Haptic aesthetics of dress in the contemporary exhibition space

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Royal College of Art for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Royal College of Art

For my most special wearers: Wyn and Sybil

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore how dress can be *felt* as though it is being worn when it is not worn in the contemporary exhibition space. In daily life, wearers touch, share space with and move in relation to others as 'dressed bodies'. This creates a haptic and aesthetic understanding of how dress operates on the body and self, and it is these 'haptic aesthetics' which the viewer references in the exhibition space in order to feel touched by dress.

The thesis is divided into four chapters, each of which reveals different registers of this wearer-engagement, but crucially also the embodiment of dress itself: 1. Dress Sense. 2 Dress Space 3. Moving Dress 4. A Dress Voice. Focus on the relationship between dress, body and self in 'Dress Sense' reveals that a wearer's consciousness can become embodied in dress. 'Dress Space' demonstrates that through the experience of being a wearer a viewer can not only inhabit their own dress, but also imagine inhabiting dress in the exhibition. 'Moving Dress' reveals that a kinaesthetic empathy can be felt between a viewer and dress in an exhibit when there is a degree of movement. 'A Dress Voice' highlights the way that dress can communicate through a particular mode: the haptic aesthetics of dress. When a viewer grasps the haptic aesthetics of dress, the effect is one of feeling touched by dress.

The study focuses on exhibitions in the UK, Europe and the United States in the last two decades, encompassing a contemporary phase in the history of the dress exhibition which has seen dress moving out of the vitrine. Theoretical texts drawn from phenomenology, ethnography, museology, fashion studies, haptics and aesthetics elucidate this relationship between the viewer and the dress exhibit. Empirical evidence is derived from personal visits to exhibitions, observation of viewers, original questionnaires and analysis of visitor data and recorded conversations with curators, designers and educators. In addition, a sensory, auto-ethnographic approach is used throughout the research to further record the experience as a representative female viewer. Not only is the female viewer typical in the dress exhibition; dress exhibits are also typically female. A female experience is gendered, yet is shared by all who are able to identify with the female point of view. This can cross boundaries of gender, age, status and culture.

From academic research in design history, textile, fashion and dress theory, and the application of haptic pedagogy, knowledge is drawn together to form a theoretical understanding of haptic aesthetics. A haptic sensibility developed through practice in textile art and dress construction, together with professional work in costume for moving image, contributes to a practical understanding of haptic aesthetics as applicable to dress. Further academic research into the contemporary curation of dress has revealed the issue of liveliness, which underpins the line of enquiry in this research.

The originality of this study lies in offering an understanding of how dress is enlivened in exhibition contexts through the application of haptic aesthetics. The thesis therefore offers a contribution to the future study of the relationship between dress, body and self in contexts where not-worn dress is viewed but not touched.

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Conclusion

Figure 1 ‘Zemire’ by Christian Dior (1954), Room 40, V&A (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 2 ‘Hanging Trio of Pieces’ by Jungen Lee, with white line box on floor, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 3 ‘An anonymous viewer’, Room 40, V&A (27.2.13). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 4 ‘A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90’. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40, V&A (14.10.17). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 5 ‘Comfortable’, *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London (2010) Image © Julian Abrams [Internet] Available at: https://www.julianabrams.co.uk/# (Accessed 9.12.20)

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Author's Declaration

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.

The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Signature: Lucy Gundry

Date: 16 December 2020

Introduction

This PhD research is an investigation into the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode of communication in the spaces of contemporary exhibition.

In his book *The senses of touch* the sociologist Mark Paterson defines 'haptic' as pertaining '[…] to the sense of touch in all its forms […]' (Paterson 2007:ix) encompassing proprioception,[1] the vestibular,[2] kinaesthesia,[3] the cutaneous,[4] the tactile[5] and force feedback.[6] Paterson's reference to the aesthetic is as an '[…] alteration of sensibility and affects within aesthetic experience […].' (Paterson 2007:9) Together he suggests the haptic aesthetic is a mode of touch '[…] concerned less with touching than with being touched.' (Paterson 2007:9). The French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty speaks of 'how the world touches us' (Merleau-Ponty 1969:244).

Originality

In this research I question how a viewer can touch, and *feel* touched by, dress in the context of the dress exhibition where touch is not permitted. My original contribution to knowledge is the application of haptic aesthetics to the study of '*how* dress touches us' through worn and not-worn dress in the context of an exhibition.

Impact

The intention of this thesis is not to provide practical curatorial solutions, but to offer a critical analysis of *how* the haptic aesthetics of dress allows a wearer to touch, and feel touched by, dress. This is to offer a deeper understanding of what a viewer brings to the experience of viewing dress in the exhibition as a 'conscious wearer'[7] when transitioning from the everyday into the exhibition space. Further, it comments on the issue of 'liveliness' in the dress exhibition through the implications of the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode through which 'dress touches us'. Overall, the intention of this is to offer the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode of communication.

This research is aimed at anyone interested in the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode through which the *feel* of touch is communicated when touch is not permitted. Primarily it is hoped that this

[1] 'Perception of position, state and movement of the body and limbs in space' (Paterson 2007:ix)
[2] 'Pertaining to the perception of balance, head position, acceleration and deceleration.' (Paterson 2007:ix)
[3] 'The sensations of movement of body and limbs.' (Paterson 2007:ix)
[4] 'Pertaining to the skin itself or the skin as a sense organ. Includes sensation of pressure, temperature and pain.' (Paterson 2007:ix)
[5] 'Pertaining to the cutaneous sense, but more specifically to the sensation of pressure (from mechanoreceptors) […]' (Paterson 2007:ix)
[6] 'Relating to the mechanical production of information sensed by the human kinaesthetic system. Devices provide cutaneous and kinaesthetic feedback that usually correlates to the visual display.' (Paterson 2007:ix)
[7] A conscious wearer is a living person who wears dress in all everyday contexts with awareness and consciousness of how the way their dressed body and self communicates within the social and moral contexts in which it is worn.

research will be of interest to those working in the fields of dress studies (including textiles, fashion and costume), ethnography and museology, to enrich theory, practice and research. Specifically, this concerns researchers, theorists, academics, designers, curators, artists and students. Theoretical impact is on the study of the relationship between dress, body and self, the concept of curating the self and the haptic aesthetic communication between different dressed bodies, contexts and spaces. Practical applications include the display, exhibition or showcasing of dress in contexts such as the gallery (museum), retail environment, theatrical space or film set, where touching dress is not possible, or is not permitted.

Scope

An explanation of the term 'dress' as used in the thesis is important here. Christopher Breward, José Teunissen and Elizabeth Wilson discuss 'fashion' in relation to the exhibition. Joanne Entwistle discusses the 'costume' exhibition. Rather than using the term 'fashion' or 'costume', I propose to discuss 'dress'. Importantly, this is because it relates to the experience of getting dressed and being a wearer in the world. The word 'dress' can be a reference to the textile item of 'a' or 'the' dress as an individual item of clothing. Further, dress is an umbrella term for fashion, costume, apparel, attire, clothing, ensemble, outfit and garb.

The act of getting dressed and being dressed are both fundamental to the experience of being a wearer in the world. According to Entwistle the phrase 'getting dressed' captures the idea of dress as an *activity*:

> Dress is therefore the outcome of *practices* which are socially constituted but put into effect by the individual: individuals must attend to their bodies when they 'get dressed' and it is an experience that is as intimate as it is social. (Entwistle 2000:11)

This is pertinent, because throughout this thesis I emphasise that what the viewer brings to the dress exhibition is the haptic aesthetic experience of being a conscious wearer in the world.

Prior research

The motivation behind this research comes from a deep fascination with, and sensitivity towards, the haptic materiality of dress and how this facilitates intersubjective communication between dress, body and self with communicative implications.

This interest was sparked when I spent time in South-East Asia, Nepal and India between 1995 and 1996, and then later during my two-and-a-half month exchange visit to Kawashima Textile School,

north of Kyoto, in 2000. It was these international experiences that illuminated the intensely subjective, yet commonly experienced, feelings that I share with other wearers through my own experience of wearing dress in these culturally and communicatively alien contexts.

It was during a degree in Textile Art, which I completed in 2001, that I became fascinated with how the intersubjectivity between dress, body and self could be interpreted by applying my own haptic practice of creating paper and thread body-dress-like pieces. I traced the lines around the edges of my body onto large pieces of Tyvek paper, which I stitched into, connecting one edge with another. Then through the act of pulling the threads, the edges (or seams) of my paper body came together, at the same time becoming distorted (Figure 1). These pieces were a comment on social pressures outside the body impacting on conscious tensions within the body.

Figure 1. 'Stitched' by Lucy Gundry, 2001. Image © Lucy Gundry

My graduate work was initially in costume for television and film, which widened my knowledge of how dress can be employed not only to convey meaning, but also identity, and even a narrative. This is both when it is worn on an actor's body and more pertinently it is not worn, for example when dressing the set as a prop. Later, I moved away from media to work more closely with the curation of textiles, firstly as textile manager in the Contemporary Applied Arts gallery in London between 2003 and 2004 and later, between 2005 and 2010, through academic research and curatorial assistance on textile exhibitions staged by Lesley Millar, Professor of Textile Culture at the University for the Creative Arts (UCA). During this time I became familiar with the curatorial issue of touching textiles in the exhibition space and methods that could be employed to address this. I also became aware of the importance of the haptic in a viewer's intermodal experience of textiles in a context where the viewer is permitted to look, but not touch.

For example, in 2005 I assisted with an exhibition entitled '21:21: the textile vision of Reiko Sudo and Nuno' (University for the Creative Arts, Farnham, 21 October 2005). Reiko Sudo's[8] vision is that 'Textiles are not just a pleasure to look at, they are a marvel to be experienced by all five senses'.[9] In this exhibition, therefore, although Sudo's textiles were exhibited with immediate access and without permission to touch, Millar introduced 'touch panels'[10] through which the viewer was able to experience the cutaneous feel of each type of fabric exhibited in the main exhibition space (Figure 2).

Figure 2. 'Touch panels', *21:21 The Textile Vision of Reiko Sudo and Nuno*, curated by Lesley Millar, 2005. Image © Lesley Millar, University for the Creative Arts

This was an effective way of connecting the seeing and touching of textiles in the exhibition space. However, when this approach was transferred to the exhibition of dress, this raised the important question for me of whether the viewer needed to physically touch dress in order to understand what it feels like to wear dress (as a conscious wearer in the moment of viewing).

In 2008, I went on to complete an AHRC-funded MA in contemporary curating, during which I focused more specifically on the role of the body in the exhibition of dress, focusing mainly on the mannequin as a model or muse. Towards the end of my MA, in June 2008, I attended the talk 'Exhibitionism: Does Fashion Belong in a Gallery?' at the Barbican Art Gallery. During this talk the fashion historian Christopher Breward declared: 'Fashion comes the museum to die!' This was pivotal to my thinking at this time because it both reaffirmed my focus on the body and drew my attention towards dress as a site for the body.

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[9] Reiko Sudo 2005 (Accessed 5.6.20 http://transitionandinfluenceprojects.com/2121Vision/index.html)

[10] 'Touch panels' were small samples of each textile exhibited along a wall at eye level for the viewers to touch at *21:21 The textile vision of Reiko Sudo and Nuno*, UCA, Farnham 2005.

Historically Breward is not alone in his view. Elizabeth Wilson, in her essay 'Fashion and the Postmodern Body', described dress in the museum as '[…] suspended in a kind of rigor mortis' and '[…] a veritable imitation of life' (Wilson. 1992:15). Joanne Entwistle, in her book *Body Dressing* (2001), described dress in the museum as '[…] haunted by the spirits of the living, breathing humans whose bodies these gowns once adorned' (Entwistle 2001:36). Entwistle suggests that 'Our experience of the costume museum, along with our sadness when confronted with the clothes of dead relatives, points to the ways in which we "normally" experience dress as alive and "fleshy": once removed from the body, dress lacks fullness and seems strange, almost alien […]' (Entwistle 2001:36). These descriptions establish the issue of liveliness in the dress exhibition, which focuses on the dress itself as divorced from its source of liveliness. My thinking was now directed towards the site of *not-worn* dress as indicative not just of a body, but also of a wearer.

In the decade since the talk at the Barbican Art Gallery mentioned above, curators have employed many effective approaches to 'enliven' dress, some of which are exemplified in this thesis. However, my enquiry remains phenomenological rather than curatorial. José Teunissen's closing thought expressed at this talk was that '[…] further research needs to be undertaken in the study of the dressed body and how it translates from street to gallery.' (Exhibitionism: Does Fashion Belong in a Gallery?', 2008). This was constructive in forming a line of enquiry for this doctoral research. My focus on the site of not-worn dress in the exhibition was now one through which the everyday experience of wearing dress could be translated, and therefore one to which the study of being a conscious wearer was important.

This research focus deepened through an academic UCA research project I carried out in 2010. This was to explore the impact of haptics (the use of digital tools) versus haptic, hand-operated tools on teaching and practice in textile and fashion degree courses within the UK. The findings suggested that developing *haptic literacy* was key to balancing the application of the haptic tool with haptics in order to help students navigate through the digital revolution.[11]

It was at this point that I linked my interest in the materiality of textiles, the relationship between dress, body and self, the issue of liveliness in the dress exhibition, the *not-worn* dress as a site indicative of the wearing experience in the everyday and the concept of a *haptic literacy*. With an awareness of Paterson's concept of haptic aesthetics, referenced at the beginning of this Introduction, a line of enquiry was formed for this PhD research. Investigation began with the aim of exploring *how* a viewer experiences the feeling of being touched by dress in the context of an exhibition where touch is not permitted through the experience of being a conscious wearer in the world.

[11] The digital revolution is the shift from mechanical and analogue electronic technology to digital electronics.

Key literature

At the beginning of this research there were particular texts which inspired me. These are interwoven throughout this thesis to develop a haptic aesthetic approach, methodology and analysis.

This first text, **Sarah Pink's book *Doing sensory ethnography* (2009),** was key to structuring my autoethnographic practice as a researcher:
It was primarily useful for my adoption of 'embodied' and 'emplaced' sensory autoethnographic research practices towards methodological practice in Chapters One, Two and Three.

Pink proposes that 'The idea that ethnographic experiences are "embodied" – in that the researcher learns and knows through her or his whole experiencing body – has been recognised in much existing methodological literature across the "ethnographic disciplines"'. (Pink 2009:25) Further, Pink's theory of an 'emplaced ethnography' was methodologically enhancing. This is one which, she proposes '[…] attends to the question of experience by accounting for the relationships between bodies, minds and the materiality and sensorality of the environment.' (Pink 2009:25). Pink goes onto to explain that 'This approach is in some ways akin to auto-ethnography, a method that allows ethnographers to use their own experiences as a route through which to produce academic knowledge.' (Pink 2009:64)

The following three texts were important for the application of haptic aesthetics to the study of dress.

Mark Paterson's book *The senses of touch: haptics, affects and technologies* (2007) was primarily important for his term 'haptic aesthetics' and for his use of the fold as a metaphor in his 'physiology of touch' (Paterson 2007:54).

Paterson describes the 'effect of folding that skin becomes flesh, becomes body: that epidermal surface achieves vascular depth' (Paterson 2007:54). Paterson further explores the folding of touch from immediate to deep, and then to metaphorical touching. This influenced the development of my concept that pressure experienced on the surface of the skin from wearing dress is translated through dress in the form of sensations, which travel deep into the body where they are identified as feelings.

Pennina Barnett's *Textures of memory: the poetics of cloth* (1999) was significant for her assertion that fabric embodies 'soft logics' and her reference to Deleuze's concept of the fold. The fold provides a useful metaphor throughout this thesis to visualize how worn and unworn characteristics travel through the materiality of dress. Further to this, Barnett discusses synaesthesia, a heightened intermodal condition, which supports the connection between sight and touch in enabling the eye to touch. Importantly, she then answers this question: What is it to become aware of the body? It is to acknowledge that material dissolution is the *presence of death in life*, not as a binary opposite – but

enfolded at its very centre.' (Barnett 1999:30) These thoughts influence observations of the dress exhibit not as a morbid discarded skin but as a fabricated skin which, if touched, could come to life.

In **Umberto Eco's 'Lumbar thought' in *Faith and fakes: travels in hyperreality* (1976)** he described the effect of wearing a pair of jeans as an imposed demeanour through his 'epidermic self-awareness'. He further declared*:* 'I discovered that my movements, my way of walking, turning, sitting, hurrying, were *different.*' (Eco 1976:192). The concept that a wearer's epidermis (skin) embodies a self-awareness was influential in developing the concept of a *wearing self-awareness* and a *wearing consciousness*[12] that a wearer experiences through wearing dress.

This next text, **Alexandra Palmer's 2008 article** '**Untouchable: creating desire and knowledge in museum costume and textile exhibition'** (Palmer 2008) was important in shaping my thinking about the haptic aesthetics of dress in the exhibition context.

In this article Palmer acknowledges that 'the personal knowledge of wearing clothing' makes viewers 'connoisseurs' of dress 'before entering a dress exhibition'. This is key to her second point that viewers 'measure meaning and value in terms of their own life'. This notion underpins both the premise of this thesis and the application of my auto-ethnographic method of exploring what viewers bring into the exhibition as 'connoisseurs' of dress.

A final text, **Claire Pajaczkowska's 2010 article 'Tension, time and tenderness: indexical traces of touch in textiles'** (Pajaczkowska, 2010) was important to the analysis of haptic aesthetics as a mode of dress communication.

In this piece she discusses the materiality of textiles as communication and summarises that the application of semiotics is useful in part, but that textile communication is more complex than this. This text has been influential in developing the concept that dress can communicate through the sense of touch.

Through these texts I was able to put together the understanding that dress has the capacity to embody traces of touch which travel into and out of the body through the materiality of folds. These folds have a conscious impact on a wearer's skin, which impacts on the relationship between dress, body and self. I understood that not being able to touch in the dress exhibition creates a desire to touch, which can to some extent be substituted by the intermodal connection between sight and touch, and that the way dress makes a wearer feel is an 'unspoken' communication between dress,

[12] The concept of a *wearing self-awareness* and a *wearing consciousness* are developed with reference Umberto Eco's concept of an 'epidermic self-awareness' (Eco 1976) through further autoethnographic observations of the cutaneous and conscious sensations experienced when dressing in front of the domestic mirror, as discussed in Chapter One.

body and self. This can be thought of as 'poetic', 'semiotic', 'linguistic', 'sensory', 'cutaneous' and even 'conscious' – but further, that it is complex and requires further investigation.

Key exhibitions and exhibits

Exhibitions:

- *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* at the V&A Museum's archive at Blythe House (2011) curated by Judith Clark and Adam Philips. This was inspiring in terms of Clark's use of the spatial metaphor and Philips' psychoanalytical textual contribution.
- *Eternity Dress,* Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013), curated by Olivier Saillard. This was an inspiring performance which referenced the creation and curation of a dress using 'voices' (of the designer, curator, wearer and living mannequin).
- *Dance and Fashion* (2014 –2015), the Museum at FIT, New York, curated by Valerie Steele. The images from these exhibits helped my analysis of gestural movement and the communicative implications of gesture through dress.

Exhibits:

- The 'Mirror Room' at *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution,* Somerset House, London (2009) for analysis of Jacques Lacan's 'mirror stage' and the fragmented body in Chapter One.
- 'Zemire' by Christian Dior (1954) Room 40, V&A Museum, for the analysis and implications of 'imaginative identification' (Lacan 1999:43) in Chapter One.
- 'A viewer' Madame Grès MoMu, Antwerp (9.2.13). This photograph provides important reference for the implications of a 'touch tension' as discussed in Chapter Two.
- 'An anonymous viewer', Room 40, V&A and 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90'. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40, V&A for the gestural act of an anonymous viewer which offers evidence of an 'imaginative identification' (Lacan 1999:43) and that dress itself *is* able to act as mirror in the exhibition as discussed in Chapter One. Further, this suggests that a viewer can experience an 'imaginative inhabiting' as discussed in Chapter Two.
- 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775' in the display *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800* Room 40, V&A Museum (October 2017) for discussion on 'arrested movement' in Chapter Three.
- 'Comfortable', *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, V&A Museum, Blythe House, London (2010). This exhibit is an important reference for the analysis of the curatorial 'voice' discussed in Chapter Four.

A Contemporary Dress Museology

A *contemporary dress museology* is important to define in order to situate dress exhibits in this thesis.

(i) A contemporary time period

Firstly, I suggest that a 'contemporary' time period began when dress came out of the vitrine. Rather than agreeing that this happened in the 1990s, as Riegels Melchior suggests in *Fashion and museums* (2014) (in which she claims there is a distinct fashion museology)[13], I subscribe to the proposition put forward by Amy de la Haye and Judith Clark in their book *Exhibiting fashion: before and after 1971* (2014). De la Haye and Clark propose that the contemporary time period begins with a seminal fashion exhibition staged at the V&A Museum, London, in 1971. This was *Fashion: an anthology by Cecil Beaton*. Not only did Cecil Beaton bring what was labeled as fashion into the museum for the first time, he also staged dresses outside the vitrine and for a temporary period of time only. This was a pivotal shift away from the traditional staging of dress in vitrines (sourced from in-house collections, inside vitrines as part of permanent displays). This shift marked the beginning of the 'contemporary exhibition space' for dress in the museum: a space specially designed to exhibit dresses sourced from outside the museum collection and staged outside the vitrine for a temporary period of time.

(ii) The contemporary exhibition space

I define the 'contemporary exhibition space' in the following terms:

First, I acknowledge that the contemporary exhibition space often refers to spaces outside the museum, such as retail spaces, hotels, churches, galleries or other everyday architectural space or locations, which might be adapted for the purpose of exhibiting dress. For example, the exhibition maker Judith Clark used the ground floor (and basement) space of an empty shop at 31-33 Church Street, Marylebone, London, to stage *Jessica Ogden*: *Still* (2017). Her other venues have included the space of the windows at Selfridges, in which the installation *Biennale 20* was exhibited in October 2016. In the context of this thesis, however, I argue the contemporary exhibition space is also one that is designed and constructed within the museum space itself. For example, in Room 40 at the V&A there is an outer gallery space featuring permanent vitrines which circles and an inner gallery space designed for the purpose of staging contemporary dress exhibitions. Room 40, brings the traditional and the contemporary together to make up the 'contemporary exhibition space' within the museum that I mainly refer to in this thesis.

[13] In *Fashion and museums* (2014) Riegels Melchior claims there is a distinct fashion museology, which I suggest is encompassed within what can be thought of as a contemporary dress museology as defined in this thesis.

The contemporary exhibition space has had a major impact on the enforcement of museum and conservation regulations and codes of conduct ('Do not touch' barriers). Traditionally the 'Do not touch' barrier is enforced by the glass wall of a vitrine, or is indicated by the placing of a rope in front of an exhibit, indicating that it is not to be crossed. Within the contemporary exhibition of dress these touch barriers are still in place in some areas of the museum (for example, around the edges of Room 40 at the V&A) to prevent viewers from touching dress for conservation reasons.[14] However, according to Melchior, with contemporary fashion museology comes a '[…] compromise [of] the ICOM guidelines for proper handling of clothing in a museum context – for example, not displaying fiber-based objects behind dust-protective glass […]' (Melchior 2014:9). This is because moving dress out of the vitrines means that viewers have 'immediate access'[15] to exhibits, which on the one hand allows dress to be viewed in greater detail but on the other means there is no barrier to prevent viewers touching it.

'Do not touch' barriers are pertinent to this thesis: therefore I have identified two types which I suggest are employed within the contemporary exhibition of dress: the 'visible' and the 'invisible'. For the purpose of this research it is the invisible touch barriers which further help define a contemporary dress museology.

(iii) Visible and invisible 'touch barriers'

Visible touch barriers include 'Do Not Touch' signs, the presence of a glass vitrine, a rope, lines or plinths marking out a barrier on the floor (seen in the V&A Museum's *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* 14 March – 2 August 2015) (see Figure 3). Visible barriers can also be thought of as like a digital interface, manipulated via a touch screen or keyboard. These interfaces can be touched, but provide a barrier to touching dress in the digital space beyond the screen.

[14] In the exhibition of contemporary dress, the 'Do not touch' rule is now more concerned with restrictions relating to sketching and photography for copyright reasons.
[15] Immediate access is a distance within which a viewer can touch dress.

Figure 3. *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty, 2015.* Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Invisible touch barriers include sensors, which emit a sound when a viewer has moved too close to them, or the placing of dresses on a false platform, both of these were used in *The Vulgar: Fashion Redefined* (Barbican Art Gallery, 2016-17). Further invisible touch barriers are created by placing dress on a high or low plinth or at the end of a cubicle or even inside a cabinet (for example in the section 'Measured' in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, V&A Museum Archives, Blythe House, 2010 (see Figure 36 in Chapter Two: *Dress Space*). Another invisible touch barrier is a verbal enforcement from invigilators.

Further invisible touch barriers emerged from my '*Dress Sense'* exhibition experiment (Gundry 2011), which I discuss later in this thesis (in Chapter Two). These come from the viewer themselves. They are self-imposed, observed through moral, social and conscious codes of conduct around touch and dress which are experienced in the everyday. There are less obvious triggers for these, but I suggest they are in part transferred from the everyday experience of being a wearer and in part an awareness of the museological code of conduct. Reasons include respect for conservation values, respect for a piece of work which has taken thought, time and skill to curate, respect for what does not belong to them (not touching what is museum property) and the sense that dress is a skin which was once worn by a fleshy body (not touching another wearer's property because this does not belong to them).

(iv) Display and exhibition of dress

The contemporary exhibition space is further defined by being a themed space which borrows architecturally from the everyday: for example, adapting, abstracting, embellishing or reconstructing retail, domestic, theatrical or cinematic devices in order to exhibit dress.

Since the Cecil Beaton exhibition in the V&A in 1971, dress has been exhibited in a variety of contemporary museum and gallery locations in London that had not previously been considered for

this purpose. These include the Design Museum, the Barbican Art Gallery and Somerset House. Another institutional space which has been used by the exhibition maker Judith Clark is the V&A's Archive in Blythe House,[16] in which Clark staged her exhibition: *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* in 2011.

The V&A Museum held an exhibition of the work of Japanese fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto (*Yohji Yamamoto,* 2011), for which some of his pieces were exhibited in satellite spaces outside the V&A, as an extension of the museum for the duration of this temporary exhibition. The piece entitled 'Yohji Making Waves' featured an oversized upside-down wedding dress suspended over a sunken pool of water in a basement room of an industrial building in Wapping, east London, which could only be reached by boat (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. 'Yohji Making Waves', Wapping Projects, March 2011. Image © Imogen Eveson

The construction of contemporary exhibition spaces for showing dress within museum and gallery buildings has resulted in part from the rise of the contemporary exhibition of dress. This has been partly due to the increased popularity of exhibiting the work of contemporary fashion designers, as well as individually themed exhibitions on cultural or socially topical themes. This has led to the opening of specialist fashion and textile museums which only stage contemporary exhibitions, including the Fashion and Textile Museum in London, which opened in 2003, and the Museum of Costume in Bath, which was renamed The Fashion Museum in 2007.

Outside the United Kingdom, the Mode Museum (MoMu) in Antwerp, Belgium, opened in 2002 to focus solely on new dress exhibitions with curatorial approaches that do not involve a permanent

[16] Blythe House is a listed building (the former headquarters of the Post Office Savings Bank) located at 23 Blythe Rd, Hammersmith, London.

collection. The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York, founded in 1969, shows temporary exhibitions from its own permanent collection. Many other international museums and galleries have opened in recent years, some of which are associated with fashion houses. Prominent in this category is the Christian Dior Museum and Garden (Granville, France), which opened as a museum in 1988 in Dior's childhood home. The Dior collection features pieces by Yves Saint Laurent, Marc Bohan and John Galliano, as well as Dior's 'New Look' pieces.

These museological and everyday contexts are employed to both 'display' and 'exhibit' dress, blurring the boundaries between the two. Borrowing from one another when curating exhibits creates a connection between the two, bringing the everyday into the museum and the museum into the everyday. This connection is crucial, as is the impact on the viewer across what I term the 'viewing space'.

(v) The 'viewing space'

For the purposes of this research, the most important space is the 'viewing space' between the viewer and the dress exhibit. The distance is dictated to some extent by the exhibition architecture and to some extent by the viewer's situated body when viewing the exhibit. However, when the viewer is facing the exhibit there is a point of arm's length distance, which I use to define the circumference of the 'viewing space'. This 'viewing space' is paralleled by the viewing spaces a viewer experiences prior to entering the exhibition space, which I explore in terms of the domestic and changing room mirror in Chapter Two.

The contemporary dress exhibitions I refer to in this thesis are predominantly those staged at the V&A Museum, London. This is for two reasons. Firstly, this is because as an institution the V&A has championed fashion exhibitions since its inaugural *Fashion: An Anthology by Cecil Beaton* in 1971 (Clark, De La Haye & Horsley 2014). Those I reference in this thesis include *Fashion in Motion: Alexander McQueen* (1999), *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (Artangel, at the V&A archives, Blythe House, 2010), *Yohji Yamamoto* (2011) and *Ballgowns: British Glamour Since 1950* (2012-2013). Secondly, these various exhibitions at the V&A have made it possible for me to gather primary research evidence from a wide range of temporary and permanent prominent dress exhibitions, which continue to champion examples of dress both inside and outside the vitrine, and further across variable viewing spaces, within visible and invisible 'Do not touch' barriers and in degrees of both motion and stillness. Outside the V&A I refer to the 'Mirror Room' in *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution* (2009) at Somerset House: this was important for the analysis of dress in the 'exhibition mirror', which I discuss in Chapter One. Further, *Eternity Dress,* curated by Olivier Saillard*, at* the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013), important for referencing the creation and curation of a dress using 'voices' (of the designer, curator, wearer and living mannequin). *Dance and*

Fashion (2014 –2015), the Museum at FIT, New York, curated by Valerie Steele, is important for the analysis of gesture in dress exhibits as explored in Chapter Three.

