

**CLUJ NAPOCA ART AND DESIGN UNIVERSITY  
PLASTIC ARTS FACULTY**

**FROM THE DRESS WORN TO THE SPACE  
DRESSED UP  
DOCTORATE THESIS**

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## SINTHESIS ESSAY

**From the Dress Worn to the Space Dressed up** represents a research I wanted and developed over the connections, interferences between clothing and other contemporary art's disciplines, as well as over the place and the functions of the costume in the human being.

The essay is structured in 4 chapters.

In the first chapter headed **"The costume"** I made the research in 3 sections:

- **"Historical references. The costume's place and functions in the human being"**.
- **"Three positions: Sonia Terk-Delaunay, Coco Chanel, Elsa Schiaparelli"**
- **"The costume's presence in the contemporary art"**

The first section, as the headline shows, has two components:

The first one is a historical inroad. Under this circumstance the research I've carried out shows the historical reality, that between major arts and the costume, in clothing creation meaning was and still is a permanent agreement. This agreement has determined the creators from all times to be attracted by the clothing's power of expression. In this sense it's self-evident the example of antique artists from the Mediterranean countries who made artistic perfection demonstration from the draped costumes, which enriched and marked the sculpture and architecture for good. So the draped clothing inspired the greatest sculptors and architects who decorated the grand gothic cathedrals' front sides.

Also the mediaeval western European's painting points out biblical episodes in which it's emphasized the religious symbolist,

but, the characters appear dressed in contemporary fashion of the creative artists, which shows that they inspired directly from their period's style.

In the same meaning, in the Renaissance the prince and aristocrat's portraits are self-evident – pictures made to order – in which the clothing together with the inside design express the model's rank and statute who has many times a propagandistic role. In this sense Jacopo Bellini, Antonio Pollaiuolo and Antonio Pisanello's paintings are obvious. They were fascinated by the visual richness of the costume, which determined them to create costumes' models, embroideries and jewelry.

In the exhibition “**Life and fashion at the Renaissance Court**” organized by the National Gallery, London (October 2001-October 2002), Pisanello was presented to the public with paintings realized for the most important and influenced courts of Italy: Visconti in Milano, Este in Ferrara, Gonzagua in Mantua. The details' accuracy of the costume, from dresses to armoury, showed by Pisanello offers us an inexhaustible documentary source relating to the costume's functions. In “Virtue and Beauty, Leonardo's Ginevra de' Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women”, the exhibition in 2001 from the National Gallery of Art, Washington is emphasized the importance that jewelry's studies have in the Renaissance portrait. The portrait of Eleonora de Toledo, made by Bronzino is a true document which shows the important statute of the character – The Great Duke of Toscana's wife – the picture is completed by a magnificent and imposing dress made from Italian velvet and silk, decorated with pearls net on the head and shoulders.

In the XVI century, the proportions of the new geographic discoveries attract and the fascinating adventure of the other nations costume's discoveries, which had a big impact on the European costume. Through the first significant works, that appear in the first half of the century, the most known about costumes is - “De ghi habiti antichi et modernni di diverse parti del mondo”, by Cesare Vecellio (Venice, 1590). Vecellio structured his work in

two chapters, the first including 361 engravings with costumes from Europe, and the second one, 59 engravings after costumes from Africa and Asia.

Rubens succeeded to realize an impressive collection of clothing studies for his portrait painting subjects, collection that later will be called “Costume Book”. But not only painting, but also graphic arts was anxious about costumes. Wenceslaus Hollar, known as sketcher in England, excelled in studies about suits. His first work, entitled “Ornatus Mublieris Anglicanus”, published in 1640, contains 26 engravings headed as “Several Habits of English Women from Nobilite to the Country Women as there are in this Time”. The book was followed shortly after by the “Theatrum Muliere” and “Aula Veneris”, which contained 100 original drawings based on costume studies made all over Europe. This was just the beginning of a long history, because after that the costume in the waves of fashion fascinated and stirred up creative impulses of artists in all the periods that followed: Rococo, Neoclassicism, Romantics, Art Nouveau, Art Deco. The beginning of the XX century is certainly marked by fast direction changes, influenced by the new artistic trends.

**The second component** of the first chapter is the one where I showed the costume place and functions in the human being.

Under this circumstance, the costume and the textile texture, which take part in the decorative art have the following major functions:

- The texture and costume’s useful function is to protect and to isolate the body from the environment, from bad weather.

- The communication function is the one that expresses the person’s statue in the social life, and it’s very important because it reflects and defines the features and the quality of a person signing the role and the place for this one in the society, his class affiliation, his religion or his ethical choice.

- The aesthetic function is the one that offers us the note over the artistic taste and the expressiveness of a person in society being directly connected with the environment.

Through costume the human silhouette becomes support for painting through colour, sculpture through shape, volume, materiality and texture.

If all these elements are visual communication ways and belong to the visual creations' register, then the costume is a part of the personal, authentic creator's expression, revealing and reflecting his creation talent and abilities to a relation between costume- painting- sculpture- design- architecture.

In the second section of the first chapter I continued the research over the dialogue between major arts and fashion.

This dialogue begins to appear with precision at the beginning of the XX century. There are collaborations between artists and couture, this influence the creation itself.

The artist drawers, the fashion authors, will wait the beginning of the XX century for their profession to be recognized. It's the period when the first shops appear and the publicity, which "...will appeal more often to illustrator sketchers to make their creations known in the fashion press". The sketchers will realize models' sketches, connected with the couture and their new creations. Erte, Eduardo Benito, Georges LePape realize fashion illustration simultaneous with the fashion picture, suggesting creation in fashion until 1910, when the photography wins for good.

The first fashion pictures date from 1856, being made by Mayer and Pierson. They take part in the album with 288 pictures ordered by Countess Castiglione. The photographic arts take from fashion graphic arts the composition and the models' expression.

This dialogue in which the interferences and connections are reflected is materialized by some great operas symbols.

