ə.li.zəm/ • noun

Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express - verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner - the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern.⁵⁰⁰

Not restrained by any form of formal etiquette in terms of the embodied image, it was up to the identities to then translate this "carte blanche" to the actual lived

⁴⁹⁶ Vieren, "Logbook," 86.

⁴⁹⁷ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 180.

⁴⁹⁸ Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze," 181.

⁴⁹⁹ Ruggerone, "The Feeling of Being Dressed," 587.

⁵⁰⁰ Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis*, 39.

experience with the garment, in the omission of the mere visual. Like Anna Pollice did in the context of "Marks of Obsession," *FASHION(non)SENSE* too explored the "attempts to disrupt a monolithic fashion image."⁵⁰¹ This dissertation's alternative outcome of embodied imagery is to be seen as an expression of the identities' subjectivity disengaged from the subject's physique, unfolding the narrow-minded notions of fashion photography.⁵⁰² So, *FASHION(non)SENSE* assimilates to what Eugenie Shinkle in "Uneasy Bodies" coined as "[...] a movement which, like the fashioned body it depicts, is at once visual and visceral, personal and social."⁵⁰³

⁵⁰¹ Pollice, "Marks of Obsession."

⁵⁰² Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

⁵⁰³ Shinkle, "Uneasy Bodies."

THOUGHTS

The outlets distilled from the lived experiences can be interpreted as self-assemblages, capturing the embodiment of the identities. Characterised by visual abstraction of both body and garment, the eleven images in turn represent a counterbalance to fashion imagery as we know it, a venture on alternative imagery concerned with a renewed notice for the sentient nature of fashion. Assembled as a portfolio, these embodied images almost manifest an act of rebellion, defying catalogue culture.

Like “fold” and “becoming,” “assemblage” is a term derived from New Materialist thought, a vehicle in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s philosophy.⁵⁰⁴ As a concept, it is “an attempt to describe [the] interaction or connection between matter and force at the ontological level.”⁵⁰⁵ With the knowledge obtained in the subchapter “Counterpoise: becoming > befitting,” becoming can be seen as a token of assemblage. To recapitulate, the (ongoing) process of becoming entailed the adoption of a non-dualist mindset based on an interaction between equal yet different matter, in this instance of the so-called body-garment duality. In other words, entering the state of becoming would amount to one’s adoption of affective practices to assemble the self, one’s true self.⁵⁰⁶ However, a note that cannot be missed is that “[...] an assemblage is a multiplicity, neither a part nor a whole.”⁵⁰⁷ When a body and garment merge - ultimately the objective of becoming - one is granted a sense of self. This self-assemblage, however, is neither a part of the self nor is it the whole self. Rather, it concerns one of many “selves” in one’s dress-up box of egos - as previously seen, egos not to be understood as alter egos but as the multiplicity of one’s very own ego. In concrete terms, one’s sense of self will differ according to one’s state of mind as well as to the mutual relationship of clothes, that is, of one garment to another. Since a same garment - however, combined in several ways - will not always add up to one and the same, and perhaps desired, effect/affect. Neither feelings nor garments comply with cues. It is a particular interaction in a particular moment that will make for a particular assemblage of one of one’s many selves.

I. What happened when confronted with a pre-selected garment over the course of three days?

By the end of the lived experience, nearly all - if not all - identities recounted a “renewed” awareness of the agency of clothes. Astounded by just how different - whether in a positive or negative way - clothes can make you feel, their eyes - or better their senses - were (re)opened to the embodied experience of fashion. The lived experience challenged the identities to the engagement with one and the same garment - pre-selected for that matter. And

⁵⁰⁴ Nail, “What is an Assemblage?,” 21.

⁵⁰⁵ Seely, “How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?,” 250.

⁵⁰⁶ Ye, “Not Just ‘The Look,’” 1.