(vi) A *'third'* Space

Internationally, museums and galleries increasingly exhibit their collections and exhibitions not just in a physical space but the contemporary 'third' space of the website. These support the exhibition of dress in the form of a visual and factual archive, able to record and give access to past, present and future exhibitions. Described as a 'third' space, this virtual exhibition site is often visited independently as an exhibition space before, during or after a physical visit, or even sometimes as a replacement for a physical visit.

The nature of this digital environment is that it is both a private and a public space where the haptic aesthetic of dress is altered, often through the use of a keyboard and occasionally through force feedback. According to Paterson, force feedback is '[…] the mechanical production of information sensed by the human kinaesthetic system [with devices that] provide cutaneous and kinaesthetic feedback that usually correlate to the visual display' (Paterson 2007:ix) It is a place where dress exists as an image, similar to a reflection, but as a simulacrum, which draws a parallel between the digital space and the domestic mirror, the changing-room mirror and the trying-on room mirror, which I refer to in Chapters One, Two and Three. It is also a space that can be accessed through a mobile digital device (a smartphone, tablet or computer), which means the digital and physical dress can also be experienced at the same time in the exhibition space.

Although the digital space in itself is not a focus in this thesis (it is *one* of the ways dress is exhibited in the contemporary exhibition space) it is a space where dress on digital mannequins can be viewed in motion; this forms part of my analysis in Chapter Three.

(vii) The 'digital dress'

The digital dress is a pixelated simulation of a material dress fabricated through computer-generated images or filmed moving images, which can be subject to manipulation through haptics. The digital dress and the material dress constitute the two main two types of dress that are exhibited in the contemporary exhibition space. The reason I discuss this here is that although I acknowledge the emergence and presence of the digital dress and the digital mannequin, as I will go on to to explain I do not focus on the experience of the digital dress as outside or operating differently in terms of the viewer's experience of the haptic aesthetics of dress.

However, in order to explain how I consider digital dress exhibits in this thesis, it was important to observe a viewer's haptic aesthetic experience of dress as an 'immersant'.[17] Therefore the term 'immersing' is used here, rather than 'inhabiting' (which I refer to in Chapter Two). In order to explore this transitional space as a viewer, and compare my experience of the same exhibit in the digital and physical exhibition space, I analyse an exhibit called 'Naomi', which featured in *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution* at Somerset House, London, 17 September – 23 December 2009. In terms of haptic aesthetics I am interested in how the physical space and the digital space merge. 'Naomi' was curated by Claire Catterall, Alistair O'Neill and Penny Martin, who worked with Nick Knight to bring exhibits from the *SHOWstudio.com* website into the exhibition space.

I first visited this exhibition via its website on my laptop (at home). It was possible to digitally interact with 'Naomi'. The digital 'Naomi' was a series of three white figures standing in the same pose side by side with their legs and raised, ballerina-like arms overlapping (Figure 5). When I clicked on the exhibit, the keys on my keyboard became a haptic device. By tapping the keys I was able to effectively reach out and daub the image of 'Naomi' with paint. On my computer screen, 'Naomi' was small and flat; I had the sense that I was painting not a body, but rather a surface in an otherwise unoccupied space. As I tapped the digital paintbrush, it made marks on 'Naomi', which I could see appearing on my screen.

Figure 5. 'Naomi', *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*, Somerset House, London, 2009. Image © Nick Knight / SHOWstudio.com

There appeared to be no space between the end of my digital tool and the marks I was making, which felt as though I had immediate access to 'Naomi'. However, I knew my digital daubs were travelling

[17] 'Immersant' is the term used to describe the physical awareness a viewer has when their viewing experience is immersed in a digital environment.

through a series of networks as a set of codes, at one remove from direct touching yet with the ability to make a mark (Figure 6).

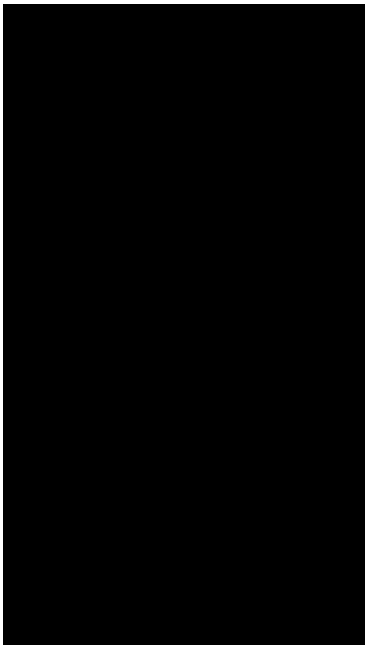

Figure 6. [REDACTED] A colourful still from an interactive video of live daubs on a giant statue of 'Naomi', *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*, Somerset House, London, (2009) Image © Nick Knight / SHOWstudio.com. Available at: https://showstudio.com/projects/naomi_campbell_statuesque/interactive_sculpture?autoplay=1

Later, when I physically visited the exhibition at Somerset House, I saw the twenty-five-foot sculpture of 'Naomi' in front of me in the exhibition space. (Figure 7, features an anonymous viewer).

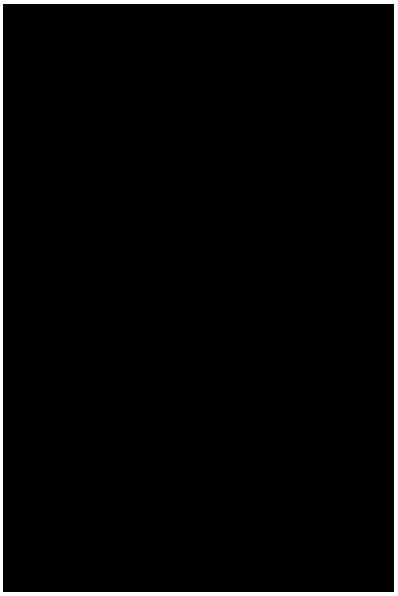

Figure 7. [REDACTED] Anonymous viewer standing in front the unveiled giant 'Naomi'

Sculpture, *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*, Somerset House, London, (2009) Image © Zac Hussein - PA Images [Internet] Available at: http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/giant-statue of-naomi-campbell-is-unveiled-during-the-press-news-photo/805321058

When I analysed 'Naomi' in the exhibition space, I observed that I could not touch her daubed body physically. I noted that there was another monitor and keyboard close by, which I could use to daub 'Naomi' in situ, as I had done at home, if I wanted to. However, I did not want to paint her body in this context, for two reasons: first, because I had already done this in the context of my home, and second because the exhibit was placed centrally on a plinth beyond arm's reach.

In my experience, I felt less inhibited when daubing Naomi via the digital screen than I would have if I had daubed Naomi in situ. The physical 'exhibit' felt less touchable than the 'digital' exhibit. In this sense, rather than feeling the haptic pressure of force feedback I felt subjected to societal and museological pressures, which put touch barriers in place. Outside the exhibition context I had been able to cross barriers; however, in the exhibition I could not. Daubs faded on and off the sculpture, exposing the bare white material underneath; immediately they were covered with other immersants' daubs. As I watched this process I understood the daubs from other viewers to be a form of dressing 'Naomi' with layers of societal pressures: pressures generated from the thoughts, words and marks which the viewers were painting onto her body, the cause and effect of their tangible play.

Then I noticed something interesting: I was thinking less about how my marks were changing 'Naomi' and more about how 'Naomi' might feel about being dressed by the marks that were being put on her. I was empathising with the dressed exhibit. Despite, or perhaps because of, my immersive experience of 'touching' Naomi, the desire to touch the exhibit in the exhibition space was not there. Equally, despite, or perhaps because of, the museological space that prevented me from touching 'Naomi', I had been enabled to feel touched by her, too.

Paterson suggests that the 'proprioceptive body' (which I explore in Chapter Two) is able to sense 'bodily boundaries' and has the 'ability to navigate through complex spaces' (Paterson 2007:124). This insight from Paterson helps my initial analysis of the difference between the viewer's experiences of haptic aesthetics in the digital space to the physical exhibition space. For example, when I was digitally daubing 'Naomi' the sensations I felt were not the same as those I would experience if I were to paint 'Naomi' with a brush in the physical exhibition space. However, despite not being able to feel with cutaneous accuracy through the digital marks I was making, my proprioceptive body navigated me through what was a complex space to complete this haptic task.

Although the different experiences offered different registers of touch, I argue that my sense of touch was not altered by my engagement through haptics. Paterson cites Susan Kozel, who argues that 'the virtual body is entwined with the fleshy body', and if I relate the immersant's experience of digital dress, such as in the experience of the 'Naomi' exhibit, to Paterson's description of travelling through digital space as an '[…] almost hermetic illusion of sensory immersion in the work, the immersant is never completely cut off from the physical grounding of sensation […]' (Paterson 2007:122). Then, as Paterson goes onto to suggest, this is a process of 'extending my body, not losing or substituting it' (ibid.:443) (Paterson 2007:120). My experience of Naomi is then explained as one of extending my sense of touch through my body in order to navigate digital space without ever losing or substituting the feeling of cutaneous touch as situated in my body in physical space. Therefore, I suggest that even when viewing digital dress in a digital space, in addition to the mimicked or simulated proprioceptive situating of the viewer, there is the grounded haptic experience of viewing dress through the physically situated experience of being a conscious viewer at the time of viewing.

Further, in order to make sense of the juxtaposition between material and digital versions of dress in the same exhibition space, I suggest a haptic literacy[18] is useful for the viewer to apply here. A haptic literacy allows an understanding not only of the relationship between haptic and haptics, but also the haptic and the aesthetic in the realm of both the digital and the physical, through the experience of being an immersant or an inhabitant. This is an understanding of how I can extend or substitute my sense of touch to navigate through complex spaces without altering it. This is one I carry forward into my haptic aesthetic analysis of dress in the exhibition context.

(viii) The 'issue of liveliness'

I suggest, for the purpose of this research, that a contemporary dress museology is one that not only acknowledges the issue of liveliness in the dress exhibition but goes some way to record and explore both curatorial practice and theory that has been applied to address this. The issue of liveliness in the exhibition of dress has been centered around two areas: 'the body' and 'movement'. I will now outline these areas as they relate to separate focuses in Chapters One and Three respectively in this thesis. I will also identify a third area centered around belonging and ownership.

The 'body'

In terms of the issue of liveliness, it was Jeffrey Feldman who identified the 'lost body problem'. In his chapter titled 'Contact Points: Museums and the Lost Body Problem' in *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture* (Edwards, Gosden & Phillips, 2006) he '[…] considers what is lost by a

[18] This stems from the pedagogic haptic project I carried out at UCA. Findings highlighted the importance of balancing the registers of haptic with haptics.

museum paradigm that emphasizes visual display over other embodied experiences.' (Feldman, in Edwards, Gosden & Phillips, 2006:245). Entwistle also refers to 'the body' in her 'estranged' observations of the dress exhibition: 'Our experience of the costume museum […] points to the ways in which we 'normally' experience dress as alive and 'fleshy': once removed from the body, dress lacks fullness and seems strange, almost alien […]' (Entwistle 2001:36).

For the purposes of this thesis I will now outline the different types of mannequins employed to represent a human body in the contemporary exhibition of dress. These fall into the following types*:* *Dressmaker* or *Stockman mannequins* (made from wood or plastic with adjustable bodies, usually fabric covered, without heads and legs but sometimes with arms and hands). *Retail/shop dummies* (usually plastic; with or without heads, but with arms and sometimes legs). *Invisible mannequins* (usually clear Perspex torsos which fit inside a dress to create a body-like volume, but which are not visible). *Custom-made mannequins* (any type of mannequin created to copy a particular body shape for a particular purpose or garment). *Digital mannequins* (computer-generated wholly or partially in the form of pixels or holograms; they can also be in the form of virtual 'avatars').

Further to these types, catwalk models have been employed as *living mannequins* – such as those employed in the *Fashion in Motion* (FIM) series at the V&A Museum, London. The term 'living mannequins' derives from Caroline Evans' book *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900-1929* (2013) with reference to the living mannequins who exhibited dress for clients in the Paris fashion houses of the 1800s. In the context of this thesis, I argue that when catwalk models enter the contemporary exhibition space in order to exhibit rather than 'show' or display dress, their role as a model changes to that of a mannequin.

The difference between a mannequin curated as a 'prop' and a mannequin curated as a 'body' is complex to identify in the exhibition of dress. However, in this thesis I suggest that clearly if the mannequin is invisible then it can be thought of as a prop. If a mannequin is visible (and displays some corporeal features) then it can be thought of as a 'body'. In this thesis I use the term *mannequin* to refer to *any* representational body which is dressed in an exhibit in the museum, whether living, non-living, visible or invisible, physical or virtual. In terms of curating the mannequin as a body, historical approaches have oscillated between whether the abstracting or omitting of bodily features and limbs complicates or enhances the issue of liveliness. Museums have experimented with omitting features through the display of blank faces, a torso without a head, arms and legs or invisible perspex body shaped volumes inside a dress. Museums have also experimented with re-creating features and limbs through digital simulacra of dressed bodies or by projecting animated living faces onto featureless mannequin heads. These are all ways of addressing the 'body problem' through the use of an inanimate mannequin.

The 'lost body' problem has been further addressed by employing a *living* mannequin in the dress exhibition. This has been introduced in two very different ways. One of these is by substituting the mannequin with the viewer's body through 'trying-on' rooms (e.g. in the Fashion Museum in Bath), exhibition mirrors (which I explore in Chapter One, e.g. 'The Mirror Room' in the 2009 *SHOWStudio: Fashion Revolution* exhibition) and interactive haptic devices for the viewer to engage with, which I discuss in this Introduction (E.g. 'Naomi' in the same exhibition). The other way is by introducing living models into the exhibition space in order to exhibit dress, exemplified in Claire Wilcox's *Fashion in Motion* events at the V&A, which I analyse in this thesis.

In these examples the lost body problem has been addressed in a number of ways; however, I suggest that whatever type of 'mannequin' (including the living mannequin) takes the place of a living body in the dress exhibition the issue of liveliness remains. Therein lies the *body* problem, in which, unlike the relationship between dress, body and self experienced by a wearer situated in the everyday, the relationship between dress and mannequin is one that is missing a 'self'.

Movement

There has been an awareness of the connection between movement and the issue of liveliness in the dress exhibition since Elizabeth Wilson's account of her visit to the *Pierre Cardin* exhibition at the V&A Museum (10 October 1990 – 6 January 1991). In her account, Wilson observes: 'Strangest of all were the dead white, sightless mannequins staring fixedly ahead, turned as if to stone in the middle of a decisive moment […] without the living body, they could not be said to fully exist. Without movement, they became oddly abstract and faintly uncanny.' (Ash & Wilson 1992:15)

These comments triggered a focus on movement in order to address the issue of liveliness in the dress exhibition. First, this prompted Claire Wilcox's decision to bring living mannequins into the V&A Museum for her *Fashion in motion* (*FIM*) series on 16 June 1999 featuring Alexander McQueen's Spring/Summer 1999 collection. Viewers witnessed the live mannequins walking in and around the V&A galleries and garden. In conversation, Oriole Cullen suggested that Wilson's rationale behind this was to "[…] counter that idea of the static body and to give the clothing back its true character to see it as it should be worn." (Cullen 2013)

At the same time, in 2000, the fashion website *SHOWstudio.com* was launched by Nick Knight in order to offer '[…] a unique platform to nurture and encourage fashion to engage in moving images in the digital age […]' (Knight 2000). SHOWstudio helped promote the rise of the digital approach to dress and in particular the 'fashion film', where dress features in pixelated forms as part of a constructed narrative brought to audiences through historic and contemporary film-making. In part, through this

inaugural website, forms of pixelated moving dress and mannequins have crept into the dress exhibition alongside other sources.

The evolution of the digital mannequin has seen the curation of dress in motion through computer-generated images (CGI) using motion capture to record the living, moving, dressed body. This particular method was developed by Jane Harris, who in 2004 brought a 200-year-old sack-back dress back to life in the *The Empress's New Clothes* exhibit shown at the Museum of London. Later examples of digitalised mannequins have been more evident in a supporting role, such as a fashion show video or film clips, or further as a part-digitalised, part-material mannequin with featureless faces onto which animated faces are projected to show *moving* expression. This is exemplified in the *Hollywood Costume* exhibition at the V&A (2012 - 2013) and the exhibition *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* at the Barbican Art Gallery, London in 2014.

The focus in this thesis is on moving *dress* rather than the moving mannequin, for the reason I cited earlier in this Introduction, that the focus is on the not-worn dress as a site for the body. However, I acknowledge that the two are inextricably linked. Therefore, I will now offer a further analysis of movement in the dress exhibition in terms of the haptic aesthetics of dress in the context of this thesis.

In Chapter Three I investigate different registers of movement in the dress exhibition, not only in order to understand movement as related to the issue of liveliness but to understand movement as it forms an important part of haptic aesthetic analysis in this research. Movement is analysed with a theoretical underpinning in Dee Reynolds and Matthew Reason's book *Kinesthetic empathy*, published in 2012. Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'kinaesthetic residua' is helpful in order to trace the conscious movement drawn between dress, body and self through the invisible touchlines I introduce in Chapter One. This is not just during the act of getting dressed but when dress is worn in the everyday, to form what I refer to as an '*invisible wearing schema'.*[19]

The residue of movement in stillness is discussed further through Gabriele Brandsetter's 'paradox of the pose' as it relates to dress on living mannequins when in a moment of pose (exemplified through Alexander McQueen's *FIM* event at the V&A, 1999). Claire Wilcox's concept of 'arrested movement' is discussed in relation to the staged stillness of the museum vitrine (exemplified through an analysis of 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle 1775', V&A). Further, Sigmund Freud's understanding of '[…] the impressions, processes and situations that can arouse an especially strong and distinct sense of the uncanny in us […]' (Freud 2003:135) which raises '[…] doubt as to whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate'. (Freud 2003:135)

[19] An invisible wearing schema acknowledges the conscious acts of wearing dress which drawn into invisible touchlines, as these form an ever-renewable invisible spatial structure around the body as a wearer moves.

This explanation of the uncanny goes some way towards explaining Wilson's 'impression' of dress in the exhibition. In this thesis, I am particularly interested in how movement is experienced through the sense of touch as it is felt through the viewer's own situated kinaesthetic experience of being a wearer, which is not altered by the digital experience (as I argue earlier in this Introduction). I am interested in how the different registers of moving dress comprise a haptic aesthetic analysis as well as (it is hoped) offering a theoretical contribution towards the issue of liveliness.

Belonging

Further to the problems of the lost body and movement, through this haptic aesthetic research a further problem emerged, which was a loss of belonging in the dress exhibition. Joanne Entwistle describes dress in the costume museum as being '[…] pulled apart from the body/self […]' (Entwistle 2000:10). The word 'pulled' is suggestive of a conscious act involving the force of touch in order to separate dress from its wearer. In the everyday, dress is thought of as belonging to a wearer, and even as being owned by a wearer. In the dress exhibition, dress is present but the wearer to whom the dress belongs is typically not.

In light of my interest in the relationship between touch and the issue of liveliness, I suggest that the sense of belonging between dress, body and self plays a crucial role. When the viewer enters the exhibition space, they bring a conscious understanding of their everyday experience of belonging between dress, body and self, which I suggest is what Palmer is referring to when she says:

> The personal knowledge of wearing clothing makes museum visitors connoisseurs even before entering a dress exhibition. Viewers come with preconceived ideas and tend to measure meaning and value in terms of their own life. (Palmer 2008:32)

This sense of belonging is embedded through dress choices a wearer makes when pulling dress on the body and the self which binds the three together into a belonging with and to each other, established through wearing experiences. Therefore when a wearer crosses the threshold into the exhibition space and becomes a viewer, feelings of belonging are exacerbated when dress is viewed as not-worn, and, in Entwistle's words, as '[…] pulled apart from the body/self […]' (Entwistle 2000:10).

Goffman's theory of 'personal effect' is helpful here:

> Thus personal effects, constituting a preserve in their own right, are frequently employed as markers; moving them or even touching them is something like touching their owner's body,

> and such acts are avoided in many circumstances or performed with suitable circumspection. (Goffman 1972:66).

In the exhibition, I suggest that if dress is actively identified with a wearer who is alive then it can be thought of as a 'personal effect'. An example is Figure 23 in Chapter One, depicting an 'Anonymous viewer in the Mirror Room' *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*. In this case, a strong degree of belonging is felt by a viewer. If the wearer is identified but known to be dead, for example in 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress', by Yohji Yamamoto, V&A (2011) that he made for his muse, the dancer Pina Bausch (see Figure 13 in Chapter Four), then the viewer may feel the residue of a belonging (as a 'personal effect') between wearer and dress. However, if the wearer appears to be absent, lost, unidentifiable or non-existent then the sense of belonging (that it is a 'personal effect') is further exacerbated, as is, I suggest, the issue of liveliness in parallel.

Summary

In summary, a ***contemporary dress museology*** is defined by the following:

- **A contemporary time period** – beginning with the exhibition *Fashion: an anthology by Cecil Beaton*, V&A, 1971, up to the present.
- **A contemporary exhibition space** – existing both outside and *inside* the museum space.
- **Visible and invisible 'touch barriers'** – as museological and everyday 'Do Not Touch' codes.
- **Display and exhibition of dress** – staging dress within 'immediate access' and borrowing exhibition architecture from the everyday.
- **The 'viewing space'** – a focus on the 'arm's length' dimensions and implications of the viewing space and what the viewer brings into the dress exhibition.
- **A '*third*' space** – a focus on the digital exhibition space (including its website) and the implications for moving dress (the issue of liveliness).
- **The 'digital dress'** – a focus on the impact of the digital dress and mannequin in relation to the material with respect to a dialogue between the two.
- **The 'issue of liveliness'** – considered in terms of curatorial practice and theoretical analysis in relation to the 'problem' of the body, movement and belonging.

Further, this thesis offers the following contributions to contemporary dress museology:

- **A haptic aesthetic literacy** – the experience of viewing all exhibits through being a wearer in the world as a balance between looking and touching, haptic and haptics.
- **The invisible touch barrier** – thinking around the emergence of invisible touch barriers aligned with everyday moral and social codes of conduct around touch.

- **The problem of belonging** – the concept that dress, body and self belong to one another in the everyday, yet in the dress exhibition this belonging is pulled apart, which impacts on the issue of liveliness.

Last, it is hoped that the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode of communication in the dress exhibition will provide a theoretical contribution towards contemporary dress museology.

A Haptic Aesthetic Methodology

In order to formulate a haptic aesthetic research methodology I drew together a phenomenological understanding from Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'how the world touches us' with Mark Paterson's concept of 'felt phenomenology'. In order to shape a haptic aesthetic research method, I needed to look outside the field of textiles, dress and fashion and museological studies towards more pertinent models using sensory ethnographic structures, such as those advocated by Sarah Pink in *Doing sensory ethnography* (2009).

Due to the nature of investigating the invisible yet felt sense of touch when viewing dress exhibits, I was presented with a methodological challenge: how to 'do' this research. Models within sensory ethnography were using the senses as a tool for 'doing' research, and as such were helpful. Before I expand on the haptic aesthetic method I apply, I will briefly discuss the multiple 'sample viewer'[20] method, which I decided against.

One option for addressing the challenge would have been to select certain viewers and work closely with them as research participants (through interviews, experiments and observational analysis), coaching and coaxing a deeper degree of conscious identification and articulation of the sensory experience in the dress exhibition. However, in reality this would have required a long-term, ad hoc and flexible involvement with individual research participants over an extended timescale, which involved two leaves of absence. Another issue was that the level of interrogation would have resulted in an invasion of privacy that could have challenged ethical boundaries (such as observing a wearer getting dressed in their domestic mirror). A further issue was that I needed to generate findings that could offer '[…] a route through which to produce academic knowledge' (Pink 2009:64), and therefore these insights needed to be clear, concise and consistent between the sample viewer and the researcher over time. These requirements would have been difficult to elicit, given the conditions of this research.

[20] 'Sample viewer' refers to my role as haptic aesthetic researcher in the context of the dress exhibition.

At the beginning this doctoral research I staged an experimental exhibition, *Dress sense,* which was key to exploring and establishing a methodology for the context of this thesis.

(i) An experimental exhibition

I staged *Dress Sense* at the Royal College of Art between 26 February and 1 March 2011 (See Appendix for a list of exhibitors and exhibits) to explore the impact of differently staged display methods for dress on the viewers' desire to touch. In particular, my aim was to investigate what kinds of exhibits encourage or discourage viewers from touching dress. By adopting two qualitative methods (observational analysis and a structured questionnaire), I was able to make an initial assessment of how best to 'do' this haptic aesthetic research.

For the experiment, I exhibited thirteen items of dress from three RCA MA Fashion Design students. I borrowed a variety of display methods from museological, domestic and fashion retail architecture to set up different contextual understandings for dress. All exhibits were situated within the viewer's reach and with no visible 'Do not touch' barriers. A private view was held on 25 March 2011, during which a selection of viewers agreed to become 'research participants' and complete questionnaires designed to test the viewer's haptic responses to the exhibits (see Figure 8 and Appendix for the questionnaire and findings). The experiment ran for six days, during which time I invigilated in order to conduct observational analysis and take photographs of viewers' haptic engagement with the dress exhibits.

Figure 8. '*Dress Sense* experiment research participants' (25.3.11), RCA. Image © Lucy Gundry

During the course of this experiment I collected a total of 46 questionnaires. In order to assess the effectiveness of questionnaires as a research 'tool' I will now refer to the initial findings (see Appendix). For 'Question 6' I gave eight differently directed answers for the research participants to 'choose' from, orientated around barriers to touch (for the context of this thesis):

6. If you did not touch any of the exhibits, please say why (tick all that apply):

Because I was not sure if I was 'allowed' to touch the exhibits ☐
Because I feel I am a 'viewer' not a 'customer' in the gallery ☐
Because it would make the exhibit feel too 'real' ☐
Because I know what it would feel like to touch ☐
Because it would feel like touching someone else's clothes ☐
Because it is not respectful to touch someone's work ☐
Because I thought it might damage the work ☐
Because it would be like touching another body ☐
(Question 6, *Dress Sense* Questionnaire, 25.3.11 by Lucy Gundry)

Initial observations from this experiment indicated that the kind of data I required demanded a deep level of articulation of the senses that viewers were not bringing into the experiment, especially outside their own viewing interests (such as an interest in the practice of fashion design). Although viewers responded to these options with understanding, my concern was that the directional nature of my questionnaire, although helpful to elicit haptic answers, was, on reflection, too prescriptive and prevented some of the more sensitive haptic analysis I was looking for to be articulated.

For this reason it became apparent that only one 'sample viewer' was needed. Yet, like the practical issues I cited earlier, this would be hard to sustain with any consistency over the extended time period which this research took to complete. Ideally this sample viewer would need to be one with whom I could consult on an ad-hoc basis, a viewer who could provide conscious and consistent observations, identification and articulation of the experience of dress from street to gallery through the senses of touch.

Therefore, with no pertinent models in the fields of textiles, fashion, dress or curatorship, in order to carry out what required a reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated approach I drew from the practice of 'autoethnography', as identified by Pink (2007).

Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a qualitative method in which the researcher uses reflexivity to explore anecdotal and personal experiences presented in an autobiographical way reference to wider social codes of conduct. There are a number of reasons for identifying autoethnography as a research method.

First, this method allowed me to explore *how* dress is experienced in the exhibition through the experience of being a wearer in the world, rather than by analysing *what* is exhibited. Throughout *The Perfect Spectator,* Janneke Wesseling, on several occasions, refers to the relevance of research into 'how' the artwork is in dialogue with the spectator: 'How does the artwork come across? What happens between the artwork and spectator?' (Wesseling 2017:121). This is crucial in order to gain an understanding, essential for this research, of the importance of what the viewer (as a spectator) brings, not only into the exhibition as a wearer but also to their subjective viewing of dress in the exhibition space, and further, 'how' this knowledge helps the viewer experience dress differently from the way they do as a wearer in the everyday. Further still, how does the shift from the role of wearer to that of a viewer allow experiences to be contextualised as appropriate to the context in which observations are being made? Wesseling introduces the term 'verticon' to define the role of the spectator, which helps to define the role I play as a 'sample viewer' in this thesis.

(i) Advantages of autoethnography

Through the practice of autoethnography, as the 'sample viewer' in this thesis, I was able to bring a particular interest in the relationship between dress, body and self to both my theoretical and sensory awareness, which fed into my observations. Further, I was able to apply academic knowledge of art and design history, dress theory, fashion theory, textile theory and museological and curatorial practice to this role. My work was also informed by my previous professional experience of working closely with an academic textile curator and as a costume designer/assistant in film and television. This role involved sourcing, fitting and dressing the living bodies of actors in a range of characters. Through this I gained a deeper understanding of how the aesthetics of dress can fit with the particular characteristics of a wearer: for example, a pencil skirt worn with a blouse tucked in and buttoned up to the collar, paired with thick dark tights and heeled court shoes, which might be worn by an efficient, demure wearer in a conventional working environment.

Further practice-based experience of stitching through paper to create body-dress-like pieces for a degree in Textile Art (2001) gave me a haptic sensibility for the making and manipulation of textile materials to fit a body. All this experience means that I have a range of tools from which to draw in my role as a haptic aesthetic researcher of dress.

In addition to my existing skills and knowledge, through autoethnography I was able to devise exercises for this research using my sense of touch as a tool. This was in the form of hands-on sensory observation, wearing, making and analysis of the connected sense of touch as intermodal communication between the haptic and the aesthetic. Using my sense of touch as a research tool provided a consistent, communicative and effective autoethnographic method which, although subjective, provided important continuity through a sensory underpinning.