**Sonia Terk-Delaunay** (1885-1979) is the one who transposes pictures from the easel cloth to costumes' materials.

In Lodeve Museum exhibition, France ( November, 30<sup>th</sup> 2002 – March 2003 ), devoted to Sonya Delaunay, were exhibited 150 works, water colors, gouaches, the direction being concentrated on

the artist's activity from 1923 to 1934, period that includes the beginnings of the artists until the innovator "**L'Atelier Simultane**". In 1919-1920 Sonya Delaunay decorates the spaces "Le Petit Casino de Madrid", drawing costumes for the first performances in here. At 'Aida' from Liceo de Barcelone, she signs all the costumes creation. In 1921, she meets Serge Diaghilev in Madrid, who introduces her in the theatre costumes world, her creations appearing in the "Pirandello" ballet. The success encourages her to organize the first cat walk at Ritz Hotel de Madrid and to open her first fashion boutique.

In 1924 she invents "**The Simultaneous Workroom**", which becomes the scene of a revolutionary idea, where the artist, together with Jaques Heim, produces simultaneous clothing creations. Her concept was to cut the material and to print it in the same time, in a perfect complementary with the inbuilt clothes from 1920s. In the "International Exhibition of Decorative Art " in 1925, her models combine the vanguardist geometric language with modern and flexible clothing loaches. Synchronizing perfectly with the new cylindrical silhouette she succeeds to include the time artistic spirit in her creations: "Modern Style", "Modern Jazz" and "Zig-Zag Modern". This way Sonya Delaunay becomes a significant example for the way in which the art has influenced and changed the fashion. The original way how Sonya Delaunay connected art and fashion is the subject of an art album edited by Andre Lhote in 1925: "Sonya Delaunay, her painting, her objects, her simultaneous fabrics, her fashions". In 1931 she comes back to painting, taking part in the exhibitions "Abstraction-Creation" and "Pavilion de L' Air" in 1937. In the same period Sonya Delaunay was invited to keep a colloquial at The Visual Art Department in Sorbona, entitled "The influence of paintings on Fashion Design", where the artist talked about the fashion detachment and liberation on the academically culture, explaining her new concept in the textile art and sustaining the idea of prêt-a-porter.

The exhibition "Fashion and Surrealism" housed by Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 1987-1988, presents the substantial

participation of fashion creation inside surrealism current. **Elsa Shiaparelli** was the one who activated with the biggest success. In the album edited to accompany the exhibition, Richard Martin writes: “While the biggest rival Coco Chanel creates dresses for the emancipated woman, adheres to Bauhaus design philosophy school, Shiaparelli creates fashion cooperation with and inspired by the advanced artists: Dali and Cocteau”.

**Coco Chanel** played a very active role in the connected circles of art and fashion in Paris: she created theatre costumes for the play: “Antigone” (1922) by Cocteau, “Le train Bleu” (1924) by Diaghilev and Cocteau, “Apollo Musangetes” ballet (1929) by Stravinsky, “Les Chevaliers du Table Ronde” (1937) by Cocteau and “Baccanala” (1939) by Dali, for the Russian ballets in Monte Carlo. Between the two world wars, Elsa Shiaparelli and Coco Chanel dominated the fashion world.

Born in Rome in 1890 in an intellectual family, **Elsa Shiaparelli** studies painting.

Between 1936 and 1939, the creator cooperates with a big number of artist from surrealism movement: Salvador Dali, Jean Cocteau and Alberto Giacometti. This cooperation was “symbiotic and simultaneous”, says Dilys E. Blum, the museum superintendent, The Costumes and Textiles Department in Philadelphia. The classical example of the relation between Shiaparelli-Dali is a group of surrealism costumes, whose tailor-made costumes had many false drawers instead of pockets. Dali experimented the theme “parts of the body” even from 1934, for him this experiment is a short allegory in which “every drawer corresponds with a smell issued by the human being”. From this cooperation resulted two of the most well-known dresses in the 1930s: “Organza dresses with Painted Lobster” in 1937 and “Thear Dress” in 1938. The theme of the natural world, inspires Dali to create “New York Dream-Man Finds Lobster in Place of Phone” (1935) and the well-known “Lobster Telephone” (1936).

“Shoe hat”, is another play realized in cooperation with Salvador Dali and reflects the surrealism theme – “reassembling

and illusion”. The Italian sculpture Alberto Giacometti realizes accessories for it, jewelry and buttons, which are introduced as accents enriching the original clothing pieces.

Elsa Schiaparelli’s creations after the war take earlier themes back and provocative ideas, but her position as a fashion stimulator was soon usurped by the new demands of the new generation, which admired the style called “New Look” belonged to Cristian Dior.

**In the 3<sup>rd</sup> section** of the first chapter I searched and treated the costume presence in contemporary art.

Here I analyzed the creations of some artists connected to the fashion phenomenon in the contemporary art. From all these I stopped over the most significant ones like:

Lucio Fontana, painter and sculptor who in 1947 introduces the space concept in which the spirit after the war joins and rediscovers perfectly. He creates, according to this new concept, a dress that represents “the limits between inside and outside, between materiality and leather, between cloth and nudity”.

Starting with this moment the ambivalence of the dialogue between art and fashion becomes more and more obvious in Pop Art, which breaks all the obstacles and functions as an answer of the contemporary art to fashion phenomenon.

**Marisol Escobar** in the context of the Pop Art current diversifies his way of work using the textile cohabitation technique on his sculptures.

**Flavio Lucchini** is an example that completes the artists’ list that create and are attracted by costume as well as by art. Lucchini, not only that develops and makes that everything is connected to fashion to become accessible subject, opens “Superstudio Piu”, a huge exhibitional art, fashion and design center, where the artist opens his own workroom and permanent exhibition hall. His new sculpture workroom becomes the platform for many creations started from the long and difficult way in the fashion world: His sculptures and bas-reliefs reflects the totem’s fascination and

admiration, which in this case are statuary dresses, 3 metres tall, from different materials: limestone, resin, silver and steel, durable materials.

Coming back to the post-war period, in 1955, Yves Saint Laurent's contribution is noticed.