⁵⁰⁷ Nail, “What is an Assemblage?,” 23.

although the experience only lasted for a short amount of time of three days, the "selves" they might have been blind to before, suddenly became very apparent and therefore undeniable. For those who (eventually) found comfort in the garment, this meant the unveiling of selves or egos they empathised with. However, those who found themselves out of comfort when wearing the garment, came face to face with (now) alien selves or egos. But as it turned out, all roads lead to a regained sense of one's true self. The "self" has always been there, however, sometimes it may take a momentum outside of oneself to rekindle one's alertness to it. The eleven embodied images obtained through the lived experience can thus be seen as a manifestation of the identities' self-journeys.

II. What happened when asked to reflect on feelings instead of visuals?

The sensorial restriction due to catalogue culture - estimating sight as the most commendable sense - seems to hold the haptic and affective qualities of fashion hostage. *FASHION(non)SENSE* initiated the possibility of a chain reaction towards revaluing those qualities lost in translation, set in motion by an individual return policy to one's self. The premise of this dissertation therefore read that once body and mind are again realigned, and we thus allow ourselves to engage in a sensorial experience with our garments, this imploded dualism may even be transcended, giving free rein to an embodied experience of fashion. Explicitly asked to reflect on what they sensed, the identities were, however, not steered in the direction of either tactile or emotional sensation. Even though this may seem to defy the whole point of this dissertation, it concerned a very deliberate decision. Left to an open-ended interpretation of "sensing," the identities' individual approaches would be all the more telling of the actual importance of *cutaneous* touch to *conscious* touch. This worked out for the better, since the logbooks proved that those who in some way showed an incentive to tactile engagement with the garment - alongside a cultivated sense of self by body-mind alignment - were also those closest to the point of true embodiment.⁵⁰⁸ In other words, there is something to say for the cutaneous touch as gatekeeper to an embodied experience of fashion. If it was not for the brutal honesty of the identities, the lived experience would have been beside the point. Either scenario of them not owning up to how they truly felt or consciously being steered towards tactility, would have led to a controlled experience, rather than a lived experience open to (their) interpretation.

⁵⁰⁸ Vandriessche, "Logbook," 8.; Van Laer, "Logbook," 22.; Van den Heede, "Logbook," 52.; Haegeman, "Logbook," 123.

III. What happened when asked to document embodiment in a non-picture format?

Whereas the main focus of the lived experience may seem to be the embodied images, they should be seen as more of a means to an end, a tool for the identities to reflect on catalogue culture and in the process of doing so reflect on their own stance to it. The embodied images unfolded in an introspective narrative, which was the underlying intention. Asked to create an image based on the sensation(s) "acquired" by living with the pre-selected garment, the identities were challenged to think outside the box of known and solid imagery formats. To go beyond the dimension of mere aesthetic appearance takes more than a simple mirror shot of "a body wearing a garment." As previously mentioned, fashion is more than the sum of its parts. A disengaged representation of body and garment would therefore never be sufficient to grasp fashion's many facets. What should be stressed instead, is the interaction between the body and the garment worn by the body, the same interaction that incited certain sensations in the identities. Not only asked to identify what it was they sensed, but equally to visually - albeit without body or garment as obvious *visual* markers - "translate" their sensation(s), the identities were left to their own devices, to their "selves." What may have felt like a restriction at first, turned out to be the start of that "something else" mentioned earlier on, an experience of fashion beyond the mere aesthetic.⁵⁰⁹ Once the identities overcame this restrictive hurdle, the meaning of "aesthetic" expanded beyond its visual limits. Some of the embodied images and how they related to the identities' lived experience have already been highlighted throughout this dissertation. A closer look at some of the artistic choices of the other identities can be found here:

* **Embodied image L.V.L.** (image annex 20-22)

"The female body that I made is my own feministic interpretation of [Niki] de Saint Phalle's works, combined with contemporary and historic critique on the female form and the way that the fashion world used women's bodies throughout history. My sculpture is created out of clay coated with a colourful note of acrylic paint. The paint colours are chosen by me and correspond to how I felt when wearing the sweater vest. I based the colours on songs that I listened to when dressing for this experiment. [...] I specifically choose to use acrylic paint as it usually shows the strokes of the paintbrush. By doing so, the viewer is confronted with the tactility of the paint and the brush, just like a person is confronted with their own senses when wearing a piece of clothing."⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁹ Seely, "How Do You Dress a Body without Organs?," 263.