(ii) Ethical considerations

Autoethnography further provided an ethical approach to the sense of touch and touch sensitivities by using my own hands as opposed to the hands of others. This enabled me to interrogate my touch sensitivities, awareness, feelings, emotions and even judgments, which could have been potentially not only difficult but also invasive, to elicit from viewers in the exhibition space. This method therefore enabled me to judge where to draw an ethical line between the application of the sense of touch when dressing in the mirror and the application of the sense of touch in relation to social and moral codes of conduct around touch in the dress exhibition.

I cite an example of drawing an ethical line in Chapter One. This was the decision not to record taking my jeans off in front of a domestic mirror but to begin analysis when the my jeans are partially on so that a degree of modesty prevents any unnecessary connotations of meaning or diversion in relation to nudity within this thesis. Other examples of ethical conduct are in the recording and translation of my body measurements for the purpose of 'making a toile' (which I outline below). Although this is not visually documented to draw attention to the wearer in a state of undress, the focus draws attention to the points of the body which are used in the practice of dressmaking.

(iii) Communication

Another strength of using an autoethnographic approach in this research is the ability to access my senses of touch and feelings in order to foster a dialogue between myself as a sample viewer and myself as a researcher. For the purpose of this analysis a consistent, clear channel of communication between these two roles is essential. A similar channel of communication is needed to further extend to the reader, who is able to observe and even empathise with these experiences by following this journey.

I recorded observations on my autoethnographic journeys, to which the reader is privy from beginning to end. These journeys transition from the private domestic space into the social space of the street and then into the museological exhibition space. By outlining how the sense of touch is brought into the exhibition as a wearer, the reader is able to understand what they bring into the exhibition as a viewer too – not just actively as a wearer during the exhibition itself but through conscious knowledge of dress built up through dressing and being dressed prior to entering. Also, the nature of being privy to these sensory journeys means that the reader is further invited to empathise with what it feels like to be a wearer in the world and a 'sample viewer' through the eyes of a female viewer at the same time.

In summary, the advantages of autoethnography are primarily that I was able to use my sense of touch as a research tool, in terms of both previous knowledge and skills and the development of two key experiments in order to add to this knowledge in relation to this research. Further, the ability to identify and use my sense of touch as specific in the haptic and aesthetic observations of dressing in front of a domestic mirror and haptic aesthetic observational exercises in the exhibition. Further to this, accessing my own senses of touch enabled an ethical, consistent and clear channel of communication between the sample viewer and researcher throughout this thesis. It is indeed an autoethnographic aim that a '[…] researchers' introspection on a particular topic […] [allows] readers to make a connection with the researcher's feelings and experiences.' (Mendez 2013:281)

'Doing' Haptic Aesthetic Autoethnography

As a contemporary design anthropologist, Pink's research and writing in *Doing sensory ethnography* (2009) advocates autoethnography, as 'a process of learning through the ethnographer's own multisensory, emplaced experiences' (Pink 2009:64), which generates knowledge about individuals in the context of their culture and society. In *Doing visual ethnography* (2007) Pink advocates that the ethnographer uses their own body as a site of knowing, perception, place, memory and imagination, and that this requires a reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated approach (Pink 2007). This is because the research is 'based on the ethnographer's own experiences.' (Pink 2007:22)

Through autoethnography as a 'sample viewer' I was able to observe myself as a wearer of dress in both the everyday and the exhibition context. In order to aesthetically identify myself in this role, I wore a 'signature outfit'. This consisted of a yellow T-shirt, orange cardigan, blue jeans and pale pink flat shoes (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. 'I am dressed', Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

The intention of this is to focus on the relationship I have with a set of particular items of dress when they are brought together on my body, in order to observe the wearing experiences, memories and ideas previously encountered, as they dovetail with new encounters I experience with these particular items in the role of 'sample viewer'. Further to this, this outfit was a way of identifying with myself when I was reflected in the exhibition mirrors and to make myself identifiable in the photographs I feature in, too.

In order to conduct research as a 'haptic aesthetic autoethnographer', there were two roles to acknowledge (which I have touched on): the 'wearer in the everyday' and the 'sample viewer' in the exhibition. To align observations between these roles I needed to apply a haptic aesthetic checklist (see Appendix), to regulate the analysis across methods and findings. For this I referenced Kim and Mida's object-based research method in *The dress detective* (2015), which in turn was inspired by Jules Prown's earlier 'deduction method' in *Style as evidence,* written in 1980.

In this case, rather than referring to an ethnographic structure I referred to one constructed for the purpose of dress studies. I tailored this method for the haptic aesthetic analysis of dress in the exhibition. This adaptation was to engage with the sense of touch to form a *feeling*-based enquiry. I use the term 'meeting dress'[21] to make a link between dress in the everyday and dress in the exhibition. This is in order to suggest that the viewer observes dress as being worn rather than not-worn in the exhibition.

(i) 'Meeting' dress

In respect to Entwistle's notion that dress is pulled apart from body/self, which I cite earlier in this Introduction, my initial examination of dress in the exhibition space revealed that rather than any absence, there was much visible evidence to suggest that whether worn or unworn, not-worn dress in the exhibition context embodies the haptic aesthetic characteristics of being unworn and worn.

The characteristics of being 'unworn' are those embedded by the designer and maker and are prescriptive of how, when, where and by whom dress may be worn. The characteristics of being unworn are also those which indicate that a dress has not been worn through the marked absence of any characteristics of having been 'worn'. The haptic aesthetic characteristics of being unworn are created by the designer's hands and include stylised details, such as the choice of type and pattern of fabric and the type of fit and cut. According to Malcolm Barnard, these fall into two types of style choices: syntagmatic and paradigmatic. The syntagmatic is described as follows: 'The relation

[21] 'Meet' in this respect means the way a viewer consciously engages with a dress exhibit as if it is being worn rather than not-worn.

between the elements in a syntagm is 'this *and* this *and* this' (Barnard 2002:90). Barnard exemplifies this as '[…] the difference between the collar, cuffs, buttons, sleeves, shoulders, front panels and back panels of a shirt […]' (Barnard 2002:90). By this he means the difference between the details of a shirt, such as the collar, cuffs, front panel, buttons etc. Aesthetically these are separate details: e.g., a button is a separate characteristic from the collar. However, when put together they create a united aesthetic. Barnard expands this to the example of a wearer's syntagmatic choices, such as the choice to wear this *and* this *and* this between the following choices '[…] the shirt, tie, jacket, shorts, trousers […]' (Barnard 2002:90). This might be the shirt, jacket *and* trousers, or the shirt, tie *and* shorts.

Barnard describes the paradigmatic thus: 'the relationship between elements in a paradigm is 'this *or* this *or* this.' (Barnard 2002:90) 'Paradigmatic difference is the difference between the different collar styles (e.g. turndown, cutaway, button-down, tab and pin […].' (Barnard 2002:90) This addresses more deeply the differences between different types of collars. So for the designer, choosing which collar to use in a shirt is a choice between this turndown collar *or* this cutaway collar *or* this button-down collar. The characteristics of being 'unworn' are embedded by the designer, with the intention that these characteristics are worn by a wearer: for example, a wearer might choose to wear a shirt for this turndown collar *or* this cutaway collar *or* this button-down collar. Both these meaningful concepts are useful to the analysis of the characteristics of not-worn dress, but the paradigmatic difference is more helpful because the way a collar is styled can also be indicative of a type of wearer or lifestyle and a styling the wearer themselves can manipulate and therefore contribute to a wider understanding of the haptic aesthetics of dress.

The characteristics of being worn are embedded in the dress by the wearer's hands and body. The haptic aesthetic characteristics of being worn are, for example, a baggy elbow or a loosened button. These give the viewer further clues about the experiences dress has had on the body that wore it. Paterson describes the outer boundary of the body as a 'felt surface', capable of transferring not only sensations, but also sensations as feelings, into the body. For example, pressures felt pulling with or pushing against the skin depend on whether the garment is loose or tight fitting – belted, cuffed, collared, zipped, buttoned, unbuttoned, pleated, skimpy, etc. Paterson further describes this as a 'morphing of feeling': '[…] a morphing of feeling in these terms charts the unfolding developmental interface between the body and the world experienced through *skin*, through *flesh* and through *body*'. (Paterson 2007:107) I suggest that all these potential pressures are taken into consideration by the wearer when choosing what to wear and how to dress their body. I suggest also that the connection between haptic pressures and associated feelings affect the wearing experience. For example, a shirt with the sleeve cuffs undone and rolled up might suggest the wearer intends a more relaxed 'look', to adhere to a fashion style, or to do a job. These are built in as individual sensitivities around touching when wearing dress, and it is these characteristics of being worn, which are haptic aesthetic.

In this thesis the focus is on the characteristics of being worn rather than characteristics of being unworn because these are indicative, even if only worn once, of dress having been worn on a body by a conscious wearer. However, the characteristics of unworn dress play an important role in influencing, affecting and creating the aesthetics of dress prior to being worn. For example, the type, style, construction and fit of the dress influence a wearer's dress choices prior to pulling dress onto their body, yet when wearing these chosen characteristics of being unworn they become characteristics of being worn too. When examined through examples of not-worn dress (in the everyday and exhibition), the characteristics of being worn and unworn show how the body touches dress through wearing experiences (haptic) and how (aesthetic) dress choices create built-in pressure points where body and dress 'wear in' to one another.

The idea that I could employ both my own bodily (cutaneous) experiences of dressing and the sense of being a wearer in the world (conscious) as a methodological tool was instrumental. In summary, 'doing' sensory ethnography requires a reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated approach (Pink 2007) in order to record haptic aesthetic experiences through the skin of dress as a site of 'knowing, perception, place, memory and imagination' (Pink 2007:23).

Here I outline how I adapted these key characteristics to set out a framework for 'doing' haptic aesthetic research:

- A **reflexive** approach was required to consistently address the subjectivity and intersubjectivity of the 'sample viewer's' female point of view (which I discuss).
- An ***empathetic*** approach was required to record the 'sample viewer's' phenomenological experience of pressures and sensations through the senses of touch when observing dress in the exhibition.
- An ***imaginative*** approach was required in order for the 'sample viewer' to 'meet' dress exhibits (inspired by Kim and Mida's concept of 'slow looking' (Kim and Mida 2015)
- A ***situated*** approach was needed for the *sample viewer* to observe how their dressed body is mapped (spatially, socially, consciously) in relation to the dress exhibit.

Overall, my research approach employed reflexivity. Through reflexivity, I was able to extend sensations and feelings experienced through the skin of my dressed body to engage with the different methods of research I employed to provide a consistent approach to the analysis of data. This played out in parallel autoethnographic research exercises from self-observations as a wearer (dressing in front of a domestic mirror) to the role of 'sample viewer' in the dress exhibition, where my observations were of dress exhibits, myself as a viewer and other viewers.

(ii) *Wearing empathy*

Reflexivity further enabled me to identify and extend my feelings across space to imagine what it would feel like to inhabit dress exhibits. In some examples this was direct, and in some this was via another viewer. This created three different kinds of reflexivity: one which reflected on tacit memories and experiences, one which evoked an imaginative fabrication of past experiences and one which reflected on emotions related to these experiences. This collective reflexivity formed the basis of what I suggest can be thought of as a *wearing empathy* which is the concept of empathising with what it might feel like to wear dress when it is being worn by or on another body.

According to Paterson, the connection between empathy and touch was observed by S. C. Edwards, whom he cites thus: 'Touch can be a way of transferring sympathy and empathy between individuals […] changing the proximity of feeling into what is felt' (1998:810). (Paterson 2007: 153). Paterson also considers Edith Wyschogrod's explanation of the connection between empathy and touch as also one of 'feeling': 'For as Wyschogrod argues, "Since empathy and sympathy are phenomena of proximity, they can only be understood as feeling-acts of a tactile rather than a visual subject" (1981:32)' (Paterson 2007: 163). Further to making a connection with proximity which charts the viewing space as a touching distance, she suggests that empathy is a 'feeling-act' related to a tactile rather than visual subject. However, I suggest the dress exhibit is experienced as both a tactile and visual subject, which I argue can be thought of as 'haptic aesthetic' and which can help the viewer to experience a *wearing empathy*.

(iii) Observation

Autoethnography further presented the option to carry out differently focused aspects of my observational research as required for each chapter. These were in the form of re-visiting dress exhibits recorded through sketches, photographs, observational notes and a series of practice-based experiments. In these, my method of observation is an intermodal approach whereby I touch with my eyes through tacit haptic knowledge. Tacit haptic knowledge is built up through dressing, wearing dress and the contextualised experiences of wearing dress. However, I conducted a couple of further exercises to build further tacit haptic knowledge prior to haptic aesthetic observations of dress in the exhibition.

The first of these was a 'body measurement' exercise. Through this I explored a deeper haptic aesthetic mapping of dress onto my body using my fingertips as a measuring tool. This helped me to understand how my proprioceptive body is mapped through touch for the purpose of constructing a dress.

Another example of using my hands was the 'making a toile' exercise that I mentioned earlier and is described in more detail later in this introduction. In doing this I employed tools beyond my fingertips, such as scissors, pins and a sewing machine, to manipulate the calico for the dress and in order to understand the space I take up inside the seams of my dress. Although I do not refer to or identify this calico dress in this thesis, as a research exercise this was key to my haptic aesthetic knowledge.

These two exercises through which I mapped my body in terms of dress had the effect of heightening my 'epidermic self-awareness', as Umberto Eco termed it (Eco 1976:194). In particular 'making a toile' had the effect of heightening what I further refer to as a *wearing self-awareness*. This is an extension of Eco's term to include what it feels like to wear dress on the skin with a focus on the points where not only is the body is fitted to the dress, but dress is fitted to the body. These points (e.g., across the bust, waist and hips) mark the outer edges of the body when dressed. These also mark points where an item of dress was touched and manipulated more intensely by the designer or maker. Darts, armscye depth and body rise are examples of points where the dress folds into the body in motion, which is referred to in Chapter Three.

Further exercises were carried out while playing the role of 'wearer' or 'sample viewer' in this thesis, which addressed different aspects of tacit haptic knowledge needed for visual reference. These were the 'Dressing in the mirror' exercise and the 'Walking' exercises. The first was an embodied haptic aesthetic observation of dress in order to explore the relationship between dress, body and self as it plays out between the hands of the wearer's fleshy body and their reflection in the mirror. The second involved kinaesthetic observations conducted through the wearer's proprioceptive body when walking in the street and the exhibition space.

(iv) A 'body measurement' exercise

For the 'body measurement' exercise I used a tape measure to record measurements from my own body based on Winifred Aldrich's instructions for 'Drafting blocks for individual figures' (Aldrich 2008:178-9) in her *Metric pattern cutting for womenswear* (2008) (see Figure 10).

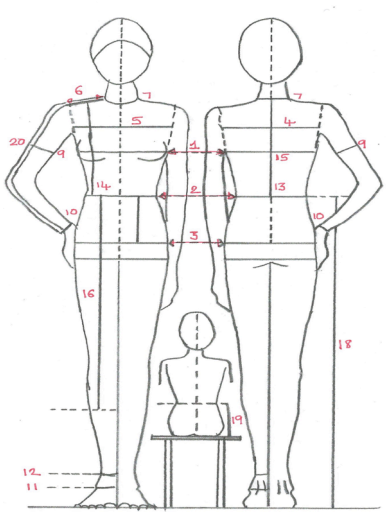

Figure 10. 'Body measurement drawing' © Lucy Gundry from illustration in Aldrich (2008:179)

Through this exercise I identified with touching specific places on my body in order to take the measurements, which were as follows:

1. *Bust* 82cm. 2. *Waist* 68cm. 3. *Hips* 83cm. 4. *Back width* 35cm. 5. *Chest* 32cm. 6. *Shoulder* 11cm. 7. *Neck size* 37cm. 8. *Dart* standard measurement. 9. *Top arm* 27cm. 10. *Wrist* 16cm. 11. *Ankle* 24.5cm. 12. *High ankle* 21.5cm. 13. *Nape to waist* 42cm. 14. *Front shoulder to waist* 41cm 15. *Armscye depth* 20.6cm. 16. *Skirt length* N/A. 17. *Waist to hip* 20.4cm 18. *Waist to floor* 102cm. 19. *Body rise* 26cm. 20. *Sleeve length* 57.5cm.

This exercise drew tactile attention to the places on my skin which are touched in order to translate the three-dimensional body into two dimensions and back into three dimensions in order to create an item of dress.

(v) 'Making a toile' exercise

In order to understand how my body measurements translate onto fabric and are then manipulated to create an item of dress, I carried out the further exercise of 'making a toile'. For this exercise I used calico fabric and made a full-length long-sleeved fitted dress as a potential template from which to tailor a dress for my body. I used dressmaking tools – pins, chalk, tape measure, pencil, needle and thread, scissors and a sewing machine –all of which I manipulated with my hands. This exercise helped me understand not only the process by which body measurements are translated onto fabric, but also how fabric is manipulated through handling a variety of tools to fabricate a skin.

In summary, I bring the additional knowledge of how my body is mapped in measurements from one point to another, and through making a toile I understand how these measurements translate into a

fabricated skin which dresses my body. This is important in enabling both the wearer, when observing their reflection in the mirror, and the sample viewer to understand dress as a three-dimensional body-shaped object or skin, even when it has collapsed off the body. These two exercises act as applied knowledge to support my autoethnographic analysis of dress. These exercises not only further fed into tacit haptic knowledge for observational analysis as a sample viewer but into the construction of semi-structured interview questions, questionnaires and a deeper analysis of observational findings.

(vi) 'Dressing in the mirror' exercise

'Dressing in the mirror' is an exercise that I carry out in Chapter One, that is referenced in Chapter Two and again briefly in Chapter Three. The purpose of this exercise was to analyse the relationship between seeing and touching dress on my fleshy body (through cutaneous and conscious pressures) at the same time as observing my reflection (or 'aesthetic double'[22], as I argue in Chapter One) in a mirror (see Figure 9).

(vii) 'Walking' exercises

Two 'walking exercises' are discussed in Chapter Three. The first analysis was 'Walking down Exhibition Road', which involved observation of my walk as a wearer with an awareness of how I am moving in relation to other wearers on the street. In the second exercise I am not physically walking but rather I experience a *kinaesthetic empathy* with mannequins walking in the museum via a camera recording. I accessed this through my smartphone as I walked behind Alexander McQueen's *Fashion in Motion* mannequins through various gallery rooms within the V&A.

(viii) Semi-structured interviews

Further qualitative research was carried out through semi-structured interviews. Each interview was carried out as a haptic aesthetic researcher. The aims of each interview were slightly different depending on the interviewee's expertise or subject area. For example, for the interview with Sam Gatley (a Textile Display Specialist at the V&A at the time of interview) I designed spatially oriented questions. For curators Claire Wilcox and Valerie Steele I posed the question of the issue of movement. With curators Ligaya Salazar and Judith Clark I questioned the situating of the role of the dress curator. For the fashion designer Tristan Webber questions were orientated around his worldview as a designer and how this is voiced through his fabricated muse, 'She'.

[22] 'Aesthetic double' refers to my dressed reflection in the mirror, which I 'meet' in an 'anonymous relationship' (Goffman 1972) through which I develop the concept of a *wearing self-awareness* in Chapter One.

Curators are not always able to comment from the viewer's point of view, but semi-structured interviews helped me to explore different curatorial approaches (the curator as mediator, the visible or invisible curator, the curator declaring their hand) and ways of addressing the issue of liveliness (Wilcox's 'arrested movement' and Valerie Steele's 'movement memory' / Clark's 'spatial metaphors'). I conducted these interviews as a haptic aesthetic autoethnographer through applied knowledge and understanding of haptic aesthetics and the way I have experienced this through the 'sample viewer's' point of view.

Claire Wilcox, Keith Lodwick and Oriole Cullen from the V&A provided further curatorial insight to the museological functioning of the V&A Museum. Supporting interviews from dress curator Jessica Regan at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, curator and director Valerie Steele at The Museum at FIT, New York, and curator Karen Van Godtsenhoven at MoMu, Antwerp helped to culturally contextualise a contemporary dress museology. Judith Clark, as an independent exhibition maker, was able to offer an independent point of view which differed from that of Ligaya Salazar, who, as the director of the Fashion Space Gallery at London College of Fashion (University of the Arts London) offered an academically contextualised point of view. Jessica Regan and Valerie Steele offered an international museological point of view and Karen Van Godtsenhoven offered a European one.

Interviews with designers and educators explored different approaches to designing dress, which denoted a different set of haptic aesthetics for different wearers. Tristan Webber and Zowie Broach from the Royal College of Art contributed directly to analysis of the designer's voice. The intention of interviewing designers as well as curators was to understand the relationship between the two and how their roles often overlap. That is, some are designers and educators, some are educators and curators, and some are designers and curators. Curators are rarely designers, but Judith Clark is arguably closer to this duality because she is able to 'declare her hand' (a concept I discuss in Chapter Four).

Among those interviewed was Freddie Robins, whom I introduce as an 'everyday' wearer's voice in Chapter Four. I applied a reflexive approach to devise both sensory-orientated questions and elicit consciously articulated ideas around how Robins chooses to wear dress on her body and what dress means to her.

(ix) Questionnaires

Questionnaires play an important role in situating and contextualising my autoethnographic contribution as a 'sample viewer' with other female viewers' experience of dress in the exhibition. Data was collected in the exhibition space by observing viewers and designing semi-structured

questionnaires specific to the trying-on room at the Fashion Museum in Bath (2011) and the *Dress Sense* experimental exhibition at the RCA in March 2010. Further questioning was conducted through questionnaires carried out at the exhibition *BIBA and beyond: Barbara Hulanicki*, held at the Brighton Art Gallery in 2013 (see Appendix). This was supported by visitor profiling data sourced from the V&A's marketing department,[23] including data from the *YohjI Yamamoto* exhibition staged in 2011, *Ballgowns: British Glamour Since 1950* (2013), *Hollywood Costume* (2013) and *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* (2015).

However, as I argued earlier in this section, questionnaires, although useful as supporting data for contextualising and situating an autoethnographic role, did not provide deep and sensitive haptic aesthetic analysis.

Limitations of haptic aesthetic autoethnography

Along with the advantages of using autoethnography that I have outlined, I acknowledge that an autoethnographic method also presents limitations. The primary limitation is a high degree of subjectivity. This is caused by reliance on the researcher to provide haptic aesthetic observation and analysis in a variety of oppositional roles through different points of view. This is further limited by reliance on the intermodal sense of touch as a primary research tool.

(i) Subjectivity

As an autoethnographic researcher, my approach is reflexive in a number of roles: wearer, viewer, researcher, observer and analyst. This involves a plurality, a duality and at other times a singular point of view as the 'sample viewer'. This also involves a shift from the observation of my haptic aesthetic experiences to the analysis of haptic aesthetics in my experiences as a wearer, as a viewer and researcher of dress exhibits. The subjectivity of these roles is further shared with the reader /audience through the reflexive 'graphy' (writing) of this thesis: 'As researchers, we try to take readers/audiences through the same process, back and forth, inside and out'. (Adams, Holman Jones, Ellis 2015:46)

The limitation of a subjective approach is summarised by Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, in their book *Autoethnography: Understanding Qualitative Research* (2015): 'When we do autoethnography, we look inwards – into our identities, thoughts, feelings and experiences […]' (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis 2015:46)

[23] Exhibition Report Data compiled by Melissa Bentley from the marketing department of the V&A Museum, 2013 – 20015.

(ii) A female point of view

In addition to the above criteria, I provide not only a subjective point of view but also a female one throughout this thesis for the purpose of analysis as a wearer, sample viewer and researcher. Conducting this research through a female point of view enabled me to consider how a wearer brings an understanding of femininity into their viewing experience. In *Fashion and psychoanalysis* (2012), Bancroft refers to the concept of the feminine proposed by Jacques Lacan:

> By taking the association of fashion and femininity, but defining femininity in Lacanian terms […] we can interpret fashion in terms of the psychic modalities of subjectivity, and see in fashion paradoxes, contradictions and conflicts of subjectivity writ large on the human body itself. (Bancroft 2012:190)

Bancroft's reference to 'psychic modalities of subjectivity' in this case refers to the subjectivity of femininity. Bancroft goes on to suggest that fashion as femininity is an extension or addition to the body, and therefore 'complicit in the visual manifestation of these processes and problems' (Bancroft 2012:191). I link Bancroft's analysis of fashion as psyche 'writ large' on the body of a wearer to Finkelstein's concept of 'the fashioned self' (Finkelstein 1991). This leads to the idea that the sense of touch can translate socially conscious pressures aesthetically onto the skin of dress in the form of what I term as the *characteristics of being worn* (outlined earlier in this Introduction). In the context of this thesis these are 'writ large' as subjective manifestations of the female dressed self.

In the first instance it is useful to think of femininity as consisting of distinct characteristics of dress, which can be identified beyond the body of a female wearer (and viewer) in terms of what Bancroft refers to as 'The woman of fashion'. This is a description of femininity that, according to Bancroft, means the fashioned dress is an interface through which the woman communicates, which, in the process, negates the woman herself: 'It quite literally fashions the physical form of woman […] The woman herself does not exist. She is revealed only through the garment that shapes and articulates her […]' (Bancroft 2012:91)

In one sense, dress as a styled skin has the capacity to aestheticise the identity of a wearer. I question whether this filtering of a feminine identity can render the woman herself invisible (or extinguish her). I would like to reiterate the term 'dress' here (as I have defined it for the purposes of this thesis earlier in this Introduction), as it is this term which refers largely (although not exclusively) to female items of dress that are present in the exhibits discussed in this thesis. In these exhibits, the fleshy wearer does not yet exist: the identity of a female wearer is articulated through the haptic aesthetics of dress itself, which renders the female point of view present even if the fleshy female wearer is absent.

The 'woman of dress' (adapted for the purpose of this thesis from Bancroft's 'woman of fashion') was once a fleshy body. Not just the embodiment of a body ideal, or a fashioned identity, or a stereotype, but an example of a woman who wore a dress for all those reasons, and in addition to this has worn their individual femininity into the dress. The woman of dress is pertinent to this thesis because she embodies what I propose is a *wearing consciousness* (which I expand upon in Chapter One). This encompasses the socially conscious pressures felt by a wearer through dress in a particular context and time. The specifics of these are subjective to each dress, yet the feeling of conscious pressures when wearing dress are experienced, shared and viewed by all female wearers.

Bancroft proposes that: '[…] when a viewer of fashion engages with an image or a garment, or a performance, it is because these cultural forms reflect existing psychic issues or conditions […]' (Bancroft 2012:191). Here Bancroft suggests that when a viewer engages with fashion, what they are really engaging with is the 'psychic issues or conditions' that are visually reflected in the culture in which they are situated. I suggest part of this cultural situating is within the realm of femininity and relates to dress. Socially conscious pressures, which constitute Bancroft's 'psychic modalities', can be exemplified by the 'ideal' female body, as represented in magazines and advertising campaigns, creating an awareness which is carried within the female wearer. This supports concepts such as 'the ideal body', 'body image' and 'the perfect figure' which are not exclusive to representations of femininity but which are widely assumed to refer to the female body. It is arguably then that an everyday awareness of idealised and idolised female forms of the body are carried within the female wearer when consciously viewing dress in the exhibition.

According to visitor profiling reports created and commissioned by the V&A Museum's marketing department since 2005, female viewers made up the highest percentage of visitors at the following dress exhibitions:

> *Spectres: when fashion turns back* (2005): 81% (Fritsch and Cook 2005); *Yohji Yamamoto* (2011): 79% (Morris, Hargreaves & Macintyre 2011); *Ballgowns: British glamour since 1950* (2013): 91% (Bentley 2011a); *Hollywood costume* (2013): 91% (Bentley 2011b); *Alexander McQueen: savage beauty* (2015): 79% (Bentley 2015).

In the context of this thesis, however, I acknowledge that outside the cisgender female gaze in the exhibition there is not only the cisgender male gaze but also a range of other gazes which blur the gender boundaries in this context: for example, those of homosexual, transgender, transvestite, bisexual, metrosexual, pansexual and asexual people. Further to this I acknowledge that in the history of dress, the cisgender male gaze has on occasion also focused on body image (the ideal body and the perfect figure). For example, dandyism has been a feature of fashion history for several centuries; the

contemporary male dandy is a man who '[…] isn't content to merely get dressed each morning; he embraces fashion as a form of self-expression and even as an extension of self' (Burrows 2019).

Although in this thesis the male gaze is not considered in its own right, I suggest the male gaze (as a subjective view of femininity and one aligned with femininity such as the example of the dandy) is a perspective that woman are capable of adopting not only for the purpose of viewing themselves in the mirror but also for viewing examples of women's dress in an exhibition. I suggest that men, too, are capable of adopting a female perspective not only when viewing but in designing and curating examples of women's dress in an exhibition. The curators I reference are not exclusively female, but the exhibitions they curate feature women's dress. The designers I include are also not exclusively female but all design womenswear. It is also notable that two of the male womenswear designers I refer to in this thesis (Yohji Yamamoto and Tristan Webber) acknowledge that they use a female muse (physical or imaginary) to model their dress designs on. I also consider how male curators in this thesis have empathised with a female point of view when staging dress. For example, the male fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto acknowledges that he is unable, as a man, to speak with an authentic female voice through his dresses but he can observe and interpret what he observes as female characteristics to tell a story which his describes as '[…] women's spirit, women's bodies, women's skin, women's vibration.' (Salazar 2011:85). Bancroft summarises this gendered empathy here: 'While it is possible to desire the garment itself, the subject also desires the garment as a representation of the woman wearing it' (Bancroft 2012:62).

In summary, the female point of view is not only one embodied in female dress through the worldview of the designer and wearer, but is also influenced by the wider cultural, social and psychological ideals and ideas of what it means to be 'woman of dress' in the world. The female point of view, therefore, is one that can potentially be designed, worn, curated, viewed and communicated in the dress exhibition through the haptic aesthetics of dress as they pertain to femininity. Further, the 'woman of dress' is present in the dress exhibition not as a fleshy body but as a set of haptic aesthetics which embody the female wearing consciousness. However, the 'woman of dress' is also a point of view from which I argue both men and women are able to view women's dress.