In this sense the Foundation retrospective exhibition "Pierre Berger-Yves Saint Laurent" is self-evident, called "**Dialogue with Art**", the central theme is focused on the creator's interpretations and personal vision in dialogue with different artistic movements and their representatives. From Piet Mondrian to Van Gogh, from Matisse to Picasso, from Warhol to the African art – all these are possible sources of the creator's beginnings. In his press statement, Saint Laurent said: "Of course I send to Mondrian, who in 1965 was the first who I dared to be close to, his severe art attracted me. But there were also Matisse, Braque, Picasso, Bonnard and Lejeune and how could I resist the Pop Art, which was the expression of my youth? How could I omit my friend Andy Warhol? I hope this exhibition to send the visitors to the creation limits and from here they could share the experiments, feelings I have lived all my life". So, the most important moments of Yves Saint Laurent's creation are presented in the exhibition "Dialogue with Art", being marked by the influence and the inspiration which the creator has found in art.

On this occasion, the spectator was surprised to see the initiator's creations "Mondrian Look" and "Pop Art Look", who presents copies from the 1960s. Presented in "Elle" magazine in September 1965: the copies are arranged in the mirror in a suggestive way, face to face with two of the painter paintings: "Composition in grey" (1914) and "Composition with red, yellow and blue" (1928).

In the same time with the clothing shape of the 1960s, the images and painting can be applied directly on costumes. Here the fashion has found inspiration in the painting's styles and manners. Op-Art and Psychedelic-Art develop and vary the vision in another direction: Yves Saint Laurent's dress, inspired from Piet

Mondrian's works, the father of Neoplasticism, has quickly become fashion.

In the 1960s, artists (painters, sculptors, sketchers, etc) had many inroads in fashion, exaggerating and criticizing, succeeding to change wanted or not its dynamism. Many of them created provocative objects, looking forward fashion and its role.

In 1964, at thirty years old, the architect Paco Rabanne appears for the first time in haute-couture, ".....he presents a collection of clothes, of course, but made by unusual materials for something like that.

"A twelve experimental and hard to wear dresses presentation" says himself.

He subverts all the conventions, turning the evening dresses material into metallic mails and sculptural constructions, made from surprising materials like plastic. The cold silver metal from the dresses created by Rabanne contrasts strongly with the human skin, but in the years 1960s his brilliance, his strange aspect, spatial was the most important.

Paco Rabanne's metallic constructions remember of the old armoury used by the people from the mediaeval period in battles. But the new sense in which Rabanne harmonizes the metallic pieces makes that his dresses to become outsized jewelry, with a feminine line built harmoniously on body shape, giving a sculptural beauty, inaccessible but a distinct one.

Pop-Art used to find in the industrial mass production world original subjects through their connection with the art exhibitional spaces. The paper dress, inspired by Warhol creation "32 Soup Cans", is printed by an anonymous artist with the repeated theme and called suggestive "**Souper Dress**" (1966), symbolizing the new consumption culture.

In 1968, **Op-Art** appears represented by two big artists: Victor Vasarely and Bridget Riley. Op-Art uses optical illusions, these of course are important for some fashion creators, who adopt hem as a theme for the prints on textile surfaces. This artistic current influences not only the textile prints sketchers but also the

fashion creators, who use Op-Art illusions to get the compositional silhouette centre out of shape, trying to evidence the clothes. In this way Harry Gordon creates the dress “Poster Dress” (1968) and he uses paper instead of the textile material, where he prints an outsized eye, succeeding to admonish, before the human being, creating a strange effect, the dress that is watching you.

**Sherry Owens**, the American sculpture, the President of the Sculpture Association in Texas expresses herself in painting but in sculpture as well. Her favourite materials are wood and steel. The artist is a permanent participant at important exhibitions over the ocean, including “Erthly Delights”, “Underworld” from Haggard Gallery, University of Dallas, Irving, Texas and “This seed of space” in Austin, Texas. In a fantastic show in the centre of Dallas, the artist Sherry Owens presents her creations at the entrance of the famous shop “Neiman Marcus” in a remarkable connection between art and fashion, the final result is a remarkable image campaign. Owens calls these works “sceneries” that become in a surprising way visual screens and through their connection with the clothing succeed to turn an excellent marketing idea into an art exhibition with a maximum visibility.

**Nam June Paik** and **Charlotte Moorman** are two artists who experience in performing. In “**TV bra for Living Sculpture**” (1969), they exhibit body linens models such as a brassiere made from two small video monitors. Moorman was wearing the “electronic” model, while he was performing the violoncello, and Paik’s video camera fed the two monitors on the artist’s breast with the performance images.

Chris Kenny plays with the funny idea calls “**the house you can dress up with**”, a wooden box like a T-shirt, with windows instead of pockets. In “Want to be worn”, Kenny presents fragments from some texts with funny and undermining suggestions.

**Vito Drago** uses the light placed behind some human bust radiographies dressed in T-shirts. He makes a hole in the clothing

material where you can see the light, realizing a micro-constellation of the bodies.

In the same section “The costume’s presence in contemporary art” I’ve studied the way in which the fashion creators introduced painting, sculpture and architecture in their creations.

**Issey Miyake** dedicates himself to inventions, the new clothing making and coloring technologies, beginning from 1993 he focused on the developing and researching a new building technology in the textile material. In 1991 he develops a new concept through the line “**A-Poc**” ( A Piece of Cloth).

His innovations remain the Japanese textile industry secrets where the engineering and the tradition can be met. Combining the computer modern technique with the pleated material techniques, a valid cloth for all kind of silhouette, in a cylindrical form. In this way the tube is sewing less, and doesn’t have a cut of coat. This uses the elasticity of the frill to be skin-tight, recovering at its first tube shape when this is naked.

The concept “A Piece of Cloth” appeared from the idea of one single piece of plane cloth that create an interesting ‘ma’ ( in Japanese – space ) between cloth and body. Every person has a different ‘ma’, the costumes created by Miyake develop individual, original forms.

The present fashion gets many shapes; it interacts continually with the ideas and visions of many artists, evolving in currents and artistic surroundings where the clothing creators find the most surprising solutions. Some of them in a surrealism manner, others twisting, aggrandizing and distorting the human body, while others look for new materials to define perfectly the human silhouette.