⁵¹⁰ Van Laer, "Logbook," 30-31.

* **Embodied image E.V.d.H.** (image annex 23)

"Keywords to my image: colourful, comfort, classic, happiness, aware, and polyvalent. The repetition and overlap of the image fragments represent the pattern of the garment as well as the amount of people surrounding me yet still feeling comfortable when wearing the piece. The sartorial aspects of the image combined with the colour palette in turn represent me and my personal style, to which the garment didn't feel like a burden, but rather my own."⁵¹¹

* **Embodied image P.R.S.** (image annex 24)

"On the days I had to wear the garment, it felt as if I was thrown back in time, stuck in the body of sixteen-year-old Paula again. The me at that time felt very uncomfortable, inappropriate, and unattractive. It was these feelings that resurfaced during the lived experience. What I want to convey with my image, is how the vest manifested itself to me as an externalisation of those negative teenage feelings."⁵¹²

* **Embodied image B.L.** (image annex 25-26)

"With the design I made, I want to show that I have more of a carefree style. The colours spoke to me, but the look and feel of the garment was too "chic" for me personally, too 'neat' almost. When I style myself, I do this by feel, just like I listened to my feeling for this design."⁵¹³

* **Embodied image J.B.** (image annex 27)

"You're just one in the crowd wearing a piece of clothing that makes you feel weird in a way, because it's not what you're used to. However, others are not as aware of this as you yourself probably think."⁵¹⁴

* **Embodied image J.J.** (image annex 28)

"The base of the painting reflects how I felt upon seeing the garment. Everything on top is representative of my ups and downs, both with the garment as is as well as when dressed in the garment. Translated to an image, my three-day adventure with the garment was colourful, luminous yet darkened, smooth as well as rough."⁵¹⁵

⁵¹¹ Van den Heede, "Logbook," 59.

⁵¹² Rodriguez Sardiñas, "Logbook," 73.

⁵¹³ B. Lenaers, "Logbook," 117.

⁵¹⁴ Branswijck, "Logbook," 144.

⁵¹⁵ Jonckheere, "Logbook," 158.

REVIEW

The question as to what the impact is of catalogue culture on the embodied experience of fashion in some way raised more questions than it did answers. There is not a one size fits all answer; fashion is and remains a subjective matter therefore ambiguous. However, a theoretical deep dive into the "body" and "bodice" alongside the practice of a lived experience, did provide the tools to gain a better insight into this intricate matter, one such a tool being one's position on the "befitting-becoming spectrum." Conceptualised as a triptych, *FASHION(non)SENSE* deliberately separated "body" and "bodice" to then be reconciled in genuine "embodiment." By way of interweaving theory and (lived) experience this dissertation audited the disparity between sight and touch within fashion (imagery), with the aim to tilt the imbalance in favour of the sense of touch, the premised gatekeeper to an embodied experience of fashion.

The threefold division of "body," "bodice," and "embodiment" helped to retrace the vital steps to embodiment. Firstly examining the body, we ran into the problem of the mind-body dualism, favouring fashion as concept or image over fashion as experience. Rooted in an overestimation of sight as the most rational sense, this dualistic framework appeared as the primary hurdle to embodiment. As both the theoretical as well as the lived experience side to this dissertation showed, we are inclined to think in terms of ratio at the expense of our feeling(s), therefore unconsciously denying ourselves the right to an authentic "self-experience." With this distorted self-relationship, came the objectification of not only ourselves, but equally of garments. Not fully committed to our authentic "selves" - due to the mind-body dualism - the relationship to our garments cannot extend beyond the surface of the skin. Being out of touch with ourselves, we almost seem to have become insensitive to touch altogether, both in a conscious as well as a cutaneous sense.

Sense of touch /sens əv tʌtʃ/ • noun

The ability to feel...