(iii) Shifting roles within autoethnography

As I touched on earlier, the autoethnographer's role is subjective. In addition, the plurality of roles I employ as an autoethnographer in this thesis are complicated by switching between one and another. Further, each role involves a differently contextualised subjectivity. As Reed Danahay describes: '[…]: (1) The role of the autoethnographer in the narrative: is the autoethnographer an insider or an outsider of the phenomenon being described? (2) Whose voice is being heard: who is speaking, the people under investigation or the researcher?' (Mendez 2013:281).

There are three identifiably different roles in this thesis, those of wearer, 'sample viewer' and autoethnographer. As the autoethnographer, I observe what it feels like to be a wearer in the everyday when conducting 'wearer' exercises such as 'dressing in front of the mirror' and 'walking' down the street. When, as the autoethnographer, I cross the threshold into the museum, observations shift into what it feels like to be a 'sample viewer'. Observations do not just shift between differently focused mindsets and differently focused experiences within the body, but also between differently experienced contexts (the everyday to the museum) and the socially conscious pressures which shift through the body as a result.

It was important to my autoethnographic approach to note from what perspective, for what purpose and at what point the main narrative voice shifts between wearer and viewer in this thesis: for example, whether observations are made through the body as a wearer or viewer or externally for the purpose of material, spatial or contextual haptic aesthetic analysis (assessment of the characteristics of being worn in a dress exhibit) there is a point at which observation shifts from one to another. One of the ways I delineate this is by separating the chapters into a theory / introductory research section, followed by autoethnographic 'journeys'. On the journeys I narrate my movements not only across the thresholds between the domestic, street and museum spaces but also by intersecting the narrative with excerpts from observational notes, interviews, exhibition analysis and theory, using different tenses to mark these shifts. Overall, my autoethnographic voice helps to knit together the corporeal, phenomenological, material, spatial and contextual haptic aesthetic analysis from autoethnographic journeys with qualitative research drawn from questionnaires, interviews, exercises and experiments.

As Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis note, further to the subjectivity of looking inwards '[…] into our identities, thoughts, feelings and experiences […]' (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis 2015:46) the plurality of roles experienced through reflexive work as an autoethnographer also means that at the same time '[…] we look […] outward – into our relationships, communities and cultures'. (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis 2015:46)

In summary, I suggest that despite this breakdown of roles and the need to delineate between them in this thesis, the role of the autoethnographer is reflexive, and therefore provides an overarching point of view (the narrative voice). It is through this narrative voice that observation and analysis is filtered and collectively made sense of for the haptic aesthetic researcher.

Chapter outlines

There are four chapters in this thesis. Each chapter charts a different haptic aesthetic aspect in the wearing and viewing of dress, focusing firstly on the body, secondly on space, thirdly on movement and fourthly on communication (voice). Of the four chapters, the first three are structured around autoethnographic journeys which transition from the everyday into the exhibition space. These begin when 'I' get dressed in front of a domestic mirror. The journey continues as 'I' move out onto the streets of London, board a bus, alight at Exhibition Road and walk along this street towards the V&A Museum. Once inside the V&A, 'I' meet dress exhibits. Chapter Four is structured around interviews with curators, designers and academics to chart the dynamic of the voices 'I' meet as the 'sample viewer' in the dress exhibition.

Chapter One employs an 'embodied' methodology to investigate the relationship between 'dress, body and self', Chapter Two an 'emplaced' methodology to investigate the relationship between 'dress, body and space' and Chapter Three a 'kinaesthetic' methodology to investigate the relationship between 'dress, body and movement'. Chapter Four is structured a little differently, using a 'communicative' method to help construct and conduct semi-structured interviews with curators, designers and academics to explore the concept of a dress voice. Accumulated knowledge from Chapters One, Two and Three help to contextualise theory around dress as communication in the everyday and in the dress exhibition, where typically it cannot be touched.

Chapter One: *Dress Sense*

In this chapter I apply an *embodied* method to explore the development of what I term a *wearing consciousness*. A wearing consciousness is the experience of being a wearer in the world. It is the experience of consciously absorbing the cutaneous impact of pressure, motion and space on, in and through the skin of dress. I suggest that the *wearing consciousness* can be thought of as embodied in the not-worn dress.

Figure 11. ‘I am dressed’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

In order to analyse how the concept of a *wearing consciousness* is experienced by a wearer, I examine this from the experience of being inside dress (wearing it) and when viewing dress as worn or not-worn on another body. In this chapter, the other body is the one I observe in three different sorts of mirrors. These are a domestic mirror in the everyday, an exhibition mirror in the dress exhibition and dress itself as a mirror in both the everyday and exhibition contexts. In all three mirrors I identify with my *wearing consciousness* in terms of haptic aesthetics.

(i) In the domestic mirror

In this thesis, a domestic mirror is the full-length ‘dress’ mirror a wearer dresses themselves in front of in their home. In this section I observe what it feels like to pull dress onto my body as I view myself getting dressed in my domestic dress mirror. Observation of the haptic sensations I experience during this analysis are discussed in relation to Merleau-Ponty’s concept of ‘double sensations’: ‘[…] My body, it was said, is recognized by its power to give me ‘double sensations’: when I touch my right hand with my left hand, my right hand, as an object, has the strange property of being able to feel too.’ (Merleau-Ponty 2005:106)

In the first instance, double sensations are experienced not only between my fingertips as they touch my fleshy body but also when my skin feels the pressure of these touches in return. However, this becomes more complex when I dress myself in the mirror, because I witness these sensations quadruply. These are witnessed as two different sets of corresponding touchings intertwined as one. The concept of quadruple sensations pertains to a connection between the double sensations of cutaneous touch (which Merleau-Ponty refers to) and double sensations of conscious touch experienced as an empathetic touch and feeling touched. For example, Eco’s concept of an ‘epidermic

self-awareness' pertains to the skin and to a self-awareness. For the purpose of this thesis I term this as a *wearing self-awareness.* This is a conceptual intertwining of the cutaneous and conscious experiences of wearing dress.

In front of a domestic mirror I observe the development of my *wearing self-awareness* with each touch as I fold in conscious thought. This is firstly an exogenous folding from external pressures (caused by the fabric of dress pressing on the skin of the body along with the pressure of social and moral codes of conduct around touch). These pressures continue to fold into sensations, and again into conscious thought as they travel through my skin and into the body, where they fold again towards 'a vascular depth' (Paterson 2007:105-6). In a secret location somewhere within the body's vascular depth there lies what Michel Serres refers to as 'black box(es)' (Serres 2008:141). This is where *wearing self-awarenesses* are made sense of as feelings and understood as conscious 'wearing' knowledge. I refer to this trajectory as the folding of 'pressure into sensation into feeling'.

(ii) In an exhibition mirror

An exhibition mirror is one that is used in a dress exhibit for practical or conceptual purposes. It can be used to frame or invite the viewer into the exhibit or to exclude the viewer by privileging the dress exhibit. Equally, an exhibition mirror can be used to show the back of a dress or create a domestic or retail staging, or more logistically to reflect light. In this section I explore both focuses. I further chose exhibition mirrors in which I am able to observe my reflection as my 'aesthetic double' (a concept I foreground through observations made between dress, body and self in a domestic mirror) for the purpose of autoethnographic analysis.

On entering the social space of the dress exhibition, I suggest that the *wearing self-awareness* I refer to above becomes a *wearing consciousness*. This is because the viewer becomes conscious that dressed bodies in this context are curated to be viewed as a dressed body, and that they too are subject to being viewed not only by themselves in an exhibition mirror but also by other viewers in the exhibition space. I explore theoretically how the 'sample viewer' imaginatively identifies (Lacan 1999:43) with their 'aesthetic double' in the exhibition mirror as both wearer and viewer. This is within the wider social, conscious and museological pressures experienced through codes of conduct relating to touch.

Therefore I argue that the wearer's conscious understanding of the connection between *pressure, sensation* and *feeling* can be thought of as a *wearing consciousness* located in what Serres refers to as

a 'black box'[24] deep inside the body. I argue that a wearer brings an understanding of this *wearing consciousness* into the exhibition experience.

(iii) Dressing the self

Entwistle suggests that: '[…] dress in everyday life is always more than a shell, it is an intimate aspect of the experience and presentation of the self and is so closely linked to the identity that these three – dress, the body and the self – are not perceived separately but simultaneously, as a totality' (Entwistle 2000:10). This resonates with Joanne Finkelstein's view, expressed in *The fashioned self* (1991). Finkelstein sums up the difference thus: '[…] the self is fashioned from external, often purchasable elements rather than wrought from the private ruminations of an individual […]' (Finkelstein 1991:172). Alison Bancroft, in *Fashion and psychoanalysis* (2012), cites Luke Thurston's concept of 'aesthetic self-invention' (Thurston, in Bancroft 2012:162). This is the notion that by choosing to dress in a certain way the wearer is consciously creating their own aesthetic identity. This is a complex area of research, which lies outside the scope of this thesis. However, what is useful is the thought that when dressing a wearer is able to identify certain haptic aesthetic dress choices to fit a conscious identification between their dress, body and self.

In Chapter One, the haptic aesthetic experience of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror is examined as an act of consciously touching. The wearer becomes familiar with viewing their own dressed body in the mirror, familiar with the feeling of identifying with their own body image reflected in the mirror and familiar with their reflection as an embodiment of their private and socially dressed self. The wearer is also familiar with the feeling that their reflection belongs to them through the sense of touch. By the same token, it is through the experience of being dressed in the world that a wearer develops a wearing consciousness of how other wearers have dressed their bodies and selves too. How this is communicated between wearers within wider social pressures (in fashion and cultural systems) is embedded through codes of conduct around touch. Further, the wearer in the everyday is a dressed body who at any moment can become a viewer when they look at another dressed body. With each experience of viewing, a wearer builds up knowledge of how other wearers choose to dress their bodies and the sequence from pressure to sensation to feeling which underpins this.

I observe that a wearing consciousness is experienced when the wearer is viewed by other wearers in the everyday. I suggest it is this *wearing consciousness* that enables wearers to identify with what it might feel like to wear dress when it is worn on other sorts of bodies (through the haptic aesthetics of dress), including that of the non-living mannequins, as it is the viewer who brings the experience of being a conscious wearer into the dress exhibition.

[24] The 'black box' (Serres 1985:145) is a metaphorical concept coined by French philosopher Michel Serres.

(iv) 'Imaginative identification'

In the exhibition space, the viewer 'meets' dress. However, this meeting is not between two living bodies (as it is between wearers in the everyday) but one living body (the viewer) beholding a non-living body (the mannequin, with the exception of living mannequins). This creates a one-way relationship, which, according to Erving Goffman's concept of 'anonymous relations', is '[…] when one end personally identifies the other but is not, and knows he is not, personally identified in return […].' (Goffman 1972:228) This one-way relationship is played out between 'ends' which in this thesis are female 'wearers' and items of 'dress'. In this context, anonymous relationships are identified between one living 'end' and one non-living 'end'. Initially, this is between a wearer and their aesthetic double in a domestic mirror and later between a viewer and a dress exhibit, as I experience on my autoethnographic journeys.

Although a one-way relationship is not a reciprocated communication between two or more living wearers, I suggest a residue of belonging is felt. For example, when I observe my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror, I identify with my *wearing consciousness* as embodied in my dress even when I am not wearing it (such as when it is hung not-worn in a wardrobe). Therefore, when dress is not being worn by a living wearer in the everyday and dresses a non-living mannequin in the exhibition context, I suggest a residue of 'belonging' is consciously extended towards the worn, but not-worn, dress.

This conscious extension can be thought of as an 'imaginative identification' with a *wearing consciousness*. I suggest that when a viewer 'imaginatively identifies' with a dress exhibit this is an attempt to recreate the feeling of a belonging between dress, body and self. This is either by way of imagining the identity of an absent wearer to whom the dress might have belonged, or by the viewer substituting their own experiences of wearing dress in order to imaginatively identify with what it would be like to wear the dress exhibit. So this is either how the viewer imagines wearing a dress exhibit on their own body or how they imagine a dress exhibit to be worn by another wearer (other than themselves).

It is in this way that I 'meet' dress in the exhibition context, dress as a third mirror. This is a process by which I identify fragments of my *wearing consciousness* as embodied in dress, and in this way I am able to imaginatively extend my own *wearing consciousness* towards a dress exhibit in order to create a connection between my fleshy dressed body and the worn but not-worn dress through the feeling of belonging between dress, body and self.

In Chapter Two I explore this further through the concept of 'imaginatively inhabiting'[25] dress on an autoethnographic journey through dress spaces, measured in terms of haptic aesthetics.

Chapter Two: *Dress Space*

As I cited earlier, Pink's theory of an 'emplaced' ethnography was methodologically illuminating for this chapter. This is because an emplaced method includes the '[…] relationships between bodies, minds and the materiality and sensoriality of the environment' (Pink 2009:25).

Therefore, through an emplaced method, analysis for this chapter is measured through the experience of dressing and wearing dress in three different registers of space. These three registers consist of the *corporeal* (the internal, interface and external dress spaces of the body), the *contextual* and the *imagined*. The purpose of this is to establish what understanding the viewer brings through their wearing consciousness to experience a dress exhibit across the 'viewing space'.

If I stand on the spot (in front of the domestic mirror), then I define my *internal dress space* as that which is inside the skin of my dress (my body) and my *interface dress space* as the permeable layer of the skin of dress itself, with all its stitched seams, hems, collars, zips, pockets, buttons etc. If I were to raise my arms and turn through 360 degrees, the space between the skin of my dress and the ends of my outstretched fingertips would mark the edges of my *external dress space*. The space between my interface dress space and the edges of my external dress space is also the space I describe as the 'viewing space'. The space beyond my fingertips (edges of my external dress space), I refer to as the *contextual dress space*. This is the space inhabited by other wearers in the everyday (including mannequins in the contemporary exhibition space).

In Chapter Two I focus initially on the wearer's proprioceptive sense. According to Paterson, proprioception is the 'perception of the position, state and movement of the body and limbs in space […] [and] Includes cutaneous, kinaesthetic, and vestibular sensations' (Paterson 2007:ix).

[25] Imaginatively inhabiting' is a term used by Mark Paterson in *The senses of touch: haptics, affects and technologies (2007)* to describe the imaginative act of inhabiting an inanimate object. Paterson maps this onto the myth of Pygmalion's sculpture: a female figure who Pygmalion imagines to come to life as she aesthetically unfolds in front of his eyes.

Figure 12. ‘Reaching out’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

In order to measure this space, I re-visit the photographs taken from exercise of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror (which I carry out in Chapter One, see Figure 12) and trace the lines (in pencil) created between dress, fingertip and body as I observe these invisible threads connecting across the viewing space (see Figure 13)

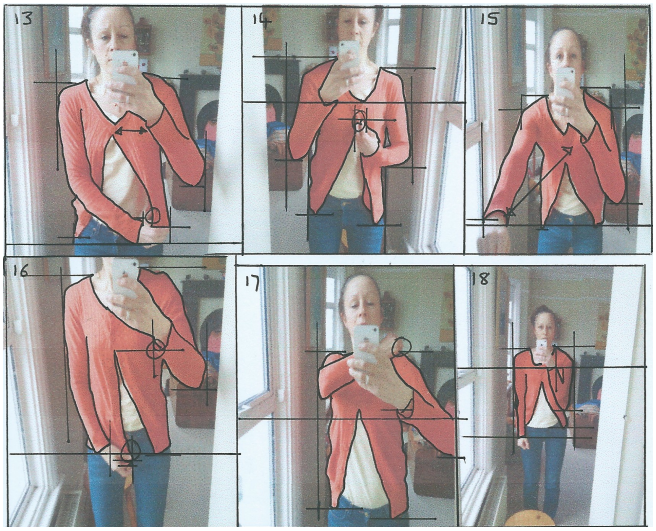

Figure 13. '*Invisible spatial structures* (images 1 – 18) created by putting my cardigan on (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

By mapping what I refer to as invisible touchlines, I am able to gain an understanding of the points within my external dress space where I (as a wearer) touch my dress in relation to my body. These mark degrees of distance as touch points between the skin of my dress and my extending and retracting fingertips. For the purposes of this thesis, I suggest it is at the end of my fingertips where invisible touch barriers lie. Touch barriers are observed through moral and social codes around touch in the everyday and through museological devices in the exhibition, that both permit and forbid touch.

This is helpful for an understanding of how the body is situated in space, in terms of how the dressed body extends not only in the external dress space around the body but through space beyond this (towards other wearers). I refer to the Deleuzian concept of the fold as a metaphor for the nature of this cyclical extension and retraction within my external dress space. This is the folding in of pressure, sensation and feeling (which I set out in Chapter One), first as one that exogenously folds into the body to translate pressures into feelings and then as endogenous folding to translate feelings back into pressures, as they extend out from the body through dress towards other bodies across the 'viewing space'. I suggest that it is along these folding (touch) lines that the viewer is able to emplace their *wearing consciousness* into the dress space of an exhibit.

I propose that if the viewer imagines inhabiting a dress exhibit, they might also imagine inhabiting the exhibition space or a space outside the exhibition that is imagined or recalled from a wearing memory.

(i) *Touch tension*

To further understand how the staging of dress in space affects whether the viewer actually reaches out to touch a dress exhibit, in Chapter Two I analyse the results of my experimental exhibition *Dress Sense*, cited earlier, which I staged at the Royal College of Art in 2011.

Figure 14. 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' by Jungen Lee, with white line box on floor', *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

As explained above in my methodology, the exhibition was designed to test how different methods of display affected the viewer's desire to reach out and touch an exhibit. Some of the items of dress were displayed as if in a museum, such as on a mannequin, on a plinth or suspended from the ceiling and positioned behind a line (see Figure 14). However, others made reference to retail or domestic contexts, such as hanging from a coat rack, in a chest of drawers, slung over a chair or on a clothes rail. All were curated within immediate access (an arm's length) so it was possible to touch all the exhibits and there were no 'Do Not Touch' signs or verbal instructions to indicate otherwise. In addition, all the dress exhibits were chosen for their tactile quality, such as a soft, textured or unusual fabric, cut or construction.

Findings from this experiment were analysed through questionnaires, observations and photographs which indicated that whether viewers touched or did not touch dress exhibits, they were aware of a reflex to touch and experienced a 'touch tension' when deciding whether to touch or not to touch, and experienced this even if they did touch. A *touch tension* is related to the impact of visible and invisible touch barriers. For example, visible touch barriers include 'Do Not Touch' signs (ropes, lines, plinths, mannequins) and invisible 'Do Not Touch' signs (this display method references museological display methods, the way in which dress exhibits are perceived to belong to a gallery, curator, institution, designer or wearer). I suggest that a tension is experienced because the viewer (through

the reflex to touch) cannot fully disconnect from the experience of being a conscious wearer in the exhibition space.

Figure 15. 'A viewer', *Madame Grès* exhibition, MoMu, Antwerp (9.2.13). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of MoMu, Antwerp

In the photograph above (see Figure 15), which I took at the exhibition *Madame Grès* at MoMu, Antwerp, I observed a viewer reaching out to touch one of the dresses, but the dress was positioned just beyond the viewer's reach and therefore remained untouchable. According to Claire Wilcox this is referred to as the 'out of reach rule' (Wilcox 2013). I suggest that this viewer's unsatisfied desire to touch is instrumental in the experience of a *touch tension*. In Chapter Two I build on the concept that a *touch tension* may trigger an extension of feeling into conscious touch as a substitution for a cutaneous touch. This conscious touch can be experienced in the form of 'touching with the eyes' (Paterson 2006:37), or, further, an imaginative leap which allows the viewer to emplace their wearing empathy in an 'imagined inhabiting' of dress in the exhibition.

(ii) 'Imaginatively inhabiting'

At this point in Chapter Two I introduce the thinking of Edmund Husserl, who suggested that in order for someone to imaginatively inhabit (dress), spatial-temporal objects (e.g. items of dress or dressed bodies in the exhibition space) must exist in an objective reality separate from the individual's subjective experience (Husserl 1931).

This sets up the premise that an object, when viewed in a separate time and place to that of the situated viewer, can also be viewed as part of their objective reality and therefore can be inhabited not only physically but imaginatively. I further suggest that to be able to imaginatively inhabit dress the viewer must not touch it with their fingers (or any other part of the body). This results in the viewer not being able to satisfy a cutaneous reflex to touch.

Wilson makes an interesting observation, that '[…] fashion does not negate emotion, it simply displaces it into the realm of aesthetics […]' (Wilson 1985:9). This suggests that the aesthetics of dress can offer a realm into which the feeling of a *touch tension* can be displaced, as a conscious emotion. In *Museum ideals of purpose and method* (1918), Benjamin Ives Gilman suggests that '[…] aesthetic contemplation is a profoundly transforming experience, an imaginative act of identification between viewer and artist. To achieve it, the viewer 'must make himself over in the image of the artist, penetrate his intention, think with his thoughts, feel with his feelings […]' (Gilman 1918:56) This suggests that if a viewer emotionally engages with the haptic aesthetics of dress (as a conscious displacement of cutaneous feelings) then this has the potential to become a 'profoundly transforming experience' (Gilman 1918:56). Gilman suggests this transformation is 'an imaginative act of identification between viewer and artist' (Gilman 1918:56). I understand this to mean that if the viewer imagines what dress would feel like to wear through a *wearing empathy*, then the viewer is able to imaginatively identify with the 'artist'. In respect to this thesis I suggest the 'artist' can be thought of as the 'wearing voice' (a concept I discuss in Chapter Four) felt to be communicated through the haptic aesthetics of dress.

Therefore I suggest that when a viewer cannot touch dress, this creates a tension which has the transformative effect of displacing 'empathetic' feelings into the aesthetics of dress – in particular, a *wearing empathy*, which combines a wearer's own wearing memories and feelings identified through the haptic aesthetics of a dress exhibit. To achieve this, it requires not only an emplacement of the *wearing consciousness* across space to think with the thoughts and feel with the feelings of what it would be like to wear another dress (other than their own) but also the kinaesthetics to imagine what it would be like to inhabit another dress as a conscious wearer.

Chapter Three: *Moving Dress*

Chapter Three applies *a **kinaesthetic*** method: using the kinaesthetics of dress to empathetically explore the degree of motion felt to be embodied in a dress exhibit. As I assert at the beginning of this thesis, 'kinaesthetics' come within the umbrella term 'haptic'. Beyond kinetics, kinaesthetics are the conscious and unconscious perception of one's own body movements, which in this thesis are those experienced during the act of getting dressed and wearing dress in motion in the everyday.

As part of an initial analysis of the kinaesthetics of dress, I re-visit the 'invisible touchlines' I mapped out in Chapter Two (whereby I mark out the points in space around the body where dress and fingertips habitually touch in the act of dressing). I trace these invisible touchlines onto a photograph to make the kinaesthetics of getting dressed visible. These provide the foundation upon which the haptic kinaesthetics of wearing experiences can be traced further.

(i) 'Kinaesthetic empathy'

The kinaesthetic method is defined by the sensory ethnographic notion that 'By walking with someone, it is thus possible to learn to inhabit a similar place to them […]' (Pink 2009:77). As I did in Chapters One and Two, I begin Chapter Three with the act of getting dressed in front of a mirror; however, for this journey, titled 'A wearer's walk', I focus on the last item to put on the body: my shoes. By documenting the act of putting on my shoes I am inviting the reader to 'walk with me' as I step out into the street. On this autoethnographic journey, once on the street I stop at a bus stop, get on a bus to the Royal Albert Hall, I alight and walk down Exhibition Road to the V&A Museum. During this walk I experience what Dee Reynolds and Matthew Reason refer to as 'kinaesthetic empathy'. This is an empathy with the way other wearers are walking. As I move into the museum, I empathise with the museological walk as I perceive this to be demonstrated by other viewers and dress exhibits staged in degrees of mobility from stillness to living movement.

Gabriele Brandstetter's concept of the 'paradox of the pose' (Brandstetter 2007:256) is pertinent in this chapter in order to discuss the smallest degree of motion. This is the theory that within the stillness of a pose there remains a residue of movement. The residue of movement accumulates when a wearer slows down into a pose and the anticipated generation of movement when a wearer moves out of a pose. Although this references a pose held by a living model rather than mannequin, I suggest in the context of the museum there are visual similarities between the two. I suggest the viewer is able to identify with dress as 'worn' when it is 'not-worn' in the dress exhibition, and that is indicative of this.

Figure 16. *Fashion in Motion*: Alexander McQueen, 1999. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

This is where Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'kinaesthetic residua' is particularly illuminating. This is the theory that a wearer's kinaesthetics leave invisible traces of how a person moves or moved their

limbs in space, which can 'take the place of actual movements' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:124). These two theoretical positions help foster the idea that an *invisible wearing schema* can be visualised in order to map the kinaesthetics of a wearer's body or a dress exhibit as movements when viewed in stillness.

(ii) *Invisible wearing schema*

To enable the viewer to imagine invisible touchlines around a static dressed mannequin, in Chapter Three I trace those I created when I put my shoes on. As I layered one on top of the other in a separate drawing, an *invisible wearing schema* emerged (see Figure 17). I explore this concept by observing my own invisible kinaesthetics as I step out into the street, board a bus and walk down Exhibition Road towards the V&A.

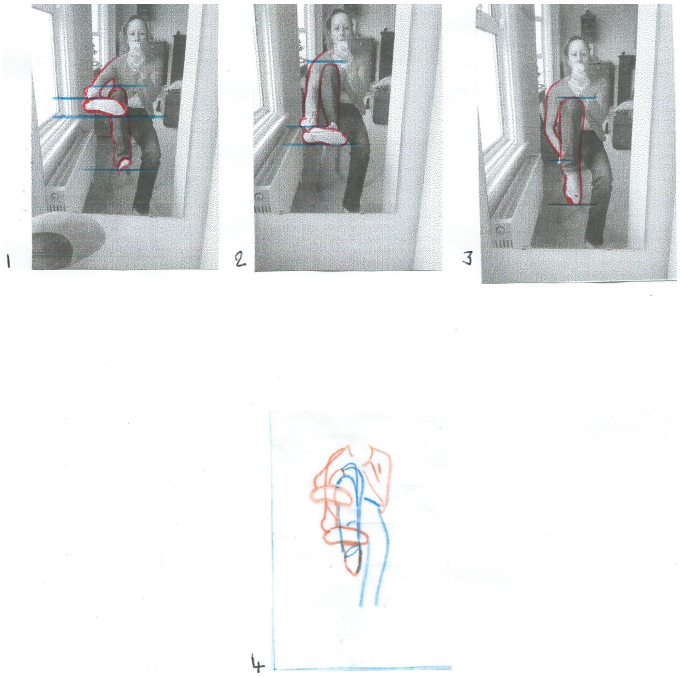

Figure 17. 'Drawing of the *invisible wearing schema* for putting on my shoe, images 1 – 4, Kensal Rise (11.10.17). Image © Lucy Gundry

As I walked down Exhibition Road, I observed that I was able to kinaesthetically empathise with other wearers' movements as they walked too. I refer to Susan Leigh Foster's theory that ways of walking are '[…] exaggerated ever so slightly […]' (Foster 2002:125) between one wearer and another. Through this I began to imagine their *invisible wearing schema* mapping around their body, forming, fracturing and reforming as the wearer moved from one step to another (Figure 17). I imagined this to the extent that I experienced an ever so slight exaggeration in my own demeanour.

It is this observational approach that I continue with in the V&A when I encounter the museum script (as outlined through reference to Carol Duncan in Chapter Two), which, according to Wilcox

(29.1.2013) presents a 'museum stillness'. Wilcox explained in conversation that it is different from a room that has 'just been left'. Caroline Evans cites Marcel Mauss's 1934 suggestion, in his writings on 'techniques of the body', that ways of walking are 'acquired' rather than 'inherent', learnt through 'education and copying through 'prestigious imitation' (Evans 2013: 224).

I explore the concept of 'prestigious imitation' first through observational analysis of viewers in the V&A's Room 40 in terms of their gestures, which the linguist David McNeill suggests carry 'living meaning' (McNeill 2005:92). Gestures are copied through an 'inner mimicry' (McNeill), not only between wearers in the everyday but also, as Evans notes, Pascal Pia suggested as early as 1935 that '[…] mannequins were the new deportment teachers [...]' (Evans 2013:222)

Figure 18. 'Collective pose' *Fashion in Motion: Alexander McQueen,* 1999. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In my last 'exhibit' in Chapter Three, I examine the kinaesthetics of living mannequins in the museum through Alexander McQueen's *Fashion in Motion* event (V&A 1999). In this still image (see Figure 18) of a moment of pose, the living mannequins are positioned in juxtaposition with a non-living mannequin. My observation is that these mannequins appear to be mimicking one another in their style of deportment, but in fact it is the living mannequins who are mimicking the non-living ones with angular arm movements. This goes some way towards exemplifying Pia's suggestion, and also suggests that the living mannequins imagined an *invisible wearing schema* around the non-living mannequin, which renders the non-living mannequin 'faintly uncanny' in relation to the quotation from Elizabeth Wilson at the beginning of this chapter. It is the observation that as an extension of a living mannequin, if the viewer imagines an *invisible wearing schema* around a non-living mannequin, then through a kinaesthetic empathy with a dress exhibit the dress can be imagined to move, and, by extension, through mimicked invisible touchlines which can take the place of the actual.

Chapter Four: *A Dress Voice*

This chapter explores the concept that dress has a 'voice': a voice that communicates through the mode of haptic aesthetics. Specific to the mode of haptic aesthetics is the communication of the cutaneous and conscious feel of wearing dress through looking but not touching. From its creation to its curation dress passes through many different hands. These can be thought of as voices, which embed their conscious touch into the materiality of the dress.