Martin Margiela, Belgium designer associated with Deconstructivism in fashion, - movement of the years 1980s. In his creations this uses fashion as a pretext for a poetical approach of imperfection, personality and eccentricity, distinct qualities that he prints to all his creations.

**Alexander McQueen** and **Shaun Leane**, one of the most appreciated jewelry designers in England, realizes clothes made of metal, some real “body sculpture”.

In Husein Chalain, fashion is characterized by an excellent technique, from the dresses anchored with plies in ‘memory’, until installations that include a movie generated by the computer which extends his vision to performance.

A remarkable work of the artist presented in the exhibition ‘**Radical Fashion**’, is the dress ‘**Poppy Dress**’, ‘**Aero Plane Dress**’, are creations inspired by materials used in the aircraft technology and by the aerodynamic forms of planes. The dresses are presented like a carcass skinned on the superior side of the bust, with many ‘flapses’ that can change the forms, rebuilding them in aerodynamic variants.

Another favourite theme is the architecture one, through a connection with a British interior design and architecture he realized a clothes collection – **The Geotrophics** (1999) – with furniture structures integrated on the costume. He adapted parts of chairs as handed extensions on the human body. Chalaian’s chair dresses transmit the idea of dynamic existence where we carry the personal surrounding. The relation between appearance and identity was explored later in performing – **After Words** (2000) – a collection presented at The Sadler’s Wells Theatre in London. On the theatre stage the scenery of the event invites the spectators to assist at a demonstration. A white room sketchily arranged with some pieces of furniture from the 1950s, where until the end of the representation the furniture turned into costume pieces and accessories of the mannequins. The concept placed behind fashion performing transmits and defines symbolical the intimate area sized by clothing, as a first protective state and the intimate architectural space as a second cover, one much larger, a refuge that can be black out and transported easily.

Illustrating it is the surprising dress worn by a mannequin made from concentric wooden circles; a dress which folded becomes an object, a furniture piece. The changing clothing in

furniture pieces brought him the reputation as a creator of the concept “furniture-wear”.

All these researches show that fashion, technique and artistic sensibility meet in a surprising result, building new images about the visual identity of a person in the future.

**In the second chapter “Artists and their public image”** I showed through some examples how personalities from all the artistic domains influenced the style, the esthetic taste and the currents in the clothing design.

This chapter contains three sections :

- Historical References; four positions: Oscar Wilde, Frida Kahlo; Salvador Dalli; Tamara de Lempicka
- Fashion and cinema
- Fashion and Music

The research showed that the public image functioned as a followed or copied example for groups of people. From pragmatic reasons people from all categories belong to a social group that make them communicate easily the message they have, through a communicative motivation. In this way I identified some groups:

**The young group**

**The businessmen group**

**The intellectual group**

**The workers group**

**The old people group**

**The artists group**, take part from a distinctive group looking at the clothes they wear. Of course, this because they come from all kind of social groups, they mix up in society, they influence the cloth they wear giving it part of their distinct personality, from their attitude and mind, creating a visual original image.

Creators from the most various artistic areas (painting, sculpture, music, film, etc.) stand out from other groups first of all through the messages they transmit through clothing, which most of times is a reflection of originality, a vivid creation, in permanent movement. Moreover, in many cases artists can be considered

leaders because they are the ones who launch the fashion, the current, which will be quickly borrowed or copied by adepts. Artists are radical people, who don't keep count on fashion trends, wearing original clothes or combining classical elements with recovered pieces, defining in this way the image of some unique characters.

**The first section – Historical References; Four Positions: Oscar Wilde, Frida Kahlo; Salvador Dalli; Tamara de Lempicka,** treats the way some personalities, artists from different domains marked the clothing style for good.

**Frida Kahlo** (1907-1954) – the Mexican artist, an evident personality who enriched the traditions of the clothing art.

The French creator **Jean Paul Gautier** brings on stage creations that remember of Frida Kahlo's exotic costumes.

**Tamara de Lempicka** (1898-1980), the most known artist from the Art Deco period, influenced in a decisive way the fashion and the costume.

In this sense I illustrated here with recent pictures from showings of the creators' homes **Dior, Missoni, Alexander, McQueen, Dolce & Gabbana, YSL-Rive Gauche, Jean Paul Gautier, Sonia Rykiel,** the way in which the contemporary creators undertook elements or details from the artists' personal style to propose them to the public. A good example could be the exhibition 'Dalli et la Mode; (June-December 2006), opened at Espace Dali in Paris, were presented many creations: these, influenced by the extravagance of his paintings, created a surrealism fashion show, interpreting part of the most important pieces of the artist. The famous 'soft watches' or 'Venus with drawers', a motive taken by Sonia Rykiel, when this created an object dress made of raschel with trompe-l'oil applications. Paco Rabbane who brought on Dalli's lips, presented now as an oversized collar of a long evening dress.

**In the second section – Fashion and Cinema –** I was concerned in the cinema contribution in fashion. The most

significant is the contribution which Hollywood had in the interwar fashion.

Designers like Robert Kalloch, Charles LeMaire, Bernard Newman, Walter Plunkett, Jack Kelly (Orry Kelly) and Irene Gibbons invented a style in the film costume, drawing the whole wardrobe of some American actors, contributing at some stars' birth – human models, objects of the public adoration.

**Marlene Dietrich** (1901-1992) one of the most appreciated star of the XX century cinematography excelled through the greatest creators' worn clothing: Chanel, Gilbert Adrian, Christian Dior, Giorgio Armani, Cristobal Balenciaga, etc. (in the huge exhibition '**Remembering Screen Legend Marlene Dietrich**' – 1993 – presented 3000 costumes and 400 hats belonging to the artist).

**Ginger Rogers** ( 1911-1995) and Fred Astair (1899-1987) had, as everybody knows, spectacular showings through the costumes created by the designers Irene Gibbons and Bernard Newman.

Many of these costumes dressed up by Ginger Rogers are still used today as inspiration sources for the fashion creators, when the costume or the clothing piece to seem imponderable. An example has John Galiano in the collection 'haute-couture' for Dior house, through dresses inspired from the two dancers' costumes, suggestive called "Lord of the dance".

The actress Audrey Hepburn wore Givenchy and Balenciaga costumes staggering the world not only for her beauty, but for the clothing grace.