- I. Cutaneous, through contact with the skin
- II. Conscious, through affinity with emotions

Both theory and experience showed, however, that it is precisely the sense of touch which could blur the barrier between one's physical body and the garments worn by one's body. Step one being the realignment of body and mind by allowing ourselves a sense of conscious touch, that is, through affinity with our emotions. Step two is the mutual commitment from body to garment by allowing ourselves a sense of cutaneous touch, which is, through contact with the skin. Therefore no longer suppressing what we - literally and figuratively - feel in favour of appearance.

Step I conscious touch ≈ body // mind

Step II cutaneous touch ≈ body // garment

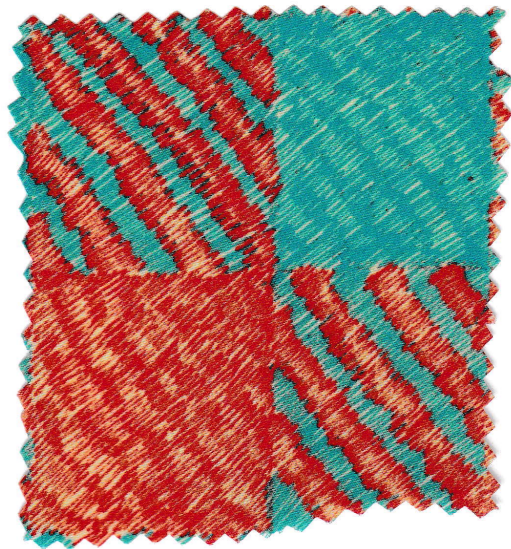
The second part to this dissertation elaborated on this twofold realignment rekindled by the sense of touch, focussing on the matter of garments, since the senses need material to get started with in the first place. Drawing from New Materialist thought, we came to understand that body and garment are to be considered as equal - yet with the nuance of *different* - matter. Both the body and the garment(s) therefore perceived as identities in their own right. However, since fashion should at all times reason from a mutual commitment between a body and a garment, interaction between both elements is ever invaluable. In other words, once body and mind are again realigned, and we thus allow ourselves to engage in a sensorial experience with our garments, the dualistic framework of body versus mind as well as body versus garment can be transcended, giving free rein to an embodied experience of fashion.

Which brings us to the "befitting-becoming spectrum," an indispensable link to review catalogue culture's impact on the embodied experience of fashion. Becoming as the non-dualist mindset based on an interaction between the equal yet different matter of body and garment, testified to one's adoption of affective practices to assemble one's true self. Fully engaged in the material entanglement of body and garment, one can draw strength from this mutual commitment instead of seeking external validation in the gazes of others. Born into a catalogue culture estimating sight as the most rational therefore commendable sense, we are deluded into believing that all that matters is that which can be seen, instilling in us a mindset of "malleability." However, with the prospect of a shift from befitting to becoming, one can come to see this "mould-fitting" norm portrayed by catalogue culture for what it truly is: flawed, instead of reproaching oneself as flawed. In the most favourable scenario, one's "becoming" will immediately coincide with a sense of (self-)comfort. However, as shown in the lived experience, becoming can also arise from a sense of discomfort. Forced to step outside of their comfort zones, the identities in discomfort gained insight in their unconscious sensibility to having a comfort zone, therefore made aware of their true "selves."

As a tool for the identities as well as to the theoretical framework, this dissertation endeavoured the possibility of an embodied representation of fashion, as a counterbalance to what has generally been interiorised as being the norm. Explicitly asked to reflect on what they sensed, the identities had to pull out all the stops to try and grasp fashion beyond the mere aesthetic, their particular experience then to be translated to an embodied image. Assembled as a portfolio, the eleven embodied images obtained through the lived experience can be seen as a manifestation of the identities' self-journeys and in turn as an act of rebellion, defying catalogue culture. So, to answer the question as to what the impact is of catalogue culture on the embodied experience of fashion, we could say that it denies one the right to experience fashion for oneself. A rather broad answer, however, a more precise interpretation depending on one's sense of self on the spectrum from "befitting" to "becoming." Up for its first trial, the aim of the lived experience as enclosed in this dissertation was to get a sense of fashion beyond the mere theoretical framework. On its own terms, *FASHION(non)SENSE* presented itself as leeway for the normative, offering the possibility of an alternative methodology. Still, there is so much more to be done on the intersection of fashion and embodiment.