It became apparent in this chapter that there is an order in which these voices become embodied in dress. First there is the designer's worldview (including that of the textile designer, but in the context of this thesis I begin with that of the dress (fashion) designer, then the curator's dressing, then the wearer's consciousness and then the viewer's ability to empathise with the wearing experience. Each voice connects and communicates with wider haptic dialogues to be able to speak of what it feels like to wear and be touched by dress as a wearer in the world. It also became apparent that each of these voices are connected within wider conscious dialogues, not only as wearers but as their profession dictated too. For example, the cutaneous, the corporeal, the spatial, the aesthetic, the conscious, the social, the phenomenological, the cultural (fashion), the sociological, the material, the museological, and so on. This means there are links and overlaps between the voices, as well as one shared voice (that of being a wearer in the world).

All of these voices project their subjective worldviews to speak individually through dress about what it feels like *collectively* to be a wearer in the world. However, not only do some voices overlap, but some exchange places and others double up. For example, the dress designer's voice embodies the textile designer's voice, the wearer's voice embodies the designer's voice and the viewer's voice embodies the wearer's voice. Some designers are also curators. Some educators are also curators. Curators, however, are rarely designers but, as mentioned above, Judith Clark is arguably closer to this as an 'exhibition maker' in the way she curates through spatial metaphors.

Figure 19. 'Comfortable' *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, 2010. Image © Norbert Schoerner

(i) Dress as a mode of communication

The notion that dress holds meaning has been theorised in the fields of anthropology, psychology, sociology, material culture, the body, linguistics, and aesthetics. In order to situate my thinking in this chapter, I will summarise pertinent theory articulated in J.C. Flügel's *The psychology of clothes,* published in 1930, to Roland Barthes' essays from 1956-69, published in English as *The language of fashion* in 2006 to the more recent publication by Alison Bancroft, *Fashion and psychoanalysis* (2012).

In the decades which span the theory and debate around how dress communicates there have been different understandings and propositions. J.C. Flügel, in *The psychology of clothes,* Susan B. Kaiser Kaiser, in *The social psychology of clothes*, (1985), and Joanne Finkelstein, in *The fashioned self*, (1991), seek an understanding of communication in the relationship between dress, body and self. Toby Fishcher-Mirkin, in *Dress code* (1995), seeks an understanding by considering dress as code, and Malcolm Barnard, in *Fashion as communication* (1996) as well as Roland Barthes, in his *Système de la mode* (1968; published in English as *The fashion system* in 1990) and his essays in *The language of fashion* (1956-69; published in English in 2006) seek meaning through dress in terms of semiotics (Saussure's visual language of signs and symbols). Both code and semiotics suggest ways in which dress can be 'decoded' to understand what dress 'means'.

Alison Lurie's insight in *The language of clothes* (1982) is that 'none of these theorists, however, have gone on to remark what seems obvious: that if clothing is a language, it must have a vocabulary and a grammar like other languages' (Lurie 1982:4). According to Lurie (and, for example, Roland Barthes in *The fashion system*) dress is structured as a non-verbal *language*. Lurie decodes dress as a vocabulary of 'words' and 'accents', to describe '[…] hairstyles, jewellery, make-up and body decoration' (Lurie 1982:4). Barthes further identified two 'systems' of semiotic communication, one 'linguistic'[26] and the other 'vestimentary'.[27]

Barthes proposes that despite the structuring of dress in two separate yet mirrored systems, '[…] the vestimentary system seems to be taken over by the linguistic system' (Barthes 2010:27). Further to this, Lurie notes that 'Theoretically at least this vocabulary [of dress] is as large as or larger than that of any spoken tongue […]' (Lurie 1982:4). Tim Dant, in analysing Barthes' writing in *Material culture in the social world* (published in 1999), concludes '[…] we found that the fashion system is not accessible as a linguistic code or as a material system but only through a combination of both' (Dant 1999:107). Therefore it seems that despite attempts to structure dress linguistically and semiotically, theorists agree that the way dress communicates is larger than the sum of its parts.

[26] Barthes describes the linguistic system as a language (such as French or English) (Barthes 2010:27)
[27] Barthes describes the "vestimentary" system as one 'according to which the garment (prints, accessories, a pleated skirt, a halter top, etc.) signifies either the world (the races, springtime, maturity) or Fashion' (Barthes 2010:27)

In relation to this research, it is Dant who points out that what is neglected as meaning in the analysis of dress is the experience of the 'wearer'.

> What the discussion of fashion often avoids are the characteristics of clothes as they are worn. […] Wearing clothes is a material experience; they are available to be looked at on other people and to be worn by ourselves. Clothes are given meaning in the fashion system by the aesthetics of design, the mechanics of production and the inducements of consumption. But the engagement of the wearer with the garment, such that they become part of each other, also gives clothes meaning. (Dant 1999:107)

Dant suggests that dress is given meaning through 'aesthetics', but also that dress acquires meaning through the process of dress and wearer becoming 'part of each other'. I suggest that the wearing consciousness (which I propose in this thesis) is the process by which dress, body and self not only form a belonging but also the one by which what it means to be a wearer in the world is made sense of, becomes knowledge and thus can be communicated. A concluding thought from Barnard is that fashion as communication is a

> […] process in which someone says something to someone else in one or other medium or channel with some or other effect. On this account, a garment, an item of fashion or clothing, would be the medium or channel in which one person would 'say' something to another person with the intention of effecting some change in that other person. (Barnard 30)

If I add 'dress' to his reference then I include the act of 'dressing' and the feeling of 'being dressed' as the active part of this 'medium or channel' of communication which has an 'effect' on another. I further suggest that if dress is thought of being able to intentionally 'say' something to 'effect' a change in another person, then dress can be thought of as a 'mode' of communication.

A ***mode of communication*** method for this chapter focuses on reflexive semi-structured interviews with curators, designers and educators to analyse the dynamic of 'voices' embodied in dress exhibits. My methodology is intended to understand the relationship and tensions between these roles and how one voice may be amplified over another or drowned out. Beyond understanding the dynamic, my aim is to understand how dress communicates to the viewer through the sense of touch in a context where touch is not permitted.

The term 'mode' holds two meanings, both of which are pertinent to this thesis. First, a 'mode' is '[…] a way of operating, living, or behaving […]' (MODE | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary, 2020) and second, 'mode' refers to the wearing of an item of dress in order '[…] to be fashionable at a

particular time […].' (MODE | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary, 2020). Both definitions shape dress as a mode of communication. If the two are embodied in dress and can be identified by a viewer through haptic aesthetics then this gives dress the capacity to communicate and effect a change in a viewer even when dress is viewed not-worn, such as in the dress exhibition.

A concluding thought from Dant on how dress communicates is his reference to Baudrillard, whom he cites as suggesting that dress 'has to be grasped aesthetically and in relation to modes of thought.' (Dant 1999:93-4). The term 'grasped' can be applied to the way the haptic aesthetics of dress can operate as a mode of communication in the dress exhibition. When a viewer in the dress exhibition desires to touch an exhibit, the reflex to touch is experienced. If the viewer is prevented from touching the exhibit due to both visible and invisible touch barriers then the way the viewer touches an exhibit is by 'grasping'. This links the haptic grasping of dress to an aesthetic, intellectual or imaginative grasping of dress, which can further be viewed with reference to Baudrillard's 'modes' of thought.

In the three chapters discussed above I established the intersubjective relationship between dress, body and self; by the end of Chapter Four I have also provided an analysis of how dress communicates, even in the exhibition space, where the 'Do not touch' rule applies, and that it does so though the haptic aesthetics of dress.

In this Introduction I have traced the journey which led to this PhD research through textile practice and academic research towards curatorial exploration and the questioning of touch and dress. The question I explore is how a viewer can touch and *feel* touched by dress in the context of the dress exhibition where touch is not permitted. By identifying and defining key concepts I formed a framework for both a contemporary dress museology and a haptic aesthetic methodology with deep focus through autoethnographic practice. Both concepts were informed by relevant literature and observation of exhibitions and exhibits, supported by experiments, questionnaires and interviews. All of these allow my roles as a wearer, 'sample viewer' and researcher to play a collaborative part in each of the chapters I outline. Practice, theory and haptic aesthetic observation are intertwined in an autoethnographic approach through reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated observations of the relationship between dress, body and self. I suggest this is what constitutes the *wearing consciousness*, a concept shared by all wearers in the world.

Chapter One: *Dress Sense*

Introduction

In this chapter, I observe how the cutaneous and conscious sense of touch are intertwined in the wearing and viewing of dress. This is in order to understand what the viewer brings into the dress exhibition as a wearer through the haptic aesthetic communication between dress, body and self.

I conduct an auto-ethnographic journey in two parts. The first is situated in front of a domestic mirror as I get dressed in the context of my home. The second is when I am dressed, and I enter the dress exhibition as a 'sample viewer'. In the domestic context, 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. I continue to observe my *wearing self–awareness* in the exhibition context through dress exhibits which I have chosen because they are useful examples through which I can analyse the 'exhibition mirror', 'exhibit mirror' and 'dress mirror' in the exhibition of dress in order to form what I refer to as a *wearing consciousness*.

I employ an embodied methodological approach in order to 'meet' dress; through an anonymous relationship in the mirrors I view dress throughout this chapter as an educated, Western, middle-aged female of slim build and average height. I 'meet' dress in order to conduct embodied autoethnographic research into the haptic aesthetics of dress. My practice is one of '[…] self consciously and reflexively attending to the senses […]' (Pink 2009:10) as a conscious wearer throughout.

Intertwining

In this chapter I propose that not only does a wearer develop a *wearing consciousness* through the haptic aesthetics of dress when it is worn on their own body, but also that this *wearing consciousness* allows the wearer to experience a *wearing empathy* when viewing not-worn dress exhibits in the exhibition.

Paterson suggests that the 'haptic' sense is made up of the physiological senses of touch, which consist of: '[…] proprioception, kinaesthesia and the vestibular sense […]' (Paterson 2007:4). These allow the situated body to operate through the sense of touch in space and time. Within this Paterson suggests there are three ways the body is able to experience the physiological touch: 'immediately', 'deeply' and 'metaphorically'. These work '[…] synergistically, as the inwardly-orientated sensations necessary for feelings of embodiment.' (Paterson 2007:4) to form what he terms a 'felt phenomenology' (Paterson 2007:1). I will begin with 'immediate' touch, because it pertains to the

sensations on the surface of the skin. Paterson refers to 'mechanoreceptors' (Paterson 2007:ix) in the skin which can register four types of cutaneous touch: pressure, temperature, pain and movement. (Paterson 2007:1) Of these, pressure is most pertinent to this research because a parallel can be drawn with the concept of conscious pressure. The philosopher Michel Serres proposes two types of touch, 'the feeling' and 'the felt' (Serres 2008:81). I suggest that these correlate to Paterson's 'immediate' and 'deep' touch, and to cutaneous and conscious touch.

Serres describes skin as a 'variety of contingency' and '[…] in it, through it, with it, the world and my body touch each other, the feeling and the felt it defines my common edge' (Serres 2008:81). Serres suggests that a 'common edge' '[…] can pass for our common sense […]' (Serres 2008:81), suggesting that the skin not only touches but consciously assimilates, even evaluates, through a wearer's 'common edge' to fold 'the feeling' and 'the felt' together. I cross-reference this with the theoretical approaches of Mark Paterson, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Gilles Deleuze. Paterson and Serres, despite their different perspectives (Paterson is a sociologist concerned with the science of the senses and Serres a philosopher concerned with theory of the senses) have developed theories that are both similar and useful to the concept of 'folding' which I discuss in this chapter.

In particular, the Deleuzian fold is pertinent because it draws attention to the indexical traces of touch within the materiality of dress itself '[…] The fold can be recognised first of all in the textile model of the kind implied by garments […]' (Deleuze 2010:139): for example, the folding of a piece of textile to create seams, collars, cuffs and hems. Therefore the 'dress fold' can be thought of as a metaphor for folding dress, body and self together as an intertwining between the cutaneous and conscious, as Serres describes:

> Fabric folds, crumples, turns on itself, is knotted at will. Skin wrinkles, adapts, reigns between organs and contains complex paths that link them; more than just the medium of the sense organs, our skin is a mixture of them like a palette. (Serres 2008:79-80)

Further, the metaphor of the 'dress fold' is helpful in autoethnographic observation and analysis of how the cutaneous and conscious touch are not only embedded into the 'supple and flat […] uneven surface of the skin […]' (Serres 2008:141), but how these also fold through the skin of dress and into the body. First I note Paterson's reference to the fold, because he suggests that 'It is through the 'effect of folding that skin becomes flesh, becomes body: that epidermal surface achieves vascular depth.' (Paterson 2007:105-6). Therefore 'the felt' can fold into 'feeling' as it travels from the skin to a vascular depth inside the body. Further, I make a link here between Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'vision' and Serres' concept of the 'black box' (which I explore later in this chapter).

Merleau-Ponty's theory that the body has 'vision': '[…] the depth beneath this surface contains my body and hence contains my vision.' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:138) is helpful in thinking about a metaphorical touch. This allows the viewer to observe the characteristics of being worn in dress as a metaphor for feeling. According to Serres, 'the feeling' and 'the felt' are held as sensations in a 'black box':

> Sensation is held in a black box, and functions like one. Both the former and the latter precede knowledge, just as each, misunderstood, comes after, envelopes or punctures it. (Serres 2008:144)

The concept of the black box is one that Serres develops with reference to a 'body-box', 'house-box', 'social-box' and a 'self-governing body-box' (Serres 2012:149). A conscious wearer is 'the pole which perceives or feels […] encased in a series of black boxes' (Serres 2008:139). The concept of the black box contributes to the analysis of how the phenomenological feelings of being a wearer in the world are experienced, assimilated and understood as haptic aesthetic knowledge through the relationship between dress, body and self.

Dress mirrors

'In the Domestic Mirror' begins with my intimate experience of getting dressed in front of a full-length mirror (which I document in photographs using my smartphone) in my home. My observations in the mirror focus on the communication between my dress, body and self, in terms of cutaneous and conscious pressures, sensations and feelings associated with pulling dress onto my body as a wearer in the world. I discuss these in terms of Merleau-Ponty's 'double sensations' (Merleau-Ponty 1962:106), Freud's concept of the 'double' (Freud 2003:142) as it relates to the 'uncanny' (Freud 2003:142) and Eco's 'epidermic self-awareness' (Eco 1976:194) to form the concept that it is through my 'aesthetic double'[28] in the mirror that I develop a self-awareness.

In 'In the Exhibition Mirror' I transition into the exhibition space where I examine 'dress' as a 'sample viewer' in front of the three different 'dress' mirrors with a now heightened awareness of '[…] social forces pressing upon the body […]' (Entwistle 2000:20). The first exhibit is the Mirror Room in *SHOWstudio Fashion Revolution exhibition* at Somerset House, 2009. I choose this exhibit to explore and document the transition from the domestic analysis of a *wearing self-awareness* towards a socially developed *wearing consciousness.*

[28] 'Aesthetic double' refers to my dressed reflection in the mirror, which I 'meet' in an 'anonymous relationship' (Goffman 1972) through which I develop a *wearing self-awareness*.

Theory to support how the wearer 'meets' their 'aesthetic double' in the exhibition mirror is drawn from French philosopher Jacques Lacan's concept of the 'mirror stage'. This is read within the 'paradigm of the properly imaginary definition, that is given of metonymy: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55). The second exhibit is 'Zemire' (1954) by Christian Dior in Room 40 of the V&A Museum. I view myself as juxtaposed with the dress exhibit, yet at the same time I remain outside the vitrine as a 'sample viewer'. My observation is an extended analysis of the connection between my fleshy body, my 'aesthetic double' (framed inside the vitrine) and the dress exhibit through which I experience a *wearing empathy*.

In 'In the exhibit mirror'**,** I refer to 'Evening Coat' (1937) by Elsa Schiaparelli in Room 40 of the V&A Museum. This was chosen because the dress exhibit is staged to face its own reflection in its own mirror. A further reason is that for the sample viewer this sets up an empathetic parallel between my experience of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror (meeting my 'aesthetic double') and the intersubjective 'meeting' I perceive between the 'Elsa Schiaparelli Evening Coat' and its reflection in the mirror. I discuss this in terms of Lacan's notion of 'lack' with reference to a mannequin's missing limbs and to the way the viewer compensates by consciously 'filling in the gaps'.

In 'In the dress mirror'*,* I argue that it is through the haptic aesthetics of dress that dress itself can act as a mirror for the viewer (who is also a wearer at the time of viewing) in the dress exhibition. Rather than observing this experience as a 'sample viewer', I chose to refer to a photograph I took of an anonymous viewer who was viewing the exhibit 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90' in *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* in Room 40 of the V&A Museum. This was chosen because I could analyse an observation I made in Room 40 at the V&A of a viewer making a reflexive gesture. She is pushing her stomach in with her fingertips to communicate an 'internal imitation […] mimicry' (Lacan 2006:43) of her 'imaginary identification' (Lacan 2006:43) with this dress exhibit to another viewer.

The reason I discuss these dress exhibits in this order is to analyse the transition a wearer makes from a domestic space, which involves a degree of self-awareness, to the social space and then into the museological space where the viewer experiences not just conscious pressures and self-conscious pressures, but also social and museological pressures. This is to the extent that when the 'sample viewer' views their 'aesthetic double' in the dress exhibit (via the mirror), the self-awareness which they experienced in the act of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror is now experienced with a self-conscious awareness of both social and museological pressures. The 'sample viewer' is now able to view their 'aesthetic double' not only in juxtaposition with the dress exhibit but also in similar terms.

In the domestic mirror

I will now describe my autoethnographic journey which took place on 25 March 2015. The aim of the first exercise was to observe the haptic aesthetic characteristics of dress (see Appendix for checklist) through the pressures I experienced (cutaneous and conscious) as I observed myself getting dressed in my signature outfit (an orange cardigan, yellow T-shirt, blue jeans and pale pink pumps, as described in my Introduction) in a domestic 'dress' mirror.

Dressing in my orange cardigan

I begin by removing my orange cardigan from a hanger with both hands and pulling it out of the wardrobe towards my body. As I do this, I recall my last wearing experience of this cardigan, which I will now describe in order to document the characteristics of being worn as they are embodied in my cardigan thus far. The first time I wore this cardigan was when I tried it on in a shop before buying it. This was in a local dress shop on Chamberlayne Road (Kensal Rise, London, NW10), in the summer sale of 2013, two months after the birth of my daughter. Its burnt orange colour, the thinness of the fabric, crochet detail and textured surface gave it a light, summery feminine feel, which fitted the haptic aesthetic I wanted to 'wear' at the time.

My first 'wearing experience' with the cardigan was on a family outing to London's Southbank on 30 May 2013. The highlight on this occasion was riding on a carousel horse with my arms wrapped around my son, who was almost two years old at the time. The cardigan, again, felt integral to this summery, fun family experience.

Figure 1. 'Wearing my cardigan on a carousel with my son', Southbank, London (30.5.13). Image © Lucy Gundry

Almost two years later, on 25 March 2015, I pull my orange cardigan out of my wardrobe to wear as part of my 'signature outfit'. In this moment I observe that I anticipate a new wearing experience for

the orange cardigan (for the purpose of conducting this autoethnographic research) at the same time as recollecting a previous wearing experience (as a light summery item for a family outing to the Southbank (London) on 30 May 2013, photographed in Figure 1). I anticipate that the two will be contextually contrasted in the pressures I experience. When I wore the cardigan on a carousel with my son, on the Southbank, the contextual pressures I experienced were an intertwining of the parental and the cutaneous. In order to keep my son physically safe as we swirled around I applied a cutaneous pressure to hold him tight. The contextual pressures I anticipate for my new wearing experience are social, museological and most significantly a pressure *not* to touch, in contrast to the parental pressure to hold my son tight.

I will now observe the pressures I experience as I pull my orange cardigan onto my body. In my bedroom, I grasp my orange cardigan between my fingertips and carry it towards the mirror. I lower it onto a piled-up heap on the wooden stool, which I have positioned in front of the mirror. I now view myself as I reach down to grasp hold of my cardigan (Figures 2, 3 and 4). I observe the cutaneous pressure I employ to grasp my cardigan with my fingertips. The feel is a pushing of fabric from the cardigan back into my skin in order to pick it up (see Figure 2). The fabric feels thin and cotton-like and slightly textured. In photograph 3 (Figure 3), I maintain my grip between my finger and thumb in order to pull the cardigan upwards. I feel the weight of it as it falls down in soft vertical folds like a body-less skin pulled downwards. It is not heavy, but not flimsy, either (Figure 4).

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Figure 2. ‘Reaching out to pick up my cardigan’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 3. ‘Picking up my cardigan’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 4. 'Holding up my cardigan', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

When I touch my cardigan to pick it up, I observe three different sorts of pressure: a cutaneous pressure (in order to 'pick it up'), a conscious pressure (the memory of parental responsibility) and a social pressure I anticipate relating to the social codes of touch. I observe that at this point there is a brief folding of cutaneous and conscious pressures between previous, present and subsequent acts of touch, which I suggest can be thought of in terms of a Deleuzian 'point of inflection'[29] (Deleuze 2010:21).

In the next three photographs (Figures 5, 6 and 7), I focus my analysis on the conscious associations which are formed between pulling dress onto my body and pulling dress onto my self. As I hold my right arm out I become aware that it is reflected as my left arm in the mirror. I hold my cardigan away from my body so I can see where to put my hand down the sleeve, then I push my hand down until it emerges beyond the cuff. The cardigan is tight enough on my arm for it to feel like a sheath on my skin. Sociologist Erving Goffman used the term 'sheath' to describe '[…] a territory of the self' […] and at a little remove, the clothes that cover the skin' (Goffman 1972:62) In this sense, through the act of putting my cardigan on I feel as if I have sheathed my arm in a territory of *myself*. Thus I have not only pulled on an item of dress but a fragment of myself tied up with the past, present and anticipated wearing pressures referred to above.

[29] 'Points of inflection make up a first kind of singularity in space, and constitute envelopes in accord with indivisible relations of distance.' (Deleuze 2010:21)

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Figures 5, 6 and 7. 'Pulling my cardigan onto my right arm', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

In Figure 8 I am beginning to repeat this process with my left arm.

Figure 8. 'Putting my cardigan on', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

The sensation of my left arm as it touches the inside of my cardigan is reflected as I see it sheathing my right arm too. My arms now both claim the territory inside the cardigan sleeves, connecting dress, body and self in the process. Further to this, I simultaneously observe my arms as sheathed in the mirror, which has the effect of duplicating the experience of 'sheathing'. Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'double sensations' is illuminating here:

> […] We have just seen that the two hands are never simultaneously in the relationship of touched and touching to each other. When I press my two hands together, it is not a matter of two sensations felt together as one

> perceives two objects placed side by side, but of an ambiguous set-up in which both hands can alternate the roles of 'touching' and being 'touched'. (Merleau-Ponty 1962:106)

I observe this to be a connection between the feel of touch from both the position of the fingertips as they touch my skin and the piece of skin that is touched by the fingertips at the same time. Merleau-Ponty describes this as the 'reciprocal insertion and intertwining of one in the other' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:138). However, when I experience these 'double sensations' in the mirror, I observe that I experience these as quadruple touch sensations. This is because when I see myself pulling on first one sleeve and then the other, I see one of my fleshy hands touching the other fleshy hand at the same time as I observe this act in the mirror. These two sets of touches are intertwined, and it is difficult to differentiate between 'fleshy' cutaneous touch and 'mirrored' cutaneous touch.

At this point, I observe a further intertwining between these two sets. This is in the form of an extended feeling experienced through seeing towards my reflection (from my fleshy body). This appears to have the capacity to touch not only my body (as I do), but my feelings in a way I am not able to. I observe this because although I understand my reflection to be animated, as I feel my fleshy body to be, I also understand my reflection to be an inanimate copy of my fleshy dressed body (and self). Therefore I do not expect my reflected body to have the capacity to touch my feelings in the way that I experienced it doing. Wilson's 'leaky margins' (Wilson 2014:8) provide a further fold-related metaphor here, because my experience is that my cutaneous feelings of wearing dress have folded into my conscious feelings. At the same time I suggest they have 'leaked' – not only from one to the other but from my fleshy body into my reflected body.

As I continue to get dressed in my cardigan, as well as having both arms in both sleeves I can now feel my cardigan covering my torso. I proceed by 'doing' a button up across the top of my chest. This creates two contrasting pressures, a tautness across my shoulders and a looseness around my waist. I am now fully 'sheathed' in my cardigan. I will reflect on the pressures I experienced during this act. These were a pulling, pushing, dangling, and a brushing on my wrists from the cuffs, a tautness across the shoulders and a looseness around the waist. At the same time I felt that being sheathed inside my cardigan felt secure and homely, that my cardigan (as an item of 'dress') now belonged to my 'body' and my 'self'.

At the same time as experiencing these haptic sensations in my fleshy body, I observed them aesthetically through my reflection in the mirror. Collectively these were experienced as a set of quadruple sensations, which was leaked through the interface of the mirror (Figure 9).

Figure 9. ‘Extending my arm’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

To analyse how these quadruple touch sensations leak between my fleshy body and my reflected body, I first consider the concept of the intercorporeal (Merleau-Ponty 1962), and second the concept of intersubjectivity (Lacan 2006:43).

Figure 10. ‘My right sleeve is on’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

In order to explore this I will refer to a particular point where I felt these intertwined pressures leaked, which I describe as the ‘elbow point’ (See Figure 10, in which I am bending my right cardigan sheathed arm to produce the elbow point.) My right arm is bent so that my hand can reach to pull my cardigan around my torso (without the help of my left hand, which is holding my phone for the purpose of taking the photograph). I observe how my I feel my cardigan begin to push into my skin, and how my skin feels as if it is pushing back into my cardigan. (This is the feeling I was conscious of when I first picked up my cardigan between my fingertips, noted earlier with reference to Figure 3.) This point, at which my elbow is most bent, is the point where I observe my cardigan pushing with the

most pressure into my skin. As soon as I unfold my arm the pressure releases, as it unfolds too (see Figure 11).

At the point of the strongest pressure in this act I suggest I experience Paterson's concept of a 'deep' touch. This is when the reciprocal pressures created an 'intercorporeal' experience. Merleau-Ponty describes this act as follows: '[…] each touching with one sole hand has its own visible, its tactile, each is bound to every other vision, to every other touch; it is bound in such a way as to make up with them the experience of one sole body before one sole world […]' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:142). I note here that describing the 'elbow point' as an intercorporeal experience posits 'dress' as a 'body'. Although this is theoretically debatable, I suggest that the touch sensations I observe when 'my cardigan begins to push into my skin and my skin begins to push back into my cardigan' felt as if dress itself was pushing back with the force of a body. For the purpose of this thesis, it is on this premise that I will apply Merleau-Ponty's concept of the intercorporeal.

Merleau-Ponty goes on to argue that the fleshy body is intertwined with the world, and that '[…] flesh is not matter, is not mind, is not substance' (Merleau-Ponty 1969:139), but is '[…] an "element" of Being'. If I take Merleau-Ponty's proposal that flesh is an element of 'Being', then the intercorporeal experience of my cardigan pushing back into my skin, further to being thought of as intercorporeal, can be thought of as intersubjective. I suggest this is because the concept that dress is 'pushing back' into my skin, exemplified in the 'elbow point', is indicative of skin (and at one remove, dress) as an intertwined conscious '[…] "element" of Being' (Merleau-Ponty 1969:139).

An example of this during the act of putting my cardigan on is when I push my hand down the clingy cardigan sleeve until it emerges beyond the end of my cuff (see Figure 11). During this act I experience a friction from the force of the sleeve clinging. It is a friction which creates the feeling of a conscious struggle to become 'sheathed' in the arms of my cardigan.

Figure 11. 'Stretching out my cardigan', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

This is a relationship that is as much about dress as it is about body and the self, as much intercorporeal as intersubjective. My reflection in the mirror can therefore be thought of as a simulacrum of 'dress, body and self' intertwined with my fleshy dress, body and self (yet at the same time separate). In order to explore this further I will now analyse my reflection in the mirror in terms of my 'aesthetic double'.

The 'aesthetic double'

Thus far in this chapter I have been referring to my 'reflection' in the mirror, but now I would like to consider my 'reflection' as my 'double'. This is in order to explore further how the cutaneous and conscious pressures I experience in quadruple have leaked not just between these two bodies (an intercorporeality between my fleshy dressed body and my aesthetic double) but also between a subjective and objective view of my dressed self through an intersubjectivity. Therefore I will now consider my reflection in terms of the 'motif of the double'.

In the first instance, the experience I have with my double in the mirror is not a morbid one, because I understand this to be my reflection. Therefore I am not referring to Otto Rank's '[…] work which explores the double in terms of mirror-images, shadows, guardian spirits, the doctrine of the soul and the fear of death' (Freud 2003:142). Instead, I refer to Freud's note that the 'double was originally an assurance against the extinction of the self […] [and] the "immortal" soul was the first double of the body [...] as a defence against annihilation […]' (Freud 2003:142). Although Freud acknowledges the double can also be associated with the 'uncanny harbinger of death' (Freud 2003:142), he goes on to say that it may later be associated with '[…] the evolution of the ego' (Freud 2003:142). I suggest this understanding of the 'double' is the closest to the one I observe in my double.

Freud further suggests that the double '[…] performs the function of self-observation and self-criticism, exercising a kind of psychical censorship, and so becomes what we know as the 'conscience' (Freud 2003:142). This is pertinent to my autoethnographic method, because it is through the observation of my double in the mirror that I am able to carry out self-observation pertaining to cutaneous and conscious touch (for the purpose of haptic aesthetic analysis of dress in this thesis). Yet it is also through observations of my double in the mirror that I experience a sense of the uncanny, because it is as if my 'aesthetic double' has become my 'conscience'.