'**Audrey style**' defined in the same time with the movie "Roman Holiday", through cooperation with the legendary costume creator Edith Head (1897-1981), the one who made costumes for over 500 Hollywood films. Her talent and her versality brought to Head eight Oscar awards for the costume and 33 nominalizations at the same title. In the movie "The Breakfast at Tiffany's", Audrey Hepburn wears a wardrobe that became famous: the wonderful Givenchy's creations are an example for the

history of the costume. A black dress in Givenchy style became a classical piece of elegance: "**Little black dress**" is even a trend's name in fashion that has as a location these dresses worn by Audrey Hepburn.

And the examples might go on.

In the last part of the second chapter, I examined how music, through its great artists and the big bands, has influenced the young' s clothing image.

Artists or bands like "**The Beatles**" wore costumes created by Pierre Cardin, Douglas Millings, Casa Gucci, Frida Gianini.

Madonna, Michael Jackson, Prince wore clothes signed by Jean Paul Gautier, Dolce & Gabbana, Penny Rose, Viktor & Rolf, and the examples might go on.

**In the III chapter** I examined the relation between the human body and the space, architecture and costume. Entitled 'The experimental Art (Architecture - Ambiance - Fashion - Installation - Performing with the costume ) I proposed myself to examine how the architecture , the ambiance and the costume interacted, borrowing useful functions, communicative or aesthetic.

Structured in 5 sections:

**Historical References of the relation between architecture and the costume; The ambience's functions.**

**Three positions: Oskar Schlemmer, Le Corbusier, Jean-Michel Frank**

**Micro/Macrostructure**

Similar practices in fashion and architecture

'Dressing' the space and the surrounding

Analyzing first of all, the protector consumption role and its practical utility to watch the human body out of bad weather, sword or bullet, the cloth wrap the body in protective coatings made from materials from the animal, vegetal, mineral world. An example is the fighters' costume - the armoury - a mobile construction that protected the human body from ancient times until now. Parts of these complete carapaces can be found today in

the contemporary soldiers' costume, in the scuba-divers and the spacemen's costume. The protector coating is today made of technological materials improved by the new generation to face the most unusual weather.

The link connection between architecture and the costume is the second coating, the space / nest / shell one, this space being watched as an extension of the personality who lives in it. It is called *ambiance* or *inside*. The *ambiance* and the costume evolved simultaneously, determined by the material and spiritual level, by the historical and geographical circumstances, the artistic ideal. The *ambiance* respects the same three functions remembered in plastic arts, decorative arts and architecture: the useful one, the communication and the aesthetic one. Through creating an *ambiance* we understand to join in the same place furniture pieces, textiles (tapestries, wall papers and carpets), lamps, art and ceramic works, according with the owner's needs. So, the useful function, in the *ambiance* setting, is the one that answers the necessity of use and protection of a space and its objects. It was and it's still as important as the environment is more hostile. The communication function, represented so clear by clothing but by the home space, too helps us to take the right place in our community according with function, tradition, fortune, family or age. The aesthetic function means the space arranging using artistic language. Here, the drawing, the form and the light, colour, shape and materiality help us to express our feelings in a visual way. So, the human appearance is reflected in the objects that surround him, framing his personality physically or psychically speaking, the instruction, the intelligence, the creativity and the artistic taste. The connection between a person's clothes and the place where he lives is easy to notice. They determine one another.

In ancient times, from Egypt to India, from Crete to Rome, the buildings were decorated with sculptures and columns around a statue dedicated to God, who was in the center of the monument. The costume, from the draping wrapped on slaves' thighs to the emperors' toga, was made from textures cut on a straight thread, in

simple shapes, draped in successive coatings that formed expressive monumental compositions which remember of the temples and palaces' columns.

In a full Romanic style, the buildings with full walls, with small holes and half-round arcades were populated with by wooden pieces carved with motives borrowed from the architecture ornamentation, and the favorite themes were religiously inspired. The costume and the decorative arts are an inside mirror. The clothing was compounded from pieces in simple cuts on a square or a circle. Through these geometric beds superposition was created a big architectural volume, wanted imposing.

The gothic style brings itself the elevation: the cathedrals were built on a stone framework and the resulted hole was filled with stained glass windows , and in a similar way - the massive wood of the furniture has been replaced with frames which had in the middle fret-saw plates with some borrowed elements from architecture: rosettes, ogive arcades, knittings - all of these decorating the holes.

Clothes, this time, made of professionals, members of the tailors' corporation, developed new cutting techniques after the textile material models on bias and so they obtained the thinning effect of the clothes' volume. The new costumes' form skinned on the body guided to another beauty ideal. The time artists, like Pissanello and Pollaiolo, created costume models and so it appeared for the first time the **fashion creator notion**. In the XV century, in works as the miniature that shows Renaud de Montauban's marriage, the human silhouette was longed as a sword to the sky, from the shoes with stretched tip to the cornet hats that imitated the expressivity and the spiritual enthusiasm of the ogives from the gothic cathedrals.

In the same time with The Renaissance the human being proportions win authority: the humanist ideas, the trust in the creative power of the human being as a master of the world expressed themselves in Michelangelo and Donatello's balanced monuments. In architecture, painting and sculpture, the balanced

geometric shapes are appreciated, like the circle and the square for plan, and the cube, cylinder and the sphere for elevation. The Renaissance costume also respects the same ideas with its regular geometric shapes and seems that it occupies the whole scene, and the man becomes the most important through costume, imposing his logic in front of the nature. The compacted form, symmetric and big volumes, built in thick textures, emphasized the human proportions' beauty, outsizing the shoulders line.

The XVII century, marked by the Catholic church strict vision brings the waving and the columns on the facades and altars treated scenerilly but on the furniture excessive carved. The baroque costume visually sends with the same sobriety scenery effects of clear-obscure ( the emphasizing of the portrait through white collars of a black suit, finishing with the outsizing of the carapace-suit from the Spanish Court).

A new style, **The Rococo**, is born in Ludovic the XV halls, a trustful and optimist style, lays like an ivy on palaces, insides, ornaments, furniture but on the costume as well, miming an invasion of a wild nature.