For now, however, feel free to revisit the mirrored page at the beginning of this dissertation to co-direct an alternative narrative. Firstly turning to the next page, you will find the "matter" to do so. "Mirroring" the garment starring in the lived experience, the piece of fabric that awaits you, the reader, could be a stepping stone to a possible domino effect, the glass of the mirror to be broken once and for all. All it takes for you to help put this in motion, is to erase the prelude. Let yourself be guided by what it is you feel. Grant yourself a glimpse of the identities' experience by not just blindly returning to the mirrored page, but instead truly taking the time to mindfully unpin the piece of fabric and feel it for what it is, a force to be reckoned with. Bonding over your mutual "matter," this force will only intensify, ultimately to stand up to the superficiality of those two words representative of the catalogue culture we find ourselves in. The superficial nature will show in just how easy the words can be erased by a simple swipe. Erasing those words from the collective memory may not be as straightforward, however, one needs to start somewhere. And what may seem as a rather small and insignificant act now, might be the incentive to something of significance indeed. Having read this dissertation, you might have started to think about your own embodied experience of fashion (or lack thereof), seeing it in a brighter light, therefore perhaps (un)consciously shifting your approach towards both your body and your garments. I encourage you to mindfully *feel the fabric* as well as what it is *you feel* when doing so, to then use this - literal and figurative - sense of touch to transcend catalogue culture's sensorial favouritism of sight. Granting you to start afresh with a mindset driven by heartfelt individuality rather than imposed collectivity, with fashion as a way of negotiating life how **you** "see" - or should we see "sense" - it.

Note: physical copy exclusive



Deadstock fabric of Dries Van Noten "mirroring"
the garment starring in the lived experience.

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ANNEX

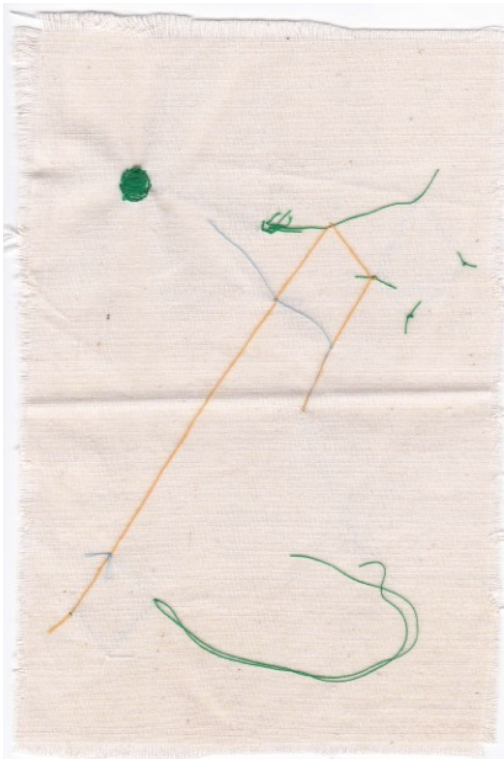


Image 1: Mirte Vieren. Embodied image (front). February 2022. Embroidery. © Mirte Vieren, logbook.

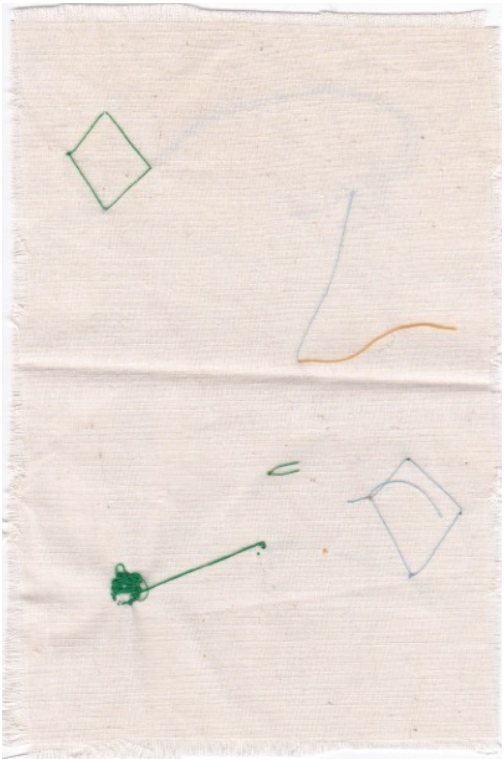


Image 2: Mirte Vieren. Embodied image (back). February 2022. Embroidery. © Mirte Vieren, logbook.