If I think of my 'aesthetic double' as a reflection of my conscience: my double becomes a site for self-observation, at the same time as self-criticism, of my fleshy body which I view in the mirror. This suggests that my double as a reflection of my conscience may have an autonomy. It is this which affords my double a sense of the uncanny. I will consider this thought with reference to Freud's

theory of the uncanny. According to Freud, an experience of the uncanny is felt through 'the impressions, processes and situations that can arouse an especially strong and distinct sense of the uncanny in us […]' (Freud 2003:135). Freud does not specify which 'sense impressions' or 'processes' trigger a sense of the uncanny; therefore for the purposes of this thesis I focus on those which are haptic aesthetic.

Freud's theory of the uncanny is an aesthetic consideration less concerned with 'the beautiful, the grandiose and the attractive […]' (Freud 2003:123) but more with 'feelings of repulsion and distress' (Freud 2003:123). Although I do not view my 'aesthetic double' as beautiful, grandiose or attractive, equally I do not view my 'aesthetic double' with any repulsion or distress. However, I do acknowledge that if my 'aesthetic double' is able to reflect conscious feelings, then the effect is one that feels faintly uncanny. On the one hand a sense of the uncanny allows me to maintain an objective distance from my 'aesthetic double', but along with this is an exposure to characteristics of myself. This exposure could be distressing in terms of an aesthetic uncertainty (rather than one that is semantic or intellectual). This is an uncertainty as to whether my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror might or might not aesthetically expose what I considered hidden. Freud suggests this is the feeling akin to '[…] when we are faced with the reality of something that we have until now considered imaginary […]' (Freud 2003:150).

Freud continues his account of the uncanny with an analytical connection between the 'homely' and the 'unhomely'. He suggests this belongs to two very different sets of ideas, '[…] one relating to what is familiar and comfortable, the other to what is concealed and kept hidden.' (Freud 2003:132). A person or thing can appear 'homely' yet at the same time reveal secrets intended to be hidden from strangers' eyes, and it is this which creates a sense of the uncanny. I suggest that my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror is aesthetically 'homely' to me because I recognise it to be my dressed body. At the same time, when I 'meet' my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror, previously invisible aesthetic fragments of my dress, body and self may become visible to me as characteristics of being worn. I may then experience these characteristics of being worn as 'unhomely', or even 'uncanny'. I suggest the concept that my 'aesthetic double' might appear uncanny or unhomely when I (as a wearer) am faced with self-observations or criticisms which become visible through the haptic aesthetic of dress choices (manifest in worn characteristics) that I am not aware of until I view my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror, acting as I do. The importance of considering my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror as uncanny is to understand how 'unhomely' fragments form part of the way I identify with my 'aesthetic double' in the everyday act of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror. Further, that this is part of what makes up the experience of being a wearer in the world that is 'given of metonym: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55).

My observations are that aspects of the motif of the double and the uncanny have allowed an *aesthetic* uncertainty (as opposed to Freud's reference to an intellectual uncertainty) as to whether my 'aesthetic double' inhabits the space inside the mirror. When standing in front of the mirror I observe that I am able to extend my feelings of being a wearer towards my 'aesthetic double' who then appears to 'wear' them because my double is 'aesthetically' embodied as a simulacrum of my 'whole' inside the illusion of the mirror (Figure 11).

I will now refer to Lacan's theory of the 'mirror stage' by way of providing a framework for the analysis of the haptic aesthetics of dress in relation to the *wearing consciousness*. This is helpful not just in terms of an *aesthetic* uncertainty about whether I feel that my 'aesthetic double' alludes to any autonomy or not, but in terms of the concept that when I meet a 'whole' image of myself, I understand this to be a metaphor for the 'whole' as a sum of parts. This is a sum of haptic aesthetic parts which include the characteristics of being worn and unworn.

Lacan posits that when an infant first sees their body in the mirror (between 6 – 18 months) it is only then that the infant is able to comprehend their body as 'whole' (Lacan 2006:75-76). In conversation about Lacan's mirror stage Alison Bancroft considers that in adulthood, when faced with our reflection ('aesthetic double') in the mirror our 'infantile anxiety' (that it is only when the child views their double in the mirror that the infant feels 'whole') is not wholly overcome. Bancroft suggests that in adulthood there is still a reason for the alienation of the self (rather than an assurance against the extinction of the self) when an adult observes their reflection ('aesthetic double') in the mirror. Bancroft argues this is because '[…] the misrecognition and alienation engendered by it are essential as well as permanent […]' and '[…] the continuing tension between fragmentation and unity that are the inevitable consequence of an alienated self […]' (Bancroft 2012:24). However, I suggest (through analysis of dressing in the mirror) that as an adult I understand my reflection in the mirror to be my 'aesthetic double', an aesthetic 'whole' of parts which make up the experience of being a wearer in the world that is 'given of metonym: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55).

In summary, I understand that rather than an alienated self, rooted in childhood anxiety, or strong feelings of the uncanny in adulthood, I understand my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror to be one that is connected yet separate (rather than alienated) from my situated fleshy dress, body and self. I understand that it is through the concept of an aesthetic whole that a degree of 'self-observation' through haptic aesthetic observation can reflect and affect my feelings. However, I understand that my 'aesthetic double' is not capable of being a source of feeling, and that my 'aesthetic double' allows an intercorporeality and intersubjectivity, but that this is in terms of an anonymous relationship which aesthetically folds out from the fleshy wearer not from their 'aesthetic double'. This observation suggests that I experience my 'aesthetic double' as a simulacrum at the same time as my own wearing experiences confirm that my 'aesthetic double' is an embodied haptic aesthetic

embodiment of my conscious wearing experience which is 'given of metonym: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55).

Dress choices

I would like now to reflect on the dress choices I make with my cardigan in order to understand what characteristics of being unworn and worn become visible and what characteristics become invisible, to think about what then feels consciously homely or unhomely. I will focus on the final choice I made, which involved doing the buttons up on my cardigan.

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Figures 12 and 13. 'Doing the first button up', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 14. 'Doing the second button up', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

Of the seven buttons, I choose to button up just the top two. (Figures 12, 13 and 14). This is mainly to profile the top part of the cardigan, because it is differently textured from the rest, featuring vertical rows with a diamond-like pattern (Figure 15). It is also to 'secure' the cardigan.

Figure 15. ‘Detail of orange cardigan with two buttons done up’ (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

Prior to my final decision, I observe a conscious desire to play with the layering of textures and lines between the cardigan and my T-shirt underneath to explore a depth and variety of places where my finger and thumb touched dress. This is what I was thinking when I made my choices:

> I do not have to wear my cardigan buttoned up, but unbuttoned does not feel secure enough. Unbuttoned, the cardigan is easy to take off. A securing at the top (doing a button up) does two things: firstly it aligns the cardigan with the line of my shoulders and secondly it keeps the textured top part of the cardigan flat and visible. One or two top buttons done up is half-way between being unbuttoned and buttoned. ‘Buttoning up’ secures all the buttons down the front, creating a whole dressing of the torso, wholly visible from the front and back. I think I will just do one button up. (Observational notes, 25 March 2015)

This observation focuses on the points where the cardigan touches my torso and how the pattern and texture touch the shape of my body. Particular focus on ‘buttoning up’ means thinking about touching and manipulating all the buttons through a cutaneous to conscious thought, but I only touch two. I anticipate that being ‘unbuttoned does not feel secure enough’ whereas fully buttoned up feels ‘sheath’-like. Doing two buttons up felt like a balance between the two.

So, in the process of making dress choices, not only am I negotiating and renegotiating a connection between cutaneous and conscious touch, but also the homely and the unhomely through self – observation (and criticism) as I pull all these fragments onto my body as I get dressed in front of the mirror.

Dressing in my jeans

In this next section I develop the concept of a *wearing self-awareness* through observations of my 'aesthetic double' (in the role of autoethnographer) in the mirror. This is first through the double haptic sensations I experience (away from the mirror) in relation to dressing in my second item of dress: my jeans. Second, in quadruple (haptic) sensations (in front of the mirror) I experience in the final moments of pulling my jeans onto my fleshy body. This is to observe how an understanding of my reflection in the mirror is my 'aesthetic double', which is one based on viewing the aesthetics of my dressed self as much as experiencing the haptic feelings of dressing my self.

As I continue to get dressed in front of a domestic mirror in my bedroom, the second item of dress I pull onto my body is my jeans (see Figures 16 - 20). Through this act of dressing I will again focus on the sensations of quadruple touch, and further, how the metaphor of the fold is again helpful to explore how these as two sets of sensations leak together, not only on the skin, but deeper into the body, before examining where this might be or where these touch sensations might fold again to.

I acknowledge that in the photographs documenting the process of putting my cardigan on, I already have my jeans on. However, for the purpose of this research I decide to take my jeans off away from the mirror and then put them back on to the point where my skin is barely visible. This is in order to document putting my jeans on without making any observations in a state of undress. During the act of getting dressed there are moments when a wearer is in a state of undress (when wearing underwear) before and during getting dressed. Although these are moments I experience when I am getting dressed, for a number of reasons, which I will now outline, a state of undress and being undressed (naked) is not one I will focus on in this thesis.

For the purpose of this thesis, although in the act of getting dressed a wearer does experience being in a state of undress (and undressed), which I acknowledge contributes to the experience of being a wearer, I suggest the undressed body is not able to fully record the pressures, sensations or feelings of wearing dress on the skin from head to toe that relate to the feeling of being 'sheathed' (dressed). Therefore, being undressed does not offer such a rich haptic aesthetic reference for the sample viewer in the dress exhibition. Secondly being in 'a state of undress' suggests that underwear is visible, which although I acknowledge these items directly contribute to the haptic experience of wearing dress and the conscious feelings of being a wearer in the world, they are not typically worn as outerwear in social contexts.

For the purpose of this thesis, terms of the undressed body (wearer / viewer in the everyday), also defined as 'naked' or 'nude', raise issues of modesty, vulnerability, sexuality and morality. These are beyond the scope of this thesis. Further to this, as an undressed body, this is obviously not how the

viewer typically enters the exhibition as a wearer, nor it is typical to view an undressed (naked) mannequin in the dress exhibition (unless the exhibition and mannequins are in the process of being 'dressed' and therefore with the intention of not being on view). However, I do acknowledge that there are a number of exhibits I discuss in this thesis in which underwear is viewed. In this chapter an example of this is 'Zemire' (1954) by Christian Dior in Room 40 of the V&A Museum, in which one of the mannequins is 'topless', wearing an undergarment on her bottom half. Another is 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90 (Room 40, V&A), where the torso-only mannequin is dressed only in a pair of stays, traditionally worn by women in the eighteenth century as a corset. Although these exhibits only display underwear, their state of undress does not overtly raise issues of modesty, vulnerability, sexuality or morality. This is because these mannequins, although employed to represent a body (on which to dress these items), are limbless (and headless), and therefore in these examples these bodies are observed as being like a prop. (See Figures 24/25 and 28 respectively.) Therefore, viewing is understood as educational or historical (e.g. a corset or a crinoline) rather than 'sexual' in nature. In addition, both these items of underwear are historical, and therefore the contemporary viewer will not necessarily have had experience of wearing them on their own body.

In front of the domestic mirror, I now pull on my jeans. Deleuze describes 'clothing' as having to 'free its own folds from its usual subordination to the finite body it covers.' (Deleuze 2010:139). This suggests that a relationship between the fold and dress is a characteristic of being unworn (one embedded by the designer through the folding and stitching together of hems, seams and darts, etc.) and once worn it 'unfolds' to become a characteristic of being worn. I observe two ways in which my pair of jeans engages through *its own* folds (Deleuze 2010:139) as I draw my jeans from my wardrobe:

> When I open the trouser drawer in my wardrobe I see my jeans folded neatly on top of another pair of jeans. As I pull them out and move my hands to hold the waistband at the top, the legs flop down, unfolding on the way until they are hanging straight and flat in front of me. (Observational notes, 25 March 2015)

As I 'hold the waistband at the top' of my jeans 'the legs flop down'. I observe that this creates a connection between how my jeans are folded and therefore how they unfold as a result. This depends on the way they have been designed and then stored in my wardrobe (before I pull them onto my body). I recently bought these jeans. Their newness is evident in their intense indigo colour (they have not faded with washing) and their tautness. I remember being advised by the sales assistant in the shop where I bought the jeans to buy a smaller size because they are woven with elastic, which loosens with wear. I remembered feeling a squeeze when I tried them on. When they were on, however, they felt snug and the jeans had a slimming effect in the mirror. I wondered how quickly the snugness would ease as I walked to the stool in front of the mirror, how soon the jeans would begin to loosen and their shape unfold with wear. I am conscious of the pre-folded, unfolded

and refolded folds in these jeans, which I now fold again onto my body in the following set of photographs (Figures 16 – 20).

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Figures 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20. ‘Putting my jeans on’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

These are my observations of how the fold is freed from itself as my jeans unfold through their own gravitational pull to dress the 'finite' skin of my legs.

> Sitting on the stool in front of the mirror, I am able to observe my right hand pulling one jean leg up, then the other as I lift each leg to facilitate the pulling. At first I glimpse the end of my jeans dangling beyond each foot, then slowly as each foot moves down the jean legs, the jeans move up my legs until each foot comes out the end and each jean leg is and ruched up above my ankle until I stand and pull my jeans up. [The first three photographs above illustrate this – see figures 16 to 19]. Once I stand up, I inch the jeans higher, holding and pulling on the waistband with both hands until the jeans are over my hips. I feel the pull of my dangling jeans as heavier and stiffer than the arms of my cardigan, and the sheath-like feeling is much stronger. (Observational notes. 25 March 2015)

When I have completed the task and my jeans button is done up, I become aware of the different touch pressures I applied in order to fold the jeans onto my body. These were pulling, gripping and a pressing friction between fabric and skin in this process of folding, unfolding and refolding. I observe that I feel consciously more comfortable when I am fully dressed. I am now fully 'sheathed' in my dress choices, which feel 'homely' to me. My dress has created an interface that now affords me a degree of both intercorporeal and intersubjective self-awareness observed through my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror (in the terms I establish with my orange cardigan). This ability to both view and feel dress on my body is one which is 'homely' to me. It is this notion which I fold into my developing self-awareness.

Serres' 'black box(es)'

In this next section, I explore the notion that a degree of self-awareness is folded not just on, but in and through the skin during the act of getting dressed. I will refer to Umberto Eco's concept of an 'epidermic self-awareness' (Eco 1976:194), Merleau-Ponty's concept of a 'seer' in the body and Serres' concept of 'black box(es)' in order to explore how and where in the body (if at all) a *wearing self-awareness* might be made sense of as a *conscious* 'vision' (Merleau-Ponty). In the first instance this is with reference to theory separate from my observations in the mirror, which I will then resume (in the mirror) in light of theoretical analysis.

In the first instance the skin is a site where Paterson and Serres suggest that haptic sensations of wearing dress can be thought of as being located. This is also where Eco suggests a self-awareness can be thought of as being located. However, I suggest Michel Serres' concept of black box(es) is illuminating here. In Serres' *The five senses* he suggests that 'Sensation is held in a black box, and functions like one'. (Serres 1985:145). If sensation is held in a black box, then the concept of a

wearing self-awareness (developed through observations of the cutaneous and conscious sensations when dressing in the mirror, as discussed in the previous section) can also be thought of as being held in a black box.

Serres explains that 'Our skin receives by constructing these undefined black boxes' (Serres 2008:141). In fact, Serres goes on to suggest there are multiple undefined black boxes received by the skin. I understand that what the skin receives are sensations felt through mechanoreceptors (Paterson 2007: ix) in the skin, which are physiological. However, without further reference to the biological function of skin (which is beyond the scope of this thesis), I argue that in the process of making aesthetic dress choices (e.g., choosing how to button up my cardigan) I do this with an awareness of the conscious pressures I pull onto my body which are received through feeling at the same time as those received through mechanoreceptors. These feelings are therefore intertwined from the moment dress touches skin and skin touches dress. I will now explore this with reference to both theory and my experience of dressing in front of the mirror.

In his 1976 essay 'Lumbar thought', Eco suggests that his jeans 'made their presence felt' and cites an '[…]'epidermic self-awareness' (Eco 1976:194) as the site of bodily consciousness for this:

> The jeans didn't pinch, but they made their presence felt. […] I sensed a kind of sheath around the lower half of my body. Even if I had wished, I couldn't turn or wriggle my belly *inside* my pants; if anything, I had to turn it or wriggle it *together with* my pants. Which subdivides so to speak one's body into two independent zones, one free of clothing above the belt, and the other organically identified with the clothing, from immediately below the belt to the anklebones. (Eco 1976:194)

In order to relate feelings of self-awareness to the experience of putting my jeans on (Figures 16 -20) which involved doing the button up, I observed the following touch sensations through my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror*:*

> Doing up the button involved pulling the two sides of the waistband together so they overlap with the button underneath the buttonhole; then, whilst holding this in place with finger and thumb, I push the button through the buttonhole. I experience a brushing of my skin from my fingertips or the back of the button. At times I am touching the metal button and at other times the textile of the buttonhole. This becomes a blur of pulling and pushing, of touching and being touched, as dress touches skin and skin touches dress until the button is done up and I feel secure. (Observational notes, 25 March 2015)

In the act of doing up the button on my jeans in front of the mirror. I observed feelings which were not just an identification of the sensations (felt on, in and through my skin), but a growing awareness of the effect of my feelings on my relationship between dress, body and self. Here I embrace Eco's suggestion that his epidermic self-awareness effected a change in his demeanour:

> Not only did the garment impose a demeanour on me; by focusing my attention on demeanour, it obliged me to live towards the exterior world. It reduced in other words the exercise of my interior-ness. (Eco 1976:193)

This suggests, first, that an epidermic self-awareness retains a conscious understanding of how dress touches the skin, and second, that this consciously recorded touch can fold out of the body via the cutaneous layer. In this quote, Eco refers to an endogenous folding, from 'my interior–ness' 'to live towards the exterior world' (Eco 1976:193). Equally he reflects on the effect of this as one which 'reduced […] the exercise of my interior-ness' (Eco 1976:193), which implies an exogenous folding inwards, affecting his feelings at the same time. Dress altered not only his demeanour but also the direction of his feelings from inside to outside, and vice versa.

The feelings I experience when 'doing the button up' are also 'obliging me to live towards the exterior world' (Eco 1976:193), to observe a self-conscious awareness of interior feelings of security, buttons and touch that I play with through my dress choices. This reveals a connection between 'buttoning up myself' and 'buttoning up my jeans'. The button has now become a metaphor for a conscious connection between dress, body and self.

In summary, my cardigan is secured and partially visible from the front, but fully visible from the back. It touches my shoulders, and my shoulders touch the cardigan, stretching the textured detail across my torso to create together with my snug buttoned-up jeans and pale yellow T-shirt underneath, a haptic aesthetic which I feel comfortable with. I have dressed myself in anticipation of my new wearing experience, which is one of being a viewer in the context of the dress exhibition where my feelings fold out through seeing towards my 'aesthetic double' in the exhibition, exhibit or dress mirror.

Figure 21. 'I am dressed', Kensal Rise (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry

'Now I am dressed'

Until now, I have considered the intertwined cutaneous and conscious touch to be one that folds exogenously from the external pressure of cutaneous touch pushing on, in and through the immediate surface of the dress towards a conscious depth. This is where touch sensations (the haptic) are translated into feelings through the concept of the black box, where, according to Paterson, in the process of 'Folding in the cutaneous touch of the surface into the more visceral tactile-kinaesthetic sense of the muscles and flesh, we fold again.' (Paterson 2007:117).

As discussed earlier, if the *wearing self-awareness* is conceptually located in undefined black boxes (wherever that might be), then I suggest this can be thought of as a moveable concept. One that is free to fold exogenously and endogenously between the wearer's interior and exterior world. Holding on to this thought, I consider Serres' suggestion that sensations in the black box have the capacity to change, because 'through sensation the hard becomes soft' (Serres 2008:145). This opens up a theory in which sensations are translated into conscious feelings of awareness.

Merleau-Ponty suggests that the body (not specifically the skin) has 'vision' (cited earlier). 'Vision' suggests that the body has the ability to view. Merleau-Ponty goes on to ask: 'Where in the body are we to put the seer, since evidently there is in the body only "shadows stuffed with organs" that is more of the visible?' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:138). Whether these undefined black boxes can be thought of as situated within the '[…] the flat uneven surface of the skin […]' (Serres 2008:141), in terms of either the epidermis or within the skin of dress itself, or whether these 'undefined' black boxes can be thought of as situated in Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'vision', which Merleau-Ponty suggests '[…] is the bond between the flesh and the idea, between the visible and the interior

armature which it manifests and which it conceals […] [in the] secrecy wherein they lie' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:149). If these undefined black boxes are best thought of as located within a concept (rather than the body), then identifying a physical location is not pertinent. Further, what remains important to this thesis is understanding *how* the experience of being a wearer in the world is worn out through the haptic aesthetics of dress. Therefore, beyond the concept of a 'place' where a *wearing self-awareness* can be thought of as being located it is not necessary to know *where* 'we fold again' (Paterson 2007:117), simply that the haptic aesthetics of dress as worn in and out of the body through not just cutaneous but conscious awareness means that a wearer observes as much as feels through their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror.

In summary, I define the experience of wearing dress as one which can be thought of as a conscious experience embodied neither in the skin of my body nor my dress, nor just in the dress choices made by the wearer, but in an intertwining through wearing experiences between dress, body and self, which can be aligned with Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'vision'. This establishes the notion that not only does my relationship between dress, body and self form endogenously from external pressures; this relationship folds exogenously out into the world, complicated further by the quadrupling of this experience when I view myself getting dressed in the mirror. That '[…] it is as though the secrecy wherein they lie and whence the literary expression draws them were their proper mode of existence.' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:149). This is a concept I will develop in Chapter Four, but for now I suggest that where 'we fold again' is defined by each conscious experience of wearing dress which is observed as much through viewing as wearing.

Now I am dressed I will explore conscious feelings of being dressed through the notion that the haptic aesthetics of my dress not only affect my demeanour but also how my 'aesthetic double' might further reflect a self-consciousness back to me as I cross the threshold and I continue my autoethnographic research in the role of 'sample viewer' in the dress exhibition.

In the exhibition mirror

In the context of the dress exhibition I will now situate myself in the role of 'sample viewer'. This is in order to explore how my 'aesthetic double' is contextualised, first within social and museological behaviour, and second when juxtaposed with dress exhibits. As an autoethnographer I bring the conscious experience of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror in the form of a *wearing self-awareness* towards the concept of a self-consciousness into my next viewing experiences.

The first exhibit I analyse is the 'Mirror Room' at *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*. I analyse this dress exhibit through first-hand experience, which I re-visit through exhibition documentation and wearing memories. The 'Mirror Room' was re-installed in the entrance to the *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*

exhibition held in Somerset House from 17 September – 23 December 2009. The curators of the show,, Clare Catterall, Nick Knight and Penny Martin, revisited the idea of a mirror room by re-creating an installation the original '[…] entrance lobby from SHOWstudio.com's first home in London's Clerkenwell, which afforded anyone visiting the studio a surprising and often uncomfortable introduction.' (SHOWstudio 2009:10).

> '[…] The *Mirror Room* invites all who walk through it to survey themselves as an infinite image. […] Although we might think we know our reflection, we usually only view it through a single 'frame'. […] In forcing us to acknowledge our own physicality, dress and image, the room sets us within the reflective surfaces of the fashion world.' (SHOWstudio 2009:10)

Similarly, the curators wanted the viewer to reflect on 'a surprising and often uncomfortable introduction' (SHOWstudio 2009:10) to the concept of being scrutinsed as they enter the dress exhibition at Somerset House (see figure 22).

Figure 22. Entrance to the 'Mirror Room' *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*, 2009. Image © Nick Knight / SHOWstudio.com

In this exhibit, the viewer becomes the subject of their own self-observation and critical analysis when they view their 'aesthetic double' as the dress exhibit. For the purpose of this thesis, I will discuss this with further reference to Lacan's concept of the mirror stage. This is in order to understand how my conscious experiences of being a wearer in the world develop towards a self-consciousness as I now view myself as the dress exhibit in this context.

Observations recalled from the experience of being a 'sample viewer' (Figure 23 shows an installation view featuring an anonymous viewer) in the 'Mirror Room' are noted here:

> I notice that I cannot gauge where my 'aesthetic double' is situated. This is because my 'aesthetic double' is not just fragmented but distorted. My orange cardigan becomes the identifiable fragment of my dressed body in a space that feels as if it wants to play with me. I realise I have not only become the object of my own gaze but I am now subject to the pressures imposed by the social gaze. (Observations Lucy Gundry)

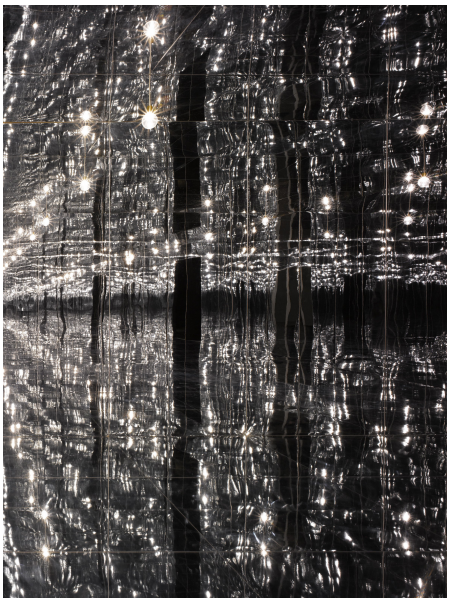


Figure 23. 'In the Mirror Room' *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*, Somerset House, London, 2009. Image © Nick Knight / SHOWstudio.com

Lacan suggests that the first fractal readings we have of ourselves are formed as a young infant (6-18 months old) in front of the mirror. At this stage in an infant's development, the perception of his image in the mirror '[…] is given to him only as a gestalt, that is, in an exteriority in which [….] it appears to him […] in opposition to the turbulent movements with which the subject feels he animates it.' (Lacan 2006:76). By this I understand that the infant sees his image in the mirror as 'whole', yet this exists only as an external image felt in contrast to the infant's 'drama' (Lacan) of 'internal pressure' [which] […] pushes precipitously from insufficiency to anticipation […] that proceed from a fragmented image of the body […]' (Lacan 2006:78). I further understand that Lacan is suggesting that in the mirror stage the infant's 'jubilant assumption' that their 'specular image' is gestalt is further contrasted by the infant's restricted feelings of being '[…] still trapped in his motor impotence and nursling dependence […]' (Lacan 2006:76) which add to the infant's 'drama' of feeling their body is fragmented. Lacan refers to three stages of conscious development within the infantile self, which he groups into the symbolic, the imaginary and the real. For the purpose of this thesis I will

focus on the 'imaginary' because is this linked not only to the Lacanian concept of 'imaginary identification' (Lacan 2006:43) but also to the notion that 'it is through an internal imitation of his opponent's attitudes and mimicry that he claims to arrive at the proper assessment of his object' (Lacan 2006:43). This is a helpful in thinking about the concept of a *wearing empathy* which results from an extension of the feeling I experience when I view my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror.

I will now consider the relationship a wearer has with their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror as one which shifts from the mirror stage in infancy to one which, importantly, develops a social awareness in adulthood through a 'dialect that will henceforth link the I to socially elaborated situations […]' (Lacan 2006:99). Firstly, I reflect on the domestic mirror as a place where I am able to negotiate and renegotiate with my dress, body and self through juxtaposing dress choices on my body. However, I propose that this is also a place where negotiation and renegotiation with my dress, body and self conceals, reveals and plays with aesthetic fragments (dress choices) with which I have identified. This process is one that is adjusted through self-observation of my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror when it becomes subject to the social gaze felt through the pressures of aesthetic scrutiny. Through my experience of the 'Mirror Room' I am now able to view my 'aesthetic double' in this further 'dress mirror' in respect of my own socially (and museologically) adjusted aesthetic pressures.

Bancroft posits that despite a shift into adulthood, a wholeness in oneself can still only be grasped when a wearer sees their reflection in the mirror. She further suggests this puts the self 'at risk', which she describes as a mis/identification. Bancroft cites an alienated subjectivity as the cause: '[…] the mirror is the place where the self is constantly negotiated and renegotiated, in an interminable process of mis/identification that is the certain consequence of an alienated subjectivity.' (Bancroft 2012:25)

I take forward the concept that with development into adulthood, the concept of the 'whole', shifts through the experience of getting dressed. This is through self-observation, which becomes a socially adjusted haptic aesthetic scrutiny through which the wearer mediates when getting dressed in order to connect their aesthetic whole in the mirror with their internal feelings of a fragmented dress, body and self. Therefore, in contrast with Bancroft's proposition that in adulthood, looking in the mirror at one's reflection results in the 'certain consequence of an alienated subjectivity' (Bancroft 2012:25), I propose that as an adult I am conscious that I exist as an aesthetic 'whole' in the mirror. That I am conscious this 'whole' is in fact my 'aesthetic double' (one part) which is separate from my fleshy 'whole' (another part) and equally from my self as a 'whole' (a third part) and therefore I understand my 'whole' in the exhibition mirror to be a sum of 'images of the fragmented body' (Lacan 2006:55). Further, that together these parts or fragments are intertwined and make up the relationship between dress, body and self which, as I have established, is 'given of metonym: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55) which I will refer to as the *wearing consciousness*.

Through my experience in the 'Mirror Room' I have learnt how the haptic aesthetic I created when dressing in front of a domestic mirror influenced the way I viewed my 'aesthetic double' in this exhibition mirror. I understand that my 'aesthetic double', which appears distorted and disrupted, represents my *wearing consciousness*, and that it is not one that is subject to alienation. Rather, my 'aesthetic double' is a juxtaposition of 'unhomely' and 'homely' feelings, which I identify with as a collection of disrupted visible, invisible and even imagined fragments of my *wearing consciousness*. This is an important experience because this has allowed conscious self-observation and criticism in a context that is removed not only from the everyday but also from the domestic. It has allowed the anonymous relationship between my fleshy body and my 'aesthetic double' through an empathetic extension of my *wearing consciousness* to continue into viewing a dress exhibit.