In the second half of the century, fighting for freedom, equality and fraternity, it appears The French Revolution style, or Napoleon Empire style. The Neoclassical style's edifices remember of the antique's temples being decorated with columns and Roman-Greek front sized. Of course the merveileuse's feminine clothes remember of the monumentality of the classic columns and of caryatids ones.

**In the II section** of the III chapter,

Three positions: Oscar Schemmer, Le Corbusier, Jean-Michel Frank, I examined the way how at the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century were marked by industrialization, the design's appearance and by the new discoveries ( the electric light, the telephony, the engine cars and finally the airplane).

Design appeared as a necessity first of all in Great Britain

because the industry revolution started earlier (beginning with the XVIII century). The term defines all the objects belonging to a serried creation considered aesthetic, good and useful. Some of them, the best ones, can take part from the decorative art category. In the XX century Louis Sullivan's principle was accepted "form follows function" ( the form comes from function), this theory found his expression in the German industrial design before 1914.

In this context, it appears as self-evident the intervention of the architect Adolf (1870-1933) who criticized Art Nouveau style in his work 'Ornament and Crime' (1908). He supports here that the surfaces excessive decorated are rest of the primitiveness. His critics and his papers catalyzed the modern current and the surfaces treatment according with the new ideas. In the same period, a big number of artists developed an abstract artistic language, beginning with the fauvists (1905) Henri Matisse in France, the cubists (1908) George Braque and Pablo Picasso, the movement artists Blaue Reiter (1911): Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Franz Marc in Germany and of the Stijl (1917), Piet Mondrian in Holand.

So, currents as Modernism, Art Deco and Cubism were the ones that animated the first quarter of the century, bringing in the same time another perspective in architecture and interior, in furniture, costume and fashion.

The industrialization and the new discoveries produced economical effects that asked for new space approaches. The Cubism manifested through strict and functional volumes in Bauhaus buildings and furniture, but in the feminine silhouette costumes as well - *garconnes*.

In this artistic scene it appeared in Weimar in 1919 a connection of two different schools, the Jobs and Arts one and The Art Academy one. Bauhaus (1919-1933) wanted to be the school that put the basis of an architectural style in order to reflect the new trends of the consumers on functional criterias and the economical ones.

Bauhaus School took an important place in the XX century history of culture, bringing together different disciplines like

architecture, design, art and the new media arts. Being through the first design schools, here they were invited to create together architects and artists. They revolutionized the educational system on one side, but they also contributed considerably at the extension of the aesthetic high standards objects' mass production. Through the first experts who taught here are the painters Johannes Itten, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and **Oscar Schlemmer**. The last one played an important role on the scene of Bauhaus school.

He studied **the relation between space and the human body**, experiencing and drawing theatre elementary components in the space relation, colour, light, movement, language and music. The innumerable experiments in theatre and dancing between the years 1920 and 1930 they had a big influence on the scene's arts and the contemporary dancing. **Oskar Schlemmer** artistic practice as a theorist, painter, sculptor and mural artist enriched the language in the performance and choreography domain.

Schlemmer's most important experiment is the one played in Stuttgart, Das Triadisches Ballet (1916-1922), where the actors used to wear costumes that turned them from natural anatomic forms into geometric ones. The show was called abstract triadic because the ballet reflected a connection of the three elements, dancing, costume and music. In the Metal Dance choreography dominated by metallic forms that shine strongly in the lights' stage, in the middle of these reflections, the dancer appeared as an animated sculpture. This approach was concentrated on abstract notions, respecting the traditional theatre rules. Oskar Schlemmer's theories were completely based on practice. The essays "The Theatre" and "The Man" and "The Artistic Figure" but also in W. Gropius's work "The Bauhaus Theatre". (1924)

For Schlemmer the central theme was the relation between the character and the space, the mediator between them is the dancer with an identity where the costume and the mask played the essential role.

The Swiss architect's appearance **Le Corbussier** (1887-1965) painter and theoretician of functionalism contributed at the

collective modern home concept, adapted to the climate and life conditions through a rational using of spaces from pavement to the roof. Watching the architecture as a 'pure creation of a spirit', the aesthetic quality or the buildings style created by him can't be separated from functionality or by the proportions reported to the human dimensions. The architect developed the 'modulor' theory (a man of 1.80m height) starting from "*The Vitruvian Man*" canons by Leonardo da Vinci and Leone Batista Alberti's works, where the harmony and the human proportions correspond to a Mathematic system. Le Corbusier published "*Le Modulor*" in 1948, followed by "*The Modulor 2*" in 1955. So, "the living car" was calculated ergonomic to satisfy the confort needs of a man 1.80m tall in realizing a collective modern home, Unite d'Habitation. Le Corbusier used the modulor's scale in many of his buildings including the one of the Notre Dame du Haut chapel from Ronchamp, France, finished in 1954.

**In the III section** of the III chapter,  
Micro / Macrostructures

I examined the way how beginning with the 1930 the architecture's modern principles became important for the creator but for the space beneficiary as well.

Adolf Loos, an architect from Vienna underlines **the connection between architecture and clothing**. He admits that the cloth is the first man's shelter. Loos says: ".....it existed an order in the way that people learnt to built. At the beginning it was the clothing.....".

The visionary Loos identifies comparisons between fashion and architecture, both disciplines had common roots. When the textile material is adapted to the body it turns into cloth, and when it is used on fixed structures it can become a construction. In this theory we find a modern movement of the roles between micro and macro-structures, both in a tight connection with the space around the body.

The daring theory that the architecture professor from the

Pincetown University develops, U.S.A, Mark Wigley, in the paper "White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture", 1995, opens new ways of understanding for the vanguard's architecture. He explores in an evident way the connection between the decorative costumes worn in th XIX century and the buildings built in the same period. The author supports his theory through contrast with the modern architecture with the white, emptied and athletics walls. The concept can be find in the human being clothing way, that underlines the well-built body through skinned minimalized costumes. Through his argument over the relation between clothing and architecture, he presents a sophisticated theory of a modern surfaces treatment, the vanguardist ones as a gesture synonym with the design logic of the contemporary costume.