Image 3: Véronique Vandriessche. Embodied image (front). January 2022. Cardboard, paper. © Véronique Vandriessche, logbook.



Image 4: Véronique Vandriessche. Embodied image (profile). January 2022. Cardboard, paper. © Véronique Vandriessche, logbook.

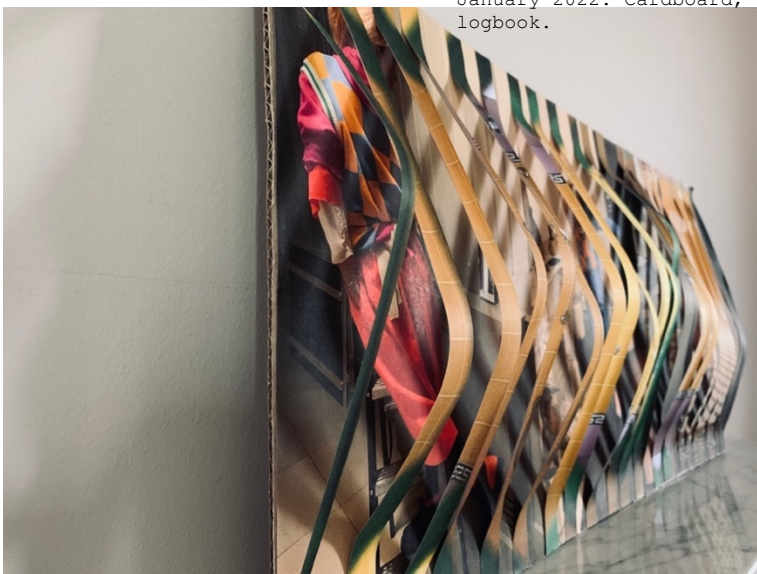


Image 5: Véronique Vandriessche. Embodied image (profile). January 2022. Cardboard, paper. © Véronique Vandriessche, logbook.



Image 6: Margo Lenaers. Embodied image (closed). February 2022. Wood, paper, ribbon, glass. © Margo Lenaers, logbook.



Image 7: Margo Lenaers. Embodied image (semi-open). February 2022. Wood, paper, ribbon, glass. © Margo Lenaers, logbook.



Image 8: Margo Lenaers. Embodied image (open). February 2022. Wood, paper, ribbon, glass. © Margo Lenaers, logbook.



Image 9: Margo Lenaers. Embodied image (poem). February 2022. Wood, paper, ribbon, glass. © Margo Lenaers, logbook.