At the end of my experience in the 'Mirror Room' I begin to identify with the idea that my 'aesthetic double' is separated from my fleshy body. At the same time, I observe that the two belong to each other and are not only connected, but also communicate intersubjectively via the mirror. This is important to share, because when I view a dress exhibit (rather than my 'aesthetic double' in the exhibition mirror) I experience this parallel observation. It is this understanding that allows an extension of feeling towards the dress exhibit. Particularly in relation to my embodied methodology in this chapter, my '[…] inherently reflexive […]' (Pink 2009:100) approach further *requires* an extension of my feeling into viewing. Because of this approach I am able to explore empathetic feelings towards my 'aesthetic double' in a dress exhibit.

Wearing empathy

I will now discuss the second exhibit I encounter, 'Zemire' (Figure 24), an evening ensemble consisting of a jacket, skirt, bodice and under-petticoat designed by Christian Dior and part of his Autumn/Winter 1954 collection, featured in a vitrine with the title 'The Fashion System 1947 -1960', situated in Room 40 of the Fashion Galleries at the V&A Museum. I chose 'Zemire' because the gold oval mirror situated in the centre of the exhibit seems to invite the viewer in but at the same time reminds the viewer they are physically situated outside the vitrine. This exhibit further enables an analysis of my 'aesthetic double' not only as one which not only reflects my fleshy body but also as one which has leaked into an exhibit and can also, therefore, reflect the dress exhibit inside this vitrine too. This is an important reflexive observation for the haptic aesthetic analysis of dress in the exhibition.

Figure 24. ‘Zemire’ by Christian Dior (1954) Room 40, V&A. (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In order to view this exhibit, I position myself so that I appear inside the gold-framed mirror. I can now view my ‘aesthetic double’ positioned in between one dressed and one semi-dressed mannequin. One of these exhibits underwear and the other outerwear, and between them they make up ‘Zemire’. I observe that the tone of my orange cardigan is similar to that of the Dior dresses, and my yellow T-shirt (which I wear underneath my orange cardigan) is as pale as the bodice on the right-hand mannequin. As I explained earlier, I do not intend to discuss underwear individually beyond noting that the mannequins are wearing two parts of one outfit to make a whole outfit. Therefore this is how I will address them.

In order to further understand the role of empathy when viewing ‘Zemire’ I will refer to Lacan’s ‘imaginary definition that is given of the metonymy: the part for the whole’ (Lacan 2006:55). Lacan suggests that within the ‘images of the fragmented body’ (Lacan 1999:55) (which I first explored in relation to my experience in the ‘Mirror Room’ and which I now experience through the juxtaposition between myself and ‘Zemire’) there is ‘the analytic experience of fantasy’. The image and the imaginary (including fantasy) together are ‘the part for the whole’ of the body experienced by the infant in the mirror stage. The feeling of being a fragmented body is one that represents vulnerability and a lack of feeling whole (represented by the ‘aesthetic double’ in the mirror).

The reason I explain this here is that I understand the fragmented body to be one which can to some extent be consciously reconciled in front of the exhibition mirror (as I experienced in the SHOWStudio: *Fashion Revolution* exhibition’s ‘Mirror Room’) as an adult. I would now like to apply this to the more complex analysis of how the wearer views their ‘aesthetic double’ in the exhibition

mirror and reconciles their fragmented body with the dress exhibit through the concept of a *wearing empathy*.

Lacan associates the fragmented body with a 'lack', which he suggests arises through the awareness that 'I' am 'not-whole', as the body appears to be in the mirror. This sets up an imbalance between 'I' and the body. When I empathetically engage with dress in the exhibit, I experience an imaginative identification not just with the concept of a fragmented body but also with dress and self, because these collectively make up the aspects of a dress, body and self (wearer) in the dress exhibit I observe.

In the 'Zemire' exhibit, this collection of fragments consisted of one semi-dressed mannequin, a fully dressed mannequin and my 'aesthetic double'. The mannequin on the right 'lacks' a part of her dress (she is wearing a corset and petticoat, but no jacket or over skirt), a head and arms. The mannequin on the left (in Figure 25) 'lacks' a head. My 'aesthetic double' lacks legs and physicality.

Lacan's description of a body that lacks limbs resonates with the typical appearance of mannequins in a dress exhibit (rather than the viewer themselves), as he suggests that a 'lack' 'appears in the form of disconnected limbs or organs exoscopically represented, growing wings and taking up arms […]' (Lacan 1999:78) If, according to Lacan, it is through the imagination (in dreams) that disconnected limbs grow wings, then I argue that a viewer is similarly capable of imagining this. However, for the purposes of this thesis I am more interested in the viewer's ability to empathetically imagine that they can extend their *wearing consciousness* towards an exhibit rather than to imagine a fantasy with it, but the two are connected. These mannequins are in some way a limbless simulacrum of an 'aesthetic double' (which is enhanced by the juxtaposition of my aesthetic double in the gold-framed mirror) belonging to an invisible wearer.

I suggest that the viewer is capable of imagining that an invisible wearer and (dressed) invisible limbs are present. I will attempt to analyse this through Lacan's assertion that an 'imaginary identification' is '[…] immediately indicated by the fact that it is through an internal imitation of his opponent's attitudes and mimicry that he claims to arrive at the proper assessment of his object' (Lacan 1999:43). Here, Lacan fosters the idea that in order to imaginatively identify with an 'object' (Lacan's reference to an 'object' is one that I relate to a dress exhibit) the viewer constructs an 'internal imitation' and 'mimicry' of what the viewer imagines 'his opponent's attitudes' (those of the dress exhibit) to be.

As an autoethnographic exercise, I consciously empathised with what it might feel like to wear 'Zemire', both cutaneously and consciously. I further imagined the following sensations:

> The feel of a light pressure across the bust from the bodice, coupled with a tighter pressure on the torso (in particular around my waist). This is contrasted by the pressure-less volume

> created by the skirt which I imagine billowing out around my bottom half through the structure the crinoline but not touching my legs. (Observations, Lucy Gundry)

Through this attention to my haptic aesthetic sensations, I was able to empathise with the internal imitation of pressure around *my* waist and a billowing around *my* legs. I began to imagine what it might feel like to consciously wear 'Zemire'. I empathised with how I might hold myself inside the structure of a bodice and the demeanour I might adopt (which could be a posture with a straighter back and a higher head than mine). This experience was a *wearing empathy*.

I suggest it is through Goffman's concept of 'anonymous relations' (where I extend empathetic feelings with the knowledge that these will not be reciprocated by the mannequin) that I am able to imaginatively identify with 'Zemire'. I found that I do this to the point at which I imagine the separately exhibited items of underwear and outerwear to be collectively worn 'as one' on a wearer (e.g. a wearer in 1954, when the outfit was designed). Therefore I suggest the imaginative identification I experienced was *felt* to be reciprocated through 'internal imitation' or 'mimicry'. I suggest the 'opponent's attitudes' Lacan refers to can be thought of as those embodied in the characteristics of being worn (exemplified by my description of the 'elbow point' earlier in this chapter) which consciously translate or reflect the awareness that 'I' is not 'whole', as the body appears to be in the mirror. Thus, through a *wearing empathy* the sample viewer is able to empathise with missing limbs in the same way that the wearer is able to empathise with invisible (missing) parts of their *wearing consciousness* when subject to viewing 'unhomely' characteristics presented by their 'aesthetic double', and this is because the viewer is able to empathetically extend their wearing experiences into the 'paradigm of the properly imaginary definition, that is given of metonymy: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55). This can extend not just between my fleshy body and my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror, but via my 'aesthetic double' to dress exhibits in the vitrine.

Figure 25. 'Zemire', Christian Dior (1954), Room 40, V&A (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

From my experience of viewing 'Zemire' I have learnt that I when I view myself in an exhibition mirror which invites me into the vitrine, I am not only able to 'imaginatively identify' with dress, but also experience a *wearing empathy* with a dress exhibit I can view, but not touch. This allows me to imagine not who might have worn this dress, but *how* it might have felt to wear this dress. I do this by connecting with my own experiences of getting dressed and observing my 'aesthetic double' in a domestic mirror. Further to this, through an internal imitation I can identify with the concept of an 'opponent's attitudes' (Lacan 1999:43) in relation to those I experienced through negotiating and renegotiating when I view my 'aesthetic double' with social awareness as a gendered adult in the mirror. It is an understanding of this *wearing empathy* that I bring as a sample viewer to the analysis of my next exhibit, the 'dress exhibit mirror'.

The 'dress exhibit mirror'

In this penultimate section, I shift my focus from an analysis of my 'aesthetic double' in the exhibition mirror (which invites the viewer in) to observe how the dress exhibit itself is reflected in a mirror. The dress exhibit mirror is one that is positioned to face the dress exhibit.

To sum up thus far, in the context of a domestic mirror I explored the construction of a *wearing self-awareness* as a wearer pulls dress, with conscious pressures, onto their body. These conscious pressures are reflected when the wearer views their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror during the act of getting dressed. When the wearer transitions into the dress exhibition, as the 'sample viewer', and observes their 'aesthetic double' in the 'exhibition mirror' (a mirror which frames the viewer as a dress exhibit inside the vitrine) a socially developed awareness of their conscious feelings of being a wearer emerge. Further, this allows the sample viewer to extend their feelings towards the dress exhibit in the form of a *wearing empathy* not just towards their 'aesthetic double' as a dress exhibit but simultaneously towards other dress exhibits within the vitrine.

In this section on the dress exhibit mirror I explore a further extension of a *wearing empathy* from the 'sample viewer' towards the dress exhibit itself as a result of the reflection in this mirror of the dress exhibit. This creates a parallel between my fleshy body and my 'aesthetic double', and the relationship I now focus on between the dress exhibit and its dressed reflection. At this point I will not refer to the mannequin's reflection as an 'aesthetic double', because unless I argue that the mannequin itself is a conscious wearer it is not possible for the mannequin to have a 'double' in the capacity I have discussed in this research thus far.

The example chosen for the analysis of the dress exhibit mirror is Elsa Schiaparelli's 'Evening Coat' (1937) in Room 40 of the Fashion Galleries of the V&A Museum, (Figure 26) for the reason that this

dress is staged on a mannequin which is positioned to face a full-length mirror in which it can 'view' (so to speak) its dressed reflection.

In the role of 'sample viewer' I now stand in a specific spot in front of this exhibit from which I am able to view both the back and the front of the dress at the same time. I am also able to view my 'aesthetic double' in a background mirror, which places me in between Elsa Schiaparelli's 'Evening Coat' and its reflection. The shift from viewing my 'aesthetic double' in the foreground of an exhibit to viewing my 'aesthetic double' in the background of an exhibit is important to observe as I extend a *wearing empathy* towards the dress exhibit. Further, the dress exhibit mirror allows me as a viewer to extend my *wearing empathy* through understanding the relationship I have with my fleshy body and my 'aesthetic double' (as I experienced in the domestic mirror) as parallel to the one I imagine between the evening coat on the right and its reflection in the mirror on the left.

Figure 26. Elsa Schiaparelli, 'Evening Coat' (1937) Room 40, V&A (25.3.15) Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Deleuze's concept of the fold is further illuminating here in analysing the impact of this parallel experience. This is because he suggests an organism (which, for the purpose of this research, I will suggest can be thought of as a 'wearer') '[…] is defined by endogenous folds' (Deleuze 2010: 7-8). In the context of this research I suggest that 'endogenous folds' can be thought of as those which fold in towards the body from external pressures (socially developed conscious pressures associated with style, gender, culture and age) to (cutaneously and consciously) press on and into the body via the skin of dress to be worn into haptic aesthetic characteristics of dress in the process. The notion that the wearer is defined by these endogenous folds informs both dress choices and self-observations when dressing in the mirror (as discussed in relation to the domestic mirror dressing experience described above). This is because these are also ones a wearer might observe on another wearer,

contributing to their 'definition' of them, which is helpful for an analysis of dress exhibits for the purpose of this research. I suggest these 'defining' characteristics can be thought of as both visible and invisible: visible as the characteristics of being unworn and worn in dress – the characteristics of being worn are indicative of the indexical traces of touch embedded and embodied in the creases and folds of dress worn in by hands and worn out by the body when wearing dress. This is further indicative of invisible characteristics, which collectively make up the haptic aesthetics of dress. Deleuze goes on to suggest that an organism can be 'called to unfold its own parts':

> '[…] when an organism is called to unfold its own parts, its animal or sensitive soul is opened onto an entire theatre in which it perceives or feels according to its unity independently of its organism, yet inseparable from it.' (Deleuze 2010:12)

First, I would like to propose that it is the 'viewer' who in this instance is in a position to 'call' dress 'to unfold its own parts' (Deleuze 2010:12) when viewing dress in an exhibition context. Second, I would like to align Deleuze's reference to the 'organism' with the 'wearer', and thereby the 'animal or sensitive soul' with the *wearing consciousness*. The *wearing consciousness* is felt not just when pulling dress onto the body but also when wearing dress, as dress pushes and folds into the body through social pressures. The notion that a viewer can 'call' an unfolding of parts from a dress exhibit is connected to an imaginative identification with dress that enables the viewer to call for the unfolding of a part which belongs to their own *wearing consciousness*. In Eco's words, this is to enable the wearer 'to live towards the exterior world' (Eco 1976:193), which links the viewer and wearer as a dual vision held in the *wearing consciousness*. I believe this to be understood between wearers in the everyday. But in the context of this research, where the relationships are autonomous, this exchange remains a projection or an extension of the viewer's *wearing consciousness* in a *wearing empathy* towards either their 'aesthetic double' or the dress exhibit or both. In relation to the Elsa Schiaparelli Evening Coat, as the sample viewer I experience an autonomous relationship with and between both.

When I experience a *wearing empathy* with the Evening Coat it is by 'calling' forth an unfolding of my own *wearing consciousness*. Deleuze makes reference to an 'entire theatre', which I suggest is a way of contextualising 'the exterior world' into which the *wearing consciousness* is called to unfold by way of imaginative identification with a dress exhibit. These 'theatres' can be different places in the everyday for the wearer. Equally, these can be conscious spaces (including those that are imagined). Schiaparelli designed this evening coat in collaboration with the French artist, poet and filmmaker Jean Cocteau (1889-1963). The contextual information given for the Elsa Schiaparelli Evening Coat is as follows:

> Cocteau produced two drawings for which were translated into designs for a jacket and this evening coat for the Autumn 1937 collection […] Schiaparelli translated Cocteau's drawings

> into 'The strong linear design on this coat can be read as two profiles facing each other, and in the negative space, a vase of roses standing on a fluted column. (V&A 2017)

From the position of 'sample viewer' via my 'aesthetic double' in the dress exhibit mirror I am able to imagine how this coat would have been worn at a social evening event by a tall, elegant female wearer who is quietly contemplating her own *wearing consciousness* as she views how she in turn defines herself in this dress mirror. I imagine how this wearer would have 'called' her own *wearing consciousness* to unfold into the theatre of social pressures which she (the opponent I have identified in conscious terms) 'perceives or feels'. This dress exhibit has allowed me to extend my own *wearing consciousness* in empathy not just with myself and my 'aesthetic double' but towards theatres I imagine which are beyond my everyday experience. I have been able to empathise with wearing a dress I cannot touch, in a context I cannot experience, through an identity I have imagined. The dress exhibit mirror has allowed a direct parallel, through my 'aesthetic double', to access, extend, empathise and imagine what it would consciously feel like to wear Elsa Schiaparelli's Evening Coat through my own *wearing consciousness*.

With this in mind, I observe that I am also partly able to identify with the Evening Coat by drawing from tacit 'wearing experiences' archived in the memory of my *wearing consciousness*. In particular, I am able to reference conscious thought processes leading to dress choices, which both define and are defined by the theatre in which I experience them. These conscious thoughts, which are transferable and translatable, are revisited through a *wearing empathy*.

For example, when I got dressed in my orange cardigan in front of the domestic mirror, I experienced a dovetailing from the 'previous wearing experience' (holding my infant son whilst riding on a carousel horse on London's Southbank) with the 'new wearing experience' I anticipated in the role of autoethnographer for the purpose of carrying out this research. Therefore my empathetic observations of Elsa Schiaparelli's Evening Coat allow a parallel dovetailing of 'wearing experiences', which enable me to imagine how the wearer of this dress might translate their conscious dress choices into an anticipated, imagined context they might be about to encounter.

'Filling in the gaps'

Through these observations as a 'sample viewer', I understand that I empathetically 'meet' the concept of a wearer through the haptic aesthetics of this dress. However, I am aware that unlike in the everyday, the 'wearer' of this dress is absent and the mannequin on which I view the dress exhibit lacks not just a head but also hands. In order to make sense of this I will now refer further to Lacan's theory of 'lack'. I apply this concept not to Lacan's concept of 'fantasy' but to the 'body problem' (which I outline in the Introduction of this thesis). Although the focus in this thesis is on dress rather

than the body, these are inextricably linked (intercorporeal, as I posited earlier), and therefore it is important to observe the impact of the body, or more specifically the problem of the 'lost body', with reference to the missing limbs witnessed in the exhibition of dress.

I will now reference the *wearing empathy* I experienced with Elsa Schiaparelli's Evening Coat in the light of the 'lost body' problem. In the example of this Evening Coat I was able to view my 'aesthetic double' (that allowed me to engage with my own *wearing consciousness*), the dress exhibit and its reflection in the mirror simultaneously. This meant that although the mannequin lacked limbs and a conscious wearer, what was present was my 'aesthetic double' and my anonymous relationship with my 'aesthetic double' from where I was situated outside the vitrine in my fleshy body as the 'sample viewer'. This provided an intercorporeal and intersubjective dialogue between my dress, body and self that I was able to access and identify with across the space between Elsa Schiaparelli's Evening Coat and its 'aesthetic double'. However, I understand, referencing Goffman's theory of 'anonymous relations', that when I meet the Evening Coat it is unable to reciprocate any feelings I extend towards it, or equally its reflection. This is reinforced by the fact that when I view a mannequin with missing limbs, I understand there is a 'lack' of a conscious wearer inside this dress.

However, what was not lacking was the ability to apply, extend and empathise through my *wearing consciousness*. I was able to experience an anonymous relationship with my 'aesthetic double' in the dress exhibit in parallel to the one staged aesthetically perpendicular to mine: that between the Evening Coat and its 'aesthetic double' in the mirror. Then it is possible to imagine that my endogenous folds of empathetic feeling touched those of Schiaparelli's Evening Coat by passing invisible touchlines. In doing this, I was able to fill in a conscious gap of the 'lost body' of the lost wearer.

When I call forth an aesthetic unfolding of a dress exhibit, in order to identify with the conscious characteristics of being worn characteristics in dress, at the same time I experience a self-consciousness which feels like a conscious 'lack'. In the context of this exhibit, this has the effect of evoking a diminished, less privileged feeling when I observe my 'aesthetic double' physically in the dress exhibit mirror, or equally in imagining the social scene that I identify for Elsa Schiaparelli's Evening Coat. I feel I am not adequately dressed for this 'imagined wearing experience' (potentially a high-society social event). However, this observation has the effect of focusing on my *wearing consciousness* as the agency through which I am able to consciously 'fill in the gaps'. Therefore, when I extend my feelings towards the Evening Coat and its reflection, I experience a conscious empathy through a common understanding of dress as an aesthetic sum of parts: some of these are missing, and are therefore the ones I identify the need to call forth from my *wearing consciousness* to fill in the gaps.

In summary, I suggest this dress exhibit mirror acts as more than an agency for revealing a view of dress that would otherwise not be possible. Further, it is a way of offering agency for the viewer to access the *wearing consciousness*. This is for the following reasons: first, the viewer is able to view 'their aesthetic double' in the mirror at the same time as the dress exhibit. Then the viewer is able to draw parallels between their own anonymous relationship with their 'aesthetic double' and the one felt to be staged in the exhibit between Elsa Schiaparelli's Evening Coat and 'its aesthetic double' in the mirror. This allows the viewer to experience a *wearing empathy* in order to 'fill in the gaps' of the lost body. This is because the viewer is able to access tacit wearing experiences and an understanding of being a conscious wearer, which is common to all wearers in the world. The experience of being a conscious wearer is one which is understood to be a relationship with the 'wearer's aesthetic double' in the mirror as a sum of parts. These 'parts' are experiences relating to the fragmented self, which is understood to comprise Lacan's concept of a 'lack' in adulthood. Further, this allows the *wearing consciousness* to act as agency for the 'sample viewer' to imagine the dress exhibit as not only embodying a *wearing consciousness* but negotiating with one. The process of imagining something as whole is a conscious 'filling in the gaps' of the relationship between dress, body and self, which the viewer feels to be 'lacking' because of the absence not only of a head and hands but of a conscious wearer of the exhibited dress. As a sample viewer, I have been able to empathetically imagine that a *wearing consciousness* is embodied in this dress, and that this is experienced through a conscious parallel I make with my experience of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror. It is this reflection which allows the 'sample viewer' to apply the relationship with their 'aesthetic double' in a domestic mirror to their viewing of dress in the exhibition.

Dress as a mirror

I chose the dress exhibit described above for the purpose of exploring the question of whether, if the sample viewer is not able to view their 'aesthetic double' in the dress exhibit, dress itself can act as a mirror, and further, whether a dress exhibit itself can act as an aesthetic double for the viewer. In the exhibits described, the analysis of dress has centred on the presence of my 'aesthetic double' in a mirror as a tool by which I can extend my feeling into seeing, and further, that my 'aesthetic double' has been key to situating myself as both a 'sample viewer' and an autoethnographer within the dress exhibit.

Therefore, with the lack of my 'aesthetic double', I will now explore whether the haptic aesthetics of dress alone can provide a mirror, through which a viewer can engage with the *wearing consciousness* imagined to be embodied in a dress exhibit in the same way as they are able to when their aesthetic double is visible in the exhibit.

27 28

Figure 27. ‘An anonymous viewer’, Room 40, V&A (27.2.13) Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 28. ‘A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90’. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40, V&A (14.10.17) Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In order to conduct this analysis I will refer to a photograph I took for the purpose of this research (Figure 27). I captured an anonymous viewer making a gestural act which offers evidence that a dress exhibit *is* able to act as mirror in the exhibition. I took this photograph during a day of observational photography in Room 40 (27.2.13) at the V&A in front of the vitrine in Room 40, V&A (*Court and Country, 1750 – 1800*) (See Figure 27). I observed one viewer in particular, who was talking to another viewer. Incidentally, because there is no mirror in this section of the vitrine, I have juxtaposed the photograph of the viewer (Figure 27) with Figure 28, which shows the dress exhibit inside this vitrine. This exhibit is labelled ‘A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90’ and ‘Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775’. The vitrine features a black mannequin torso dressed from the waist down in a hooped crinoline. This is the undergarment for a dress that is visible on the far right in Figure 27. The purpose of juxtaposing these two photographs is to display the dress exhibit (see Figure 28) in a staged parallel through which I can conduct an analysis of whether, and how, a dress exhibit can act as a mirror itself.

In the moment this photograph was taken (Figure 27), the viewer has both hands placed together on her stomach, fingertips facing one other, lightly touching but splayed, appearing to push her stomach inwards. Her gesture appears to imitate, or mimic, the pressure she would have felt from the stays on her stomach if she were to pull them on to her body. She seems to be attempting to communicate this sensation to the other viewer. To consider this exhibit in the same terms as the exhibits I have discussed above, I will refer to Lacan’s theory of ‘imaginary identification’ (Lacan 2006:43). The ‘opponent’ in this instance is the wearer, who would have worn the pair of stays displayed. Whether the viewer is mimicking this opponent’s ‘attitude’ or her own ‘attitude’ in empathy is hard to identify, but I suggest the viewer in this instance is mimicking feelings of both cutaneous and conscious

pressure. If I were to suggest the conscious feeling this viewer is experiencing, this could be an 'attitude' of 'fitting-in': one of uncomfortable, cutaneous compliance, yet, comfortable, conscious compliance.

What this demonstrates is that the viewer has experienced a haptic aesthetic impact from viewing this pair of stays, and that this haptic aesthetic impact is drawn from a *wearing empathy* she has when viewing the item. This *wearing empathy* has folded exogenously out towards the exhibit. At the same time, this viewer has experienced the impact of endogenous folds back onto her body as if she has pulled the stays onto her body at the same time, as a layer of conscious pressure. This has affected a change in her demeanour (Eco 1976) to the extent that she is mimicking the cutaneous pressure from wearing the stays with her own hands. Through this haptic aesthetic act the anonymous viewer unfolds her *wearing consciousness* – exogenously – towards the other viewer with whom she is communicating. This could be in order to understand the exhibit, it could be to 'fill in the gaps' by internally imitating what it would have felt like to wear the stays, or for the purpose of addressing the feeling of 'lack' in the wearer. It could be that without a mirror to juxtapose an intersubjective communication through her 'aesthetic double', she is further addressing this 'lack' by communicating this feeling to herself and to the other anonymous viewer at the same time.

This suggests the anonymous viewer is not only mimicking but also mirroring a haptic aesthetic towards another viewer. This suggests a haptic aesthetic unfolding can occur between dresses on different bodies, across thresholds and viewing spaces, and most pertinently *without* a mirror.

Conclusion

'**In the domestic mirror'** exercise I closely observe my experience of getting dressed in front of the full-length 'dress' mirror in my bedroom, undertaking an analysis of how the haptic pressures felt when pulling (and pushing) dress on to the body are aesthetically experienced in the mirror as a set of quadrupled cutaneous and conscious feelings, which fold dress, body and self together, on, in and through the skin of my 'aesthetic double'. It is through observing the haptic aesthetic characteristics of being worn and unworn as they are felt to be embedded in the fabric of dress that past, present and potential wearing experiences are not only felt but can be imagined to be felt by the wearer. Together the observation and feel of getting dressed in the mirror allows a *wearing self-awareness* to develop.

'**In the exhibition mirror'** exercise I analyse the experience of viewing my 'aesthetic double' reflected as 'whole' yet experienced as a sum of my parts. The folding in of socially conscious pressures established what I suggest can be thought of as a *wearing self-awareness*. I explore how this enables the viewer to 'imaginatively identify' with their aesthetic double in the exhibition mirror when invited

into the exhibit, which develops the viewer's ability to extend their feeling into seeing from the 'aesthetic double' towards the dress exhibit inside the vitrine. This extends towards a *wearing empathy*.

'In the dress exhibit mirror' exercise, I explore the mirror situated inside the vitrine, but rather than being focused on inviting the viewer in, this is focused on inviting the viewer to observe the relationship between dress and its reflection in the mirror. The impact of this is that the viewer is invited to empathise with the dress exhibit through their experience of being a conscious wearer. The viewer makes an imaginative leap to identify feelings which parallel those experienced in the act of getting dressed in the domestic mirror with those the viewer empathises with between the dress exhibit and its 'aesthetic double' in the mirror. This is a conscious *wearing empathy*.

Finally '**In the dress as a mirror'** exercise**,** I explore the proposition that dress itself can act as a mirror for the viewer. With the absence of a physical mirror in the exhibit, the dress itself provides an important reference to the relationship between dress, body and self for the viewer through a set of haptic aesthetics which a viewer can identify and empathise with by referencing their own *wearing consciousness*. In the example I choose, it is the viewer's demonstration of internal mimicking that suggests that dress itself can act as a mirror in the dress exhibition. This takes place not just between a viewer and the dress exhibit but between one viewer and another, as it does between one wearer and another in the everyday. It is this final mirror which the viewer not only brings into the exhibition but is able to reflect through when viewing dress exhibits.

In summary, all the mirrors in this chapter can be thought of as 'dress' mirrors. This is because it is through these mirrors that the sample viewer is able to view, identify, develop a conscious awareness of, empathise with and fill in the gaps of any fragments that are felt to be lacking in a dress exhibit, whether visible or invisible, through their own *wearing consciousness*. The analysis in this chapter suggests a *wearing consciousness* is a sum of fragmented parts that folds in and out of the body. When the viewer 'meets' dress in the exhibition context this is in an anonymous relationship (as with their 'aesthetic double' in the everyday). The haptic aesthetics of dress allow the viewer to reflect through their own experiences of being a conscious wearer. So a viewer's *wearing consciousness* is the interchangeable mirror which they bring into the dress exhibition, located in the 'secrecy wherein they lie' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:149); however, this is one that is felt and shared by all wearers in the world because it is 'given of metonymy: the part for the whole' (Lacan 2006:55).

It is through the haptic aesthetics of dress that the 'sample viewer' is able to view dress not just with a self-awareness, but a self-consciousness and, further, a *wearing empathy*. That wearing empathy can be experienced whether a dress exhibit is viewed with or without a mirror. This is because it is through Goffman's notion of an 'anonymous relationship' that the sample viewer is able to extend

their conscious wearing experiences towards the dress exhibit at the time of viewing. It is through an empathetic extension of the sample viewer's *wearing consciousness* towards a dress exhibit that the viewer can *touch* dress in this way and in this context, where touching dress is not typically permitted.

Chapter Two: *Dress Space*

Introduction

Inspired by Callum Storrie's book *The delirious museum* (2006) and his belief that '[…] museums should be a continuation of the street' (Storrie 2006:2), in this chapter I take forward the concept that the dress exhibition *is* a continuation, not only of the street, but also of the home. In Chapter One I explored the concept of a *wearing empathy*, and how this enables viewers in the dress exhibition to extend their feeling into seeing, despite the 'Do not touch' barrier. In this second chapter I want to analyse how a *wearing empathy* is affected by the unique environment of the dress exhibition, as a place where both visible and invisible touch barriers discourage touch, yet where the viewer is able to emplace their *wearing empathy* across these barriers to 'imaginatively inhabit' the dress exhibit. The reason I now expand my haptic aesthetic analysis of dress in terms of space is to understand how a spatially structured *wearing consciousness* is developed and brought into the dress exhibition by the 'sample viewer'. It is an autoethnographic study of the spatial relationship a wearer forms in front of the domestic mirror, which re-forms in front of the changing-room mirror (in a retail context) and again in front of the dress exhibit in the exhibition space.