Both disciplines - fashion and architecture - use the same principles of construction, of the materials economy and of the materials conservation. The fashion designers explore new materials and technologies of folding the metal, membranes, glass and plastic fibre, traditional raw material for buildings. The research and the new technologies developed materials that action individual through sensors according to the environment's climate.

#### **In the IV section** of the III chapter

The same practices in fashion and architecture, I showed the way in which the clothing creators like architects produce models able to respect the innovations in materials. So, the clothing pieces proposed by the designers get unusual shapes, in **Issey Miyake's** vision - the creator of such a new material - the body becomes support for superstructures, and Alexandre McQueen proposes sculptures-corsettes where the human body is well tight in silver wire. In her last creations from the beginning of the year 2006, Issey Miyake exceeded the bounds of fashion proposing a surprising idea. Together with the designer Dai Fujiwara, he revolutionized two disciplines: fashion and furniture design, proposing to the architecture and design company belonging to

Ron Arad a piece called "The Twins" - a pillow adapted on Arad's armchair shape called "Ripple Chair" - the waved chair, that in Miyake's vision , turns elegantly into a winter jacket suited to the human body. This fickle piece wasn't presented on a fashion stage. It appears simultaneous exposed on a moving mannequin and on Arad's chair in Salone furniture exhibition, Italy, 2006.

In the exhibition "Skin and Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture" from The Contemporary Art Museum in Los Angeles (September 2006) it is anticipated, exploring similitudes in architecture and the contemporary fashion. Inside the exhibition frame there were presented costumes and creations of some fashion creators and over 300 sophisticated architectural installations from the last 25 years, all of them on a large scale. The event pointed the significant experiences of the cultural changing between the two disciplines, fashion and architecture. It was presented a creation concentration of innovative fashion, installations, design works and the most interesting architect's works from the whole world, structured on a serie of theme like: identity, protection, geometry in the volume construction, reconstruction, deconstruction, draping, folding up and suspension.

The cohesion between the costume and architecture is an important one, because both use the human proportion, geometry and perspective to create a protective cover. Fashion and architecture gravitate together around the human proportions to indicate its dimensions through space. These are structures that protect symbolic, and extend the idea of a shelter to the house one, mega-structure.

The famous suit designers **Pierre Cardin, Paco Rabanne, Roberto Capucci and Gianfranco Ferre** are architects who create clothes according to the forms and space principles respecting in the same time the fashion rules. They use structures and volume, redistributing the human proportions in a clear manner, sculptural that create a three-dimensional expansion of the forms which requires fixed architectural principles. They use the textile material amplifying most of the times proportions, and so

the creations impact becomes a mixture between clothing, art and architecture.

**In the V section** of the III chapter

The environment and space "In coating" I studied the Land Art current artists' contribution, **Christo Javacheff** and **Jean-Claude de Gaillebon**. The demonstration places are the urban spaces or the nature, where they build mega-installations from textile materials using the wind power, water courses and architectonical constructions. Their works are great interventions in the environment and on long distances. Most of the projects are realized from textile materials, cut in big curtains that dress buildings, islands, parks, bridges or trees.

The idea to costume buildings or islands, uncovered their structure and the essential form hiding small details, protecting it like a curtain on an irrelevant sculpture or a cloth on a body. In this way it has been realized the step between the characters' in coating and the scenes' dress or the citadine spaces.

In this sense the young Korean artist Do-Ho Suh (1962) proposes to the public ambient sculptures meticulously realized from transparent materials put on a steel structure. Beginning with 1999, he turn in natural silk relies in natural size of some homes - of the personal apartments from Seoul and New York - these could be packed and transported. Suh examines the space complexity where he lives , understanding its spatiality and details, and inviting us at their new discovery, ignoring the intimacy.

In this chapter, entitled The Experimental Art (Architecture - Ambiance - Fashion - Installation - Performing with the costume), I presented the connections o which domains apparently different develop new interferences areas. Similitudes like the ones with a protection role, of identity or of a creative process, stylist parallels including here and the last trends to deconstruction and minimalism, all are connected in context with the built space, the architectural space, the ambiance, scene or the pieces they contain (furniture, art) and clothing.

**The last chapter, the IV** one, has as a searching object performing in fashion, the personal experiments and the section "From the worn costume to the space dressed up".

Structured in 3 sections:

Parallel experiments - Performing in fashion

Personal experiments

From the worn costume to the space dressed up

In the demonstrations serie where I took part with works from all times, shows, performance, presentings and exhibitions, object-costumes were realized in different materials, from the textile conventional ones to the textile manual painted ones but also unconventional materials like paper, plastic, netext, wire, wire net and the metal.

The last ones are most of the times the new element, because used as "construction element" they listen and answer to the most interesting structures. The metal and the wire, lasting materials specified to buildings or sculpture, I used to realize some object-costumes. The strict carcasses with considerable outsizes were presented in a show, being then left by the owner. The object becomes a sculptural abstract form. The work took part from an ensemble at the Romanian Architects Ball, at Vernescu House, and it was presented on the National Theatre stage in Bucharest.

The participation at some sessions among some workshops interdisciplined with an international audience in France, at Domaine de Boisbuchet (Poitou-Charente), on design theme, workshop initiated by the Pompidou Centre, Paris and Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, caused me the meeting with Andrei Bartenev. This is one of the young artists, on Russian origin who create instalation-dresses which makes performance with, being well-known for the events and shows performed in Germany, France, America in the 1990s. The artist shows his instalation performances with a costume in some stories directed by him. So, everything makes sense in a script where he develops a full visual show. One of the best performance is "The Botanical

Ballet" (1922). The costumes created by him are statue-objects of big dimensions, from paper worked in papier mache technique, painted in white and black, where the man hides in a box. Through form and graphism, they remember of the costumes created for Russian ballets or the tridimensional works of J. Debuffet: "*Coucou Bazar*" (1973), "*Jardin d'hiver*" (1970) and "*Jardin d'email*" (1972) exhibited in Kroller-Muller museum, Otterlo, Holand.