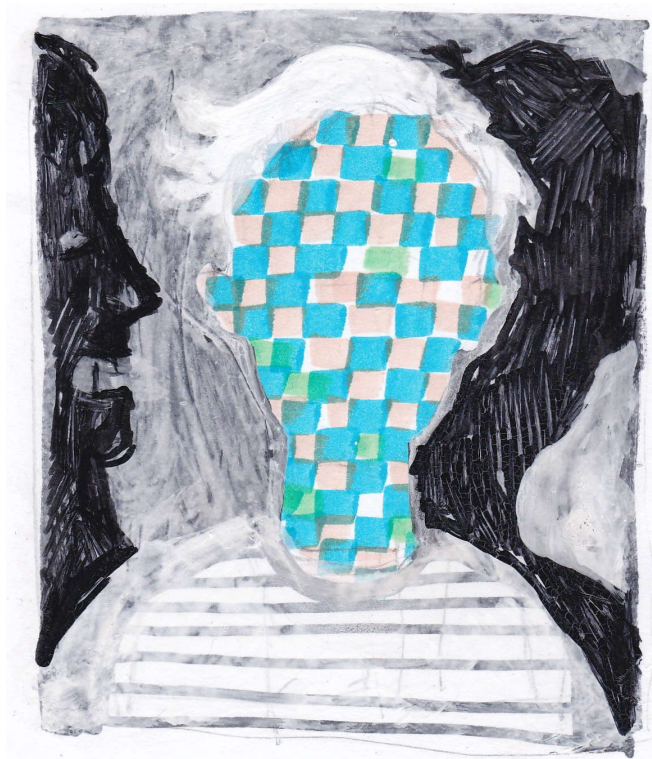


Image 10: Nand Haegeman. Embodied image. February 2022. Paper, (marker) pen. © Nand Haegeman, logbook.



Image 11: Hadewijch Bosmans. Embodied image (I). February 2022. Photograph. © Hadewijch Bosmans, logbook.



Image 12: Hadewijch Bosmans. Embodied image (II). February 2022. Photograph. © Hadewijch Bosmans, logbook.



Image 13: Dries Van Noten. Menswear A/W 06/07 catalogue (pages 10-11). 2006. Photograph.
© Collection MoMu Antwerp. Published in Marco Pecorari, *Fashion Remains: Rethinking Ephemera in the Archive*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021, 146.

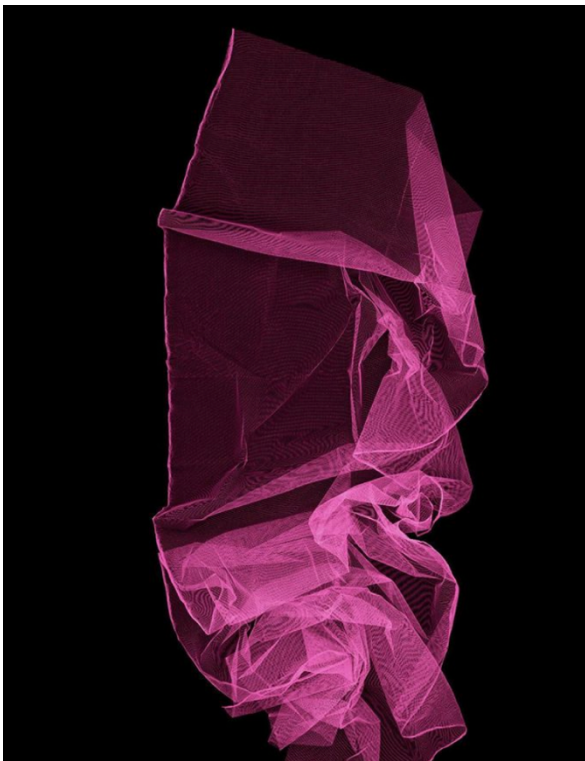


Image 14: Dries Van Noten. Photograph of scanned pink fabric, A/W 21/22. 2021.
© Dries Van Noten, Instagram, October 31, 2021.



Image 15: Casper Wackerhausen-Sejerssen. Kayako Higuchi in Dries Van Noten womenswear look 44 A/W 21/22. 2021. Photograph. © Dries Van Noten, Instagram, October 31, 2021.



Image 16: Dries Van Noten. Photograph of scanned blue fabric A/W 21/22. 2021.
© Dries Van Noten, Instagram, November 4, 2021.



Image 17: Pamela Berkovic. Maty Fall in Dries Van Noten womenswear look 33 A/W 21/22. 2021. Photograph. © Dries Van Noten, Instagram, November 4, 2021.



Image 18: Dries Van Noten. Photograph scanned glove fabric A/W 21/22. 2021.
© Dries Van Noten, Instagram, November 6, 2021.



Image 19: Casper Wackerhausen-Sejersen. Steffi Soede in Dries Van Noten womenswear look 26 A/W 21/22. 2021. Photograph. © Dries Van Noten, Instagram, November 6, 2021.



Image 20: Luna Van Laer. Embodied image (front). January 2022. Clay, acrylic paint. © Luna Van Laer, logbook.



Image 21: Luna Van Laer. Embodied image (profile). January 2022. Clay, acrylic paint. © Luna Van Laer, logbook.