In 1998, as part of the remembered workshop, starting from a classical theme proposed by Andrei Bartenev - "*The swans lake*" - I realized some object-dress pieces which were integrated in a demonstration that turned into a visual show. The oversized costumes' volume, full coloured characterized the classical theme characters, but on a hard stage movement, directed by Bartenev. Made from unconventional materials for a costume - plastic, cardboard and metal rods - the constructions hid the character who handled the sculpture costume. A year later, on the same theme, as a part of the same workshop from Boisbucchet, I realized costumes made of fluid materials, soft, transparent. These costumes, although oversized, with full forms, regular, made special for large spaces, let the body movement freedom to perform.

The Pompidou Centre and Vitra Design Museum, initiated, as a part of their programme, a complex session with an important international audience of great artists, designers and architects. The result: "*Boisbucchet Collection*".

The starting point was the classical theme from Hoffman's fairy tale, taken from Piotr Ilici Ceaikovski's two acts ballet, "*The Nut Cracker*", which had to be put in object-costumes. From the beginning to the final act, all the costumes suffered a changing, after the Russian constructivism model. It came to a simple stay of the sculpture-costumes in space. Starting from the premises of the constructivist art, as a part of our event, every participant had to realize two pieces: One from a sensitive vision and one from an abstract one. From my point of view, for each of the two works I used different materials, the unconventional ones, like the plastic

net, acetophan - for the fluis costume, transparent, and building materials - plastic tubes, acrylite pigments and plastic sheets - for geometric costume - constructivist.

In our unconventional show every object-costume, (Clara and Fritz characters, the Nut Cracker, the soldiers, the toys, the mice, etc) took a place on the stage, on a spiral way, around a central element - *the fir-tree*. *The fir-tree*, one of my costumes, made on a simple shape, a parallelopipedal with a triangle base, two metres tall, was pierced by thick tubes (used in construction); these were as the fir-tree's branches. It has to be said that in traditional theme shows there isn't a character who has to be this fir-tree, most of the time being suggested at the back of the stage, but, this time, the central element, the fir-tree, had a double role, the decorative and the costume one. The structure costume use in making an object-costume increased the technical, visual aspect but the functional one, so the fir-tree costume "worn" by me could move its branches.

The whole show was filmed by the proffessionals, and the movie was sold by the president "*Boisbuket Collection*" Alexander von Vegesack to obtain founds for Domaine de Boisbuket castle's restoring.

In 2003, at the invitation brought by the "*Pleinart*" International Art Festival's organizers, Budapest, Hungary I took part and coordinated a costume performing with the first year students from the Fashion Department at the Art National University in Bucharest. Here, on a given theme, "*The writing*", the students conceived costumes made of textile materials. The presentation concept asked for a folding on the writing theme. The event was programmed in the evening, on a stage arranged in the old center of Budapest, on a pedestrian street. The interpretation I gave to the theme was one in an interactive vision, where the scenery was provided by a collective costume, made on the stage dimensions. This was supported in the outside parts by two characters. So, the costume functioned on one side as scenery of the space where the students' costumes were presented, and, on the

other side, as a screen-support on which I designed a film made by the Romanian students.

All these object-costumes, no matter what material they used (textile conventional or other unconventional materials), are always chosen directly connected with the destined space and so they behave like a micro-construction which the human body occupies, coming into its cover, moving it without changing its initial form. They are a link connection between architecture-costume-installation-performing with the costume.

I'll stop over the pieces ensemble which materializes the association between architecture, ambiance, fashion, installation and the costume performing.

All the pieces were made in outsized shapes and, so, they became micro spaces where the human body can get in or out without modifying their symmetry. There are personal trials to develop the costume over the conventional fashion limits, starting from the idea that space that surrounds us is reflected in costume.

The pieces ensemble that materializes the association between architecture-ambiance-installation-the costume performing, called **"From the worn dress to the Space Dressed Up"**, are first of all creations that correspond to the principles and rules of a construction, around the human body, spreaded the idea to space. The plan and elevation's architecture are materialized in the plane structure of the material, from which it results through cutting and reassembling the pieces - the cube, the cylinder and the sphere - good for the elevation. The costumes' "Construction", realized after the architecture rules, develops shapes in space (cube, circle, trapeze, diagonals, etc.) that form micro-spaces, which, populated or not, remain stabile.

Having the experience of a conventional material but also the unconventional ones, I chose to "build" this clothing pieces in textile materials, some specific to the furniture like doubled or padded materials, natural wool, (fetu), cotton texture and cotton and silk jacquard. Chosen specially for every work, technically speaking (texture, thickness, density and weight), but also plastic

and aesthetically (materiality, chromatic and graphic, especially in padded material, that, over the successive beds, is currently sewed, forming a lining squares , to obtain the wanted effect the one that accents the costume construction.

The materials' harmony but also the forms' balances, the colour, the relation of the human with the environment are basic principles of my creations. All the clothing collection pieces were deliberately made in outsized shapes, so that they became micro-spaces where the human body can get in or out without modifying their symmetry. When the costumes are needy of the human silhouette, the three-dimensional built form can be admired from outside, and the chromatic - from the distance, as a sculptural work. Every object has a dominant colour for their spatial form to be read easily, when all of them are contained in the same space. Worn on the stage, the pieces present the attributes of a timeless costume taking easily part in fashion, and animated by a dancer artist they open new possibilities of expression and body movement, taking symbolic the expression language of the ballerinas. The sleeve's form, unconventional, is adapted to positions from their classical technique.

The traditional clothes are more interesting moving, but the object-costume can create a visual show, also in the static hypostasis through monumentality, volume and chromatics, but in the dynamic, where they become the essential part of performing scenery as well. As an object, I developed the costume's elements, expounding the forms of a furniture pieces, and after that to be used in the performing of a costume.

Building-costumes, with an evident massiveness, are adapted to movement, becoming suited to performing with a costume. Operating with the space formed by the costume between architecture, fashion, sculpture, choreography, I synthesized the costume's design. More than a cloth, the costume gets a different combined form with the abstract geometry, that determines deformations and out sizes of the human body, elongating. The human body coated in the object-costume, won't be an isolated

gesture, it comes gracefully on the fashion vanguard's stage, to be then adapted to the contemporary clothing style.