Image 22: Luna Van Laer. Embodied image (back). January 2022. Clay, acrylic paint. © Luna Van Laer, logbook.



Image 23: Edgar Van den Heede. Embodied image. February 2022. Digital collage. © Edgar Van den Heede, logbook.



Image 24: Paula Rodriguez Sardiñas. Embodied image. February 2022. Digital photomontage. © Paula Rodriguez Sardiñas, logbook.

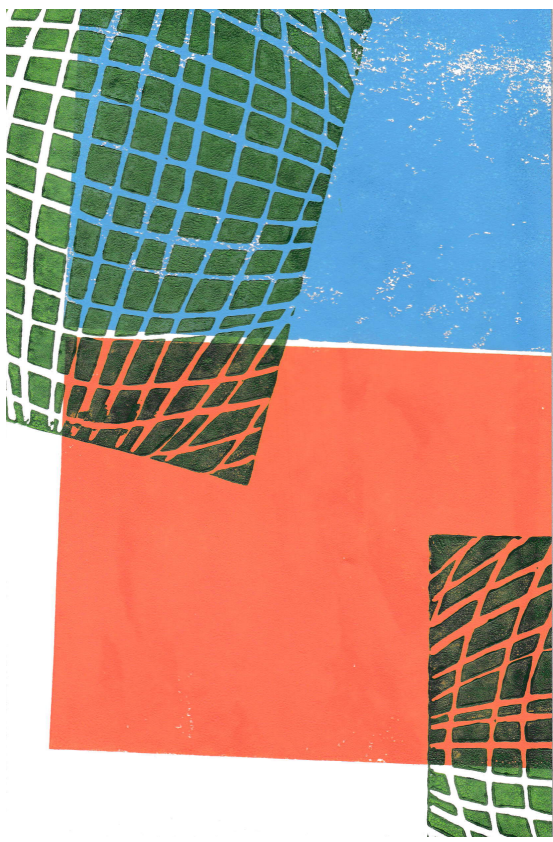


Image 25: Birte Lenaers. Embodied image (I). February 2022. Cardboard, paper, paint, stencil. © Birte Lenaers, logbook.

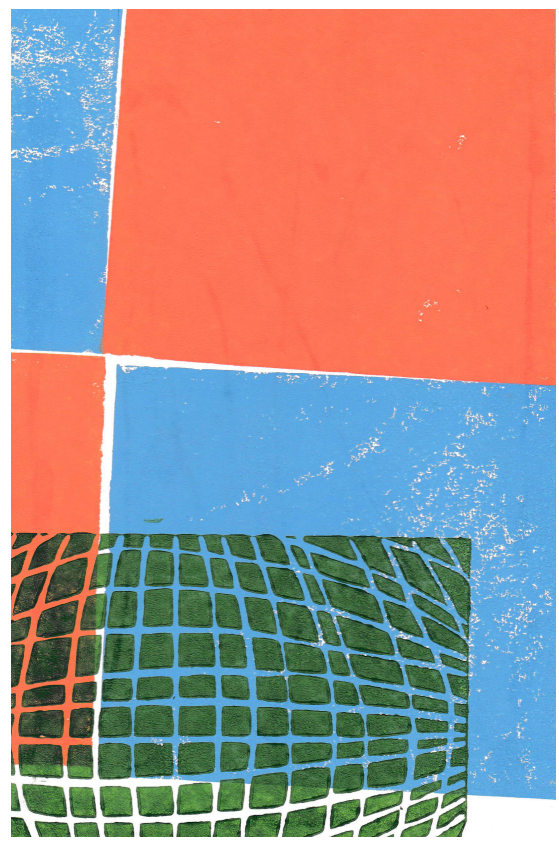


Image 26: Birte Lenaers. Embodied image (II). February 2022. Cardboard, paper, paint, stencil. © Birte Lenaers, logbook.



Image 27: Jonas Branswijck. Embodied image. March 2022. Digital photomontage.
© Jonas Branswijck, logbook.



Image 28: Jana Jonckheere. Embodied image. March 2022. Paint on canvas. © Jana Jonckheere, logbook.