Dress spaces

In this chapter I propose a spatially structured experience of wearing dress for the purpose of viewing dress in three differently contextualised spaces. I will now define the dress spaces pertinent to this chapter.

The **corporeal dress space** is the body space defined by dress when being worn. The corporeal dress space can be broken down into the 'interior', 'interface' and 'exterior' space.

The *interior* space is that which is inside the seams of dress, inhabited by either a living or non-living body or an absent wearer (if folded or hung up). The *interface* space is the detachable fabric skin of the dress itself, volumised when worn on the body and limp or folded when off the body. The *exterior* space is between the interface space of the dress itself and the furthermost edges of a wearer's arm's-length circumference around their body when it is worn. When dress is taken off a body, the exterior dress space becomes the immediate space extending to an approximate arm's length in circumference around the dress itself. Examples include dress hanging in a wardrobe, where the external dress space can extend to the whole interior space of the wardrobe within the sides and door. If the wardrobe is full, and the dress is squashed up against other dresses, the external dress space reduces the interface dress space.

The '**viewing space'** is the space in front of the wearer or viewer when viewing their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror (domestic, retail changing-room, or dress exhibition mirrors including dress itself as a mirror as discussed in Chapter One). It is also the distance between the viewer's situated body and the touch barrier beyond which the dress exhibit is situated. It can also be the space which the wearer's 'aesthetic double' or the dress exhibit occupies, either as an illusion of a separate space inside the mirror (domestic, changing-room or exhibition mirrors) or the enclosed space of the vitrine, or simply an open stage or set in which a dress exhibit is staged.

The **contextual space** is the environment in which dress is viewed. In this thesis this is the domestic, street (retail) and exhibition space. These can arguably be thought of as 'homes' for dress. The domestic space can be exemplified by the house, within which there is the wardrobe. The street space is exemplified by pavements and roads (or even the enclosed space on a bus). The retail space indicates shop windows and inside the changing-room spaces where dress can be 'tried on'. The exhibition space can be broken down into the museum space, within which is a gallery space, within which there is the vitrine or plinth space, then the dress as a space itself. These three contextual spaces are delineated by 'thresholds', typically doorways which are entered and exited in order to transfer from one to the other. There is also what is referred to as a '*third*' space, which can be thought of as digital space – including websites – and cultural spaces within systems, such as the fashion system, material consumption, social consciousness, phenomenological space (the space of being in the world) and the imaginary dress space.

The **imaginary dress space,** according to Pink, is a 'Place [which] can indeed be said to be remade on a third level when viewers […] – including, of course, the ethnographer – use their imaginations to create personal /cultural understandings of the representation.' (Pink 2009:101) The *imaginative* space is therefore the contextualised space which the viewer imagines dress to inhabit. I suggest that the viewer (including myself as the 'sample viewer') experiences these imaginative spaces in a way similar to the imaginative identification I discuss in Chapter One, but contextualised within a spatial dimension, which can be situated in any of the above spaces.

***Dress Sense* exhibition experiment**

In order to understand how the viewer responds to viewing dress in differently contextualised spaces through the sense of touch, I conducted an ethnographic experiment early on in this doctoral research. This was so that I could cross-reference my autoethnographic haptic aesthetic experiences as a 'sample viewer' (which I carry out later in this chapter) with other anonymous viewers in the dress exhibition for spatial analysis.

This experiment was an exhibition titled *Dress Sense*, staged at the Royal College of Art between 26 February and 1 March 2011 (See the Appendix for a list of exhibitors and exhibits). The need for this arose because, unlike dress in the museum', where typically it is not permitted to be touched, by conducting my own experiment I was able to exhibit items of dress without 'touch barriers'. The aim was to test how different methods of display would affect whether a viewer felt they could or could not touch a particular dress, and why.

I selected dresses designed and made by three RCA MA student fashion designers (2010-11), whose work was in different ways haptic aesthetic (in material, texture or construction). There was a deliberate focus on the sense of touch, so that any touch barriers I observed could be related to the architecture of the exhibit (touch barriers) rather than the dress itself. The behaviour of the viewers who attended was recorded through observation and photographs. Analysis was further gleaned from a questionnaire, which over the course of the exhibition was completed by 46 viewers, 31 (67 per cent) of which were female. (The interpretation of male responses towards items of female dress is a point I discuss in my Introduction). However, I argue that barriers to touch (the focus of this experiment) are less affected by whether the viewer was male or female, and more by how the viewer was able to extend feeling into seeing through the senses of touch in response to social, moral and museological codes of conduct.

The experiment was held in a seminar room at the RCA. This was not an exhibition space. However, its rectangular dimensions, wooden flooring, black and white walls and the position of the ceiling lights meant it was a blank context in which dress could be displayed to test visible and invisible touch barriers (Figure 1). I staged each dress differently. Some examples fell into a 'domestic-like' setting, some into a 'shop-like' setting and some into an 'exhibition-like' setting. Some were a mix of all three.

Figure 1. Seminar room, Stevens Building, Royal College of Art. (24.2.11) Image © Lucy Gundry

All the dresses were positioned within immediate access with no visible touch barriers or 'Do not touch' signs, and very little indication was given as to whether touch was permitted (or not), even

when viewers enquired. However, some exhibits employed more obvious museological devices than others. For example, Figures 2 and 3 (see below) show a mannequin on a plinth and dress pieces suspended from the ceiling with a white line on the floor below to delineate the space. It was possible to touch the suspended dresses but not try them on; it was possible to try on other garments.

2 3

Figures 2 and 3. Anonymous viewers, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

The 'domestic-like' setting

In order to reference the domestic space, in one example I hung a coat over the back of a chair, whilst in another I hung a coat on a coat rack (Figures 19 and 4).

Figures 4. 'Blue & pink Coat' on coat rack by Hye Eun Kim, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

The photograph depicts Hye Eun Kim's 'Blue & pink coat' (Figure 4) hung on a coat rack (a domestic item), contextualised in this exhibit by being positioned near to the door, with no touch barrier in place. This encouraged the viewer to associate it with a domestic space.

The 'shop-like' setting

In order to reference the retail environment, I displayed a collection of dresses hanging on a rail (Figure 5) with no touch barrier in place. This encouraged viewers to think that not only could they browse through the rail of dresses with their hands, they could also take items off and hold them against their body as if to try them on. Although this rail was positioned with immediate access for the research participants, there was no changing-room or mirror to view themselves in, or for trying an item on.

Figure 5. Two Biker Jackets and a Women's Jacket (Hye Eun Kim) on a clothes rail, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

The 'exhibition-like' setting

In order to reference an 'exhibition-like' setting, I suspended Jungen Lee's three dress pieces in a row at eye level within immediate access. A thick white rectangular line on the floor marked out the space belonging to the exhibit, but did not provide a physical touch barrier (Figure 6).

Figure 6. 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' by Jungeun Lee, with white line box on floor, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

In summary, some of the exhibits made clear references to the domestic, transitional and exhibition space (as described) but there were some further examples that were a combination of one or more of these. For example, the exhibit within which a dress is slung over a chair was 'domestic-like', whilst the stand-alone positioning of the chair was 'exhibition-like' (see Figure 19). These combinations were to test whether the mixed references would affect whether touch barriers were put in place to a greater or lesser extent by the viewer.

Research participant questionnaires

In order to collect data from viewers I compiled a questionnaire (see the Appendix for the questionnaire and findings). I asked all the viewers who attended the private view on 25 March 2011, and subsequent viewers who visited the experiment over the seven days it ran thereafter, if they would be willing to complete this questionnaire. I approached all the viewers who entered the experiment, regardless of gender, age etc.

Overall, 46 questionnaires were completed. Demographic findings revealed not just that 67 per cent of viewers were female but that 76 per cent were art and design students. Over half were between the ages of 18-30 (56 per cent), with the second largest age group being 31-40 (30 per cent). Therefore, the most typical viewer was a female art student between the ages of 18 and 40. This is important to acknowledge, because it means that both the site of the experiment (a seminar room at the RCA) and the work exhibited (RCA MA fashion student pieces) were to some extent familiar to the type of viewer who visited, and therefore had an impact on the viewer. It is also important because this demographic is typical of the viewer who attends museum exhibitions of fashion and dress (drawn from V&A visitor data reports outlined in my Introduction). As the 'sample viewer' in this

thesis, I too fit into both these categories (at the time of this experiment) and therefore (to an extent) I was able to empathise with the viewer's situated experience of dress in this context.

This experimental exhibition not only provided an important spatial understanding relating to the impact of exhibition architecture, touch barriers and the tactility of dress on the desire to touch, but also informed my preparation for the autoethnographic journey I undertake through dress spaces later in this chapter.

A *touch tension*

The main finding from this experiment was that viewers experienced a tension around touching, which varied according to the different display methods. Viewers who crossed a touch barrier (by touching and trying on dress) did so to resolve a *touch tension*. It seems that this was in not only the cutaneous but also the conscious sense of reaching out to touch dress. None of the dress exhibits invited the viewers to touch or try on dress. Although some of the exhibits were easily accessible – for example, they could be taken off a peg, chair or hanger or from out of a drawer (Figures 7 and 8) – other exhibits were less so, or not so at all, because they were dressing a mannequin positioned on a plinth or suspended from the ceiling by wires.

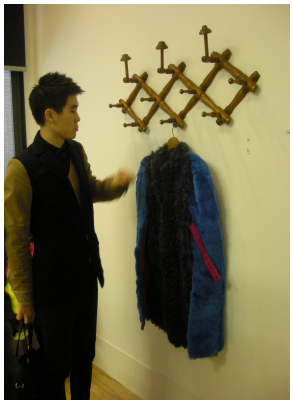
7  8

Figure 7. 'Anonymous viewer reaching out to touch 'Blue & pink Coat' on coat rack by Hye Eun Kim, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 8. 'Two anonymous viewers, one touching Two Biker Jackets and a Women's Jacket' (Hye Eun Kim) on a clothes rail, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Further questionnaire findings demonstrate the emergence of a *touch tension* caused when viewers did not reach out to touch. One of the questions I posed was: 'Were there any exhibits you felt you could not touch?' 65 per cent of the viewers answered that there were exhibits they felt they could not touch. 35 per cent indicated there were 'none' they felt they could not touch.

In a follow-on question, I asked: 'If you did not touch any of the exhibits, please say why'. The viewers were offered a series of potential answers and asked to select one or all that applied. The most popular answer was 'Because I was not sure if I was "allowed" to touch the exhibits'. This was by followed by 'Because I thought it might damage the work'. Then 'Because it is not respectful to touch someone's work'. Interestingly, this shows that the primary reason for not touching a piece of work was because they thought they were not allowed to. Had they felt that they were allowed to, the majority would have touched the exhibits.

The fewest selected 'Because I knew what it would feel like to touch'. This indicates that even though this response was less frequently articulated, there are viewers who are aware that they know what it feels like to touch different dresses, and therefore they do not need to touch. These findings suggest there is a conscious barrier to touch in this context (along with the museological) that the majority of viewers imposed on themselves. This also suggests that the strongest feeling was a dilemma around the permission to touch (E.g. the museological), followed by a self-imposed barrier to touch through an awareness of, and respect for, dress that does not belong to the viewer. The following comments support this in a number of ways, which I have indicated in bold:

> *It's very difficult (especially in an art school) to get over this* ***trained reflex not to touch*** *things in a gallery, even though we want to*. (Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25.3.11)
>
> *There was a line on the floor around them*. (Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25.3.11)
>
> *I didn't touch or even want to touch number 5 or 10 – it didn't look appealing &* ***did not seem 'available'*** *as the other pieces*. (Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25.3.11)
>
> *I didn't feel comfortable touching the one on the plinth.* ***It felt like I shouldn't be.*** (Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25.3.11)
>
> *The piece at the door and on the pedestal were the least enticing to me – I did not want to touch either –* ***they felt more out of bounds to me.*** (Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25.3.11)

The piece referred to as 'on the pedestal / plinth', and as 'number 5', is the item shown in Figures 9 and 10.

Figure 9. ‘Lime Green Mongolian Jacket’ (Hye Eun Kim), on female mannequin and plinth, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 10. ‘Lime Green Mongolian Jacket’ (Hye Eun Kim) on female mannequin and plinth, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

The ‘piece at the door’ (Figure 11) and dress exhibit ‘number 10’ in the viewers’ comments is the item pictured below, which was also displayed on a mannequin.

Figure 11. ‘Lime Green Coat’, Hye Eun Kim, on mannequin outside gallery, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

The comments left by these viewers indicate that despite the reflex to touch exhibits, the barriers these viewers felt ranged from the feeling that they shouldn't be touching the dresses to the feeling that dresses were 'out of bounds'.

Interestingly, there was one exhibit in particular, Jungeun Lee's three pieces, which emerged as the 'most tempting' to touch and the 'most touched', yet at the same time 53 per cent also considered this exhibit to be the most 'untouchable'. Jungeun Lee's pieces were three figure-hugging, voluminous body-like skins or short dresses, hung in a row. They were suspended from the ceiling by invisible threads at eye level, and delineated by a thick rectangular white line on the floor below. In the photograph below (Figure 12) one viewer is crossing the white line (the visible touch barrier) in order to touch, but the other viewer (on the right) is not.

Figure 12. 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' by Jungeun Lee, with white line box on floor, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Therefore, for some viewers the reflex to touch was stronger than the feeling that they should not touch dress, despite the museological reference to touch barriers. However, for others this was the opposite. A viewer who observed the white line as a touch barrier commented: '*There was a line on the floor around them*. (Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25.2.2011).

Figure 13. 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' by Jungeun Lee, with white line box on floor, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

For another viewer this line was not effective as a touch barrier. This indicates that viewers experienced a dilemma, involving the desire to touch and a barrier to touch, which was overcome by some viewers who reached out and physically touched the dress (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' by Jungeun Lee, with white line box on floor, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Another answer viewers could have selected in the questionnaire to indicate why they did not touch the dress exhibits was '*because it would feel like touching someone else's clothes*'. Only one participant ticked this box. I will explore this in relation to an exhibit I displayed on (and in) a small chest of drawers in one corner of the room to mimic a domestic setting. Two dress items were arranged as if a wearer had laid these items out in order to make a dress choice (Figure 15).

Figure 15. 'Pink Jumpsuit & Green Heels', by Hye Eun Kim, in commode, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 16. 'Pink Jumpsuit & Green Heels', by Hye Eun Kim, in commode, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

One viewer left this comment: '*It was in a box and felt more "owned"*'(Anonymous viewer, '*Dress Sense* experiment', 25 February 2011) (see Figures 15 and 16). The use of the word 'felt' could mean that the viewer was empathising with a potential owner, or simply acknowledging that dress belongs to a wearer's 'territory of the self' (Goffman 1972:62). I suggest that this feeling reinforces a sense of 'belonging' between dress and wearer (who could be the artist, designer, curator or a wearer, identified or unidentified), and a touch barrier is observed because otherwise it would 'feel like touching someone else's clothes' without the wearer's permission.

Interestingly, there were two particular viewers who did not observed no barriers to touch or trying on items of dress in this experiment (see Figures 17 – 20).

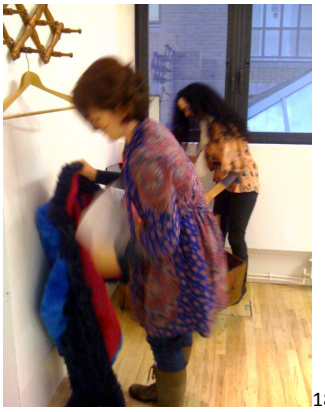
17  18

Figure 17. 'Blue & Pink Coat' by Hye Eun Kim, on coat rack, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 18. 'Blue & Pink Coat' on coat rack / 'Pink Jumpsuit & Green Heels', by Hye Eun Kim, in commode, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

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Figure 19. 'Yellow & Pink Coat' by Hye Eun Kim, on chair, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 20. 'Yellow & Pink Coat' by Hye Eun Kim, on chair, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

These two viewers were in fact students on a BTEC fashion course I was teaching at the time. When they asked me if they could touch and try these items on, I replied that they should do as they felt appropriate. These students knew I had set this up as a touch experiment and therefore the touch barriers which remained in place for other viewers were blurred for these viewers. Interestingly, though, these viewers did not go as far as taking the items off any of the mannequins.

In summary, '*because it would feel like touching someone else's clothes*' was not a touch barrier for the majority of viewers. This indicates that although some of the exhibits were staged as if in a domestic setting, and therefore potentially belonged to a wearer (which might present a moral or social touch barrier), this was not effective unless the museological touch barriers which mimicked an 'exhibition-like' setting were in place (visibly or invisibly) to indicate touch was not permitted.

Overall, the experiment proves the unique circumstances of the exhibition space in terms of touch. The experiment revealed the impact of architecture and scripts borrowed from the domestic, retail and exhibition space on the viewer. Each exhibit had its own combination. The viewers experienced a desire to touch, but tensions arose when the desire to touch could not be satisfied or when it was satisfied. But the viewer felt they had crossed a barrier. Whether a viewer touched or did not touch, awareness of a touch barrier was indicated, even if not observed.

To sum up, one viewer would not touch for conservation or museological reasons (cutaneous) and another another for societal reasons. If one felt a barrier to touch because touching the dress would feel like touching someone else's clothes, for another viewer this would be an invitation to touch. Some observed an 'ownership barrier' whilst others transgressed this barrier (see Figure 12). I will now apply the analysis from these findings to develop an 'emplaced' methodological approach. This is in order to conduct a spatially structured autoethnographic journey through differently contextualised 'viewing spaces' in the second half of this chapter.

An 'emplaced' methodological approach

For the purpose of this chapter, rather than an 'embodied' methodology, which I employ in Chapter One, here I employ an 'emplaced' methodology. This is in order to develop the spatial concept that a wearer is able to emplace their *wearing empathy* across the viewing space, through touch barriers towards and even into the dress exhibit itself. The anthropologist David Howes makes an important distinction between 'embodiment' and 'emplacement':

> While the paradigm of 'embodiment' implies an integration of mind and body, the emergent paradigm of emplacement suggests the sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment (Howes 2005:7).

The sensory ethnographic concept of an 'emplaced' ethnography, as outlined by Pink in *Doing sensory ethnography*, is methodologically pertinent because it helps to contextualise the relationship between dress, body and self in terms of space. This is because it '[…] attends to the question of experience by accounting for the relationships between bodies, minds and the materiality and sensoriality of the environment' (Pink 2009:25).

By way of 'doing' an 'emplaced' method I refer to my 'whole experiencing body' as a site through which to record the haptic aesthetic relationship between dress, body and self (*wearing consciousness*) in space (Pink). This includes the practice of seeking 'to share others' experiences' for the purpose of analysing how I in turn empathetically emplace my own experiences into other

people's worlds (places). Further, in doing so I learn how wearers share the experience of being a wearer in the world, and how this is helpful towards 'imaginatively inhabiting' dress (Paterson 2007:10), as it may be experienced as an emplacement or displacement into differently contextualised spaces or places. As Pink notes:

> This approach involves not only ethnographers seeking out ways to share others' experiences, but also their situating their experiences within other people's places – or put another way, learning how to recognize their own emplacement in other people's worlds (Pink 2009:64).

Em [place] ment and dis [place] ment

According to both Pink and Howes, space can be thought of as 'place'. Therefore, the act of emplacement is not just through space but through place. For example, in relation to this thesis, this could be from the domestic place into the street place then into the exhibition place and then into a conscious place. An emplacement can also be between spaces that exist as consciously or socially constructed systems, such as the imaginary space and the 'fashion' space, which are consciously constructed places. However, specifically in this chapter, it is helpful to think of the places on my autoethnographic journey as different types of 'homes' for dress.

Further, an 'emplaced' methodology as a researcher allows me to observe what the viewer brings into the exhibition of dress as a conscious wearer. As Howes suggests, 'The counterpart to emplacement is displacement, the feeling of homelessness is a disconnection from one's physical and social environment' (Howes 2005:7). This is helpful to observe 'the feeling of 'home' […]' (Howes 2005:7) between myself as a sample viewer and the dress exhibit as it can be linked to the concept of the 'homely' and 'unhomely' feelings I discuss in Chapter One in the role of wearer.

The act of emplacing

In terms of theoretically situating the concept of a sample viewer for this chapter (and Chapter Three), I will refer to Janneke Wesseling's concept of the 'verticon' in *The perfect spectator*. Wesseling introduces the term to 'identify the concrete, embodied spectator' (Wesseling 2017:115), who operates within the spatial concept of 'horizon'. For the purpose of this thesis the verticon is exemplified by the situated 'sample viewer' in the dress exhibition, which is both myself as the 'sample viewer' and other viewers. In terms of the horizon, Wesseling refers to this as 'a universal phenomenon, which at the same time is linked to the individual' (Wesseling 2017:118) and 'is, therefore, inextricably linked with human scale' (Wesseling 2017:124). Wesseling further suggests the

verticon 'calls forth the horizon' when contemplating an 'artwork'[30] through a linear perspective (Wesseling 2017:119). This is particularly pertinent for understanding how a viewer 'calls' dress forth through a spatial 'system' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412) of contemplation within 'a linear perspective' (Wesseling 2017:119). I suggest that a linear perspective is applied by the sample viewer in the form of 'invisible touchlines' (which I map out in the beginning of my autoethnographic journey) created in the act of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror. These touchlines not only define the proprioceptive parameters but also structure the touch space within these.

In this chapter, therefore, the 'horizon' can be thought of as the edges of the exterior dress space, where a touch line is drawn by the fingertips of a viewer's outstretched hand (in front of a domestic mirror and the dress exhibit). This is demonstrated by in the photograph below, of an anonymous viewer in front of a dress exhibit at the *Madame Grès* exhibition in Antwerp (9.2.13).

Figure 21. 'A viewer', *Madame Grès* MOMU, Antwerp (9.2.13). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of MoMu, Antwerp

With regard to the act of reaching out to touch, I will refer to Merleau-Ponty, who suggests that:

> In the action of the hand which is raised towards an object is contained a reference to the object, not as an object represented, but as that highly specific thing towards which we project ourselves, near which we are, in anticipation, and which we haunt (Merleau-Ponty 2005:159).

I understand Merleau-Ponty to suggest here that in the act of reaching out towards an object the 'horizon' is consciously called forth between viewer and (in the context of this thesis) a dress exhibit as the 'highly specific thing towards which we project ourselves' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:159). Further, the dress exhibit is one towards which we project ourselves 'in anticipation' of being able to 'haunt'. I

[30] Wesselings' reference to 'artwork', although I acknowledge that dress in an exhibition is arguably an artwork, it nevertheless is exhibited as an object for contemplation and therefore one, which requires the viewer's engagement.

suggest Merleau-Ponty's reference to the concept of 'haunting' is one which can be thought of as the emplaced act of 'imaginatively inhabiting', which I will now outline in the context of this research.

Arguably the viewer I witnessed at the *Madame Grès* exhibition at MoMu (Figure 21) demonstrates this in her action, because she appears to be reaching out towards the highly specific content of the dress exhibit. Perhaps this woman experienced a *touch tension* when she was not able to satisfy her desire to touch. Or perhaps her act of reaching out resulted in an imaginary inhabiting of the dress. Perhaps, in anticipation, she was able to 'haunt' this dress in the form of imaginatively inhabiting. Or perhaps she was prevented by a touch barrier and experienced a touch tension. I cannot be certain, because this is subject to her own viewing experience.

'Imaginatively inhabiting'

I will now discuss Paterson's concept of 'imaginatively inhabiting' (Paterson 2007:10) as it applies to the concept of a viewer's spatial experience in the exhibition. This is for the purpose of understanding how the sample viewer can transgress a touch barrier through a conscious sense of touch without cutaneously touching a dress exhibit in the exhibition space. Paterson introduces his concept of 'imaginatively inhabiting' through the narrative of the classical Greek myth of Pygmalion. Pygmalion is a sculptor who crafts a beautiful woman out of marble, with whom he then falls in love, and to whom the Greek goddess Aphrodite grants life. Paterson deciphers this narrative as an:

> […] unfolding aesthetic […] since by imaginatively inhabiting the statue's becoming-flesh we too start with the two-dimensionality of vision, opening our eyes, and subsequently start to correlate other senses with movement, becoming increasingly spatially aware (Paterson 2007:10).

Paterson's description of an 'unfolding aesthetic' is pertinent here in order to chart the haptic aesthetic translation between dress across spaces, places or 'homes' in this thesis. Further, the connection between 'opening our eyes' and the process of 'becoming increasingly spatially aware' (Paterson 2007:10) for the sample viewer (who remains an active wearer) is key to an emplaced methodology in this chapter.

Merleau-Ponty's concept of intercorporeality, which I discuss in Chapter One, is also helpful here in order to situate the discussion around how the viewer's 'unfolding aesthetic' transitions through space. In the first instance this is between the wearer's dressed body and their 'aesthetic double' in the dress mirror as it unfolds through domestic, street and retail spaces. Further, this applies to the sample viewer and the dress exhibit to unfold aesthetically towards an intercorporeality through

which the sample viewer is able to 'henceforth inhabit […] both bodies simultaneously.' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412):

> […] as the parts of my body together compromise a system, so my body and the other's are one whole, two sides of one and the same phenomenon, and the anonymous existence of which my body is the ever-renewed trace that henceforth inhabits both bodies simultaneously. (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412)

In this extract, first Merleau-Ponty suggests that the body is made up of a sum of parts, which he defines as an 'anonymous existence', and that this exists in the form of an 'ever-renewed trace' to 'comprise a system' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412). This supports the concept I build in Chapter One, that the wearer understands their relationship with their 'aesthetic double' (in the domestic mirror) to be 'anonymous' because the wearer feels their 'self' to be a sum of parts (relating to Lacan's 'whole' and 'lack'), which, when emplaced into their 'aesthetic double', is not one which is able to reciprocate. Further to this, the concept of intercorporeality can allow an anonymous relationship (Goffman) through the concept that the body is understood to exist as an 'ever-renewed trace' which can 'comprise a system' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412), rather than one with which a reciprocal relationship can be formed. I suggest that this intercorporeality is complicated when the wearer moves away from an engagement with their aesthetic double and moves into the exhibition space to engage with dress as a 'highly specific object towards which we project ourselves' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412). This is because it is not just an inhabiting of both bodies simultaneously, it is also an intersubjective projection, and therefore an inhabiting of both *wearing consciousnesses* at the same time.

Therefore, an aesthetic unfolding between the viewer and the dress exhibit is intercorporeal, but in part this is inextricably linked with the intersubjective leaking of the cutaneous into the conscious, and vice versa. Therefore, the concept of a conscious unfolding through the haptic aesthetics of dress is further explored through the conscious understanding of imaginative inhabiting as one which is an intersubjective and intercorporeal extension across the 'viewing space'. Therefore, as the sample viewer my aim in this chapter is '[…] to come closer to understanding how those other people […] imagine. […]' (Pink 2009:23). Specifically, this means that I learnt how to recognise my 'emplacement in other people's worlds' (Pink 2009:64) through my ' experiencing, knowing and emplaced body' (Pink 2009:25), experienced as both an intercorporeal and intersubjective haptic aesthetic unfolding between my dress, body and self and the situated dress exhibit.

This is how I understand 'imaginatively identifying' – not just with dress in terms of what it might be like to wear on my body, but in terms of empathising with another's *wearing consciousness*, from different perspectives, contextualised by imaginatively inhabiting different dress 'homes'. This enables the sample viewer to displace and emplace the concept of 'home' into different dress spaces.

Autoethnographic analysis

The second half of this chapter is structured, like Chapter One, in the form of an autoethnographic journey. This is divided into three sections which correspond with those I tested out in the *Dress Sense* experiment: the domestic space, the transitional (retail) space and the exhibition space. In the domestic space I explore the spatial experience of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror; this then transfers to getting dressed in front of a changing-room mirror in a dress shop, and then again into the dress exhibition space. Spatial analysis as a viewer continues through the threshold of the glass revolving doors into the V&A Museum. Inside the V&A, analysis continues with an emplaced experience of 'An anonymous viewer' in Room 40 at the V&A (which focuses on a viewer who I suggest is experiencing a *wearing empathy* which I explore at the end of Chapter One). The journey continues into the space of the V&A Archive at Blythe House to discuss the dress exhibits 'Pretentious', 'Armoured' and 'Measured', from the exhibition *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (27 April – 27 June 2010, V&A Archives, Blythe House, London). As I exit Blythe House I reflect on the construction of spatial metaphors for dress in this exhibition.

Semi-structured interviews referenced in this chapter were held with curators Claire Wilcox (Professor and Chair of Fashion Curation at London College of Fashion and previously Senior Curator of Fashion at the V&A until 2013) 29 January 2013 and curator and exhibition-maker Judith Clark, on 20 January 2016.

Space One: *Domestic*

In order to embark on my autoethnographic analysis of the viewing space I will first chart the space between myself as a wearer and my 'aesthetic double' in the domestic mirror in terms of Paterson's 'phenomenological aspects of spatial measure' (Paterson 2007:72). This is measured by 'Using body parts as an investigative aid to the perception and measurement of external space [which] also involves moving them in relation to a core orientation of the torso' (Paterson 2007:72). Using the body is an ancient measuring method which includes: '[…] the Graeco-Egyptian notion of cubits (a forearm's length), digits (a finger's breadth, three-quarters of an inch) and so on' (Paterson 2007:72). I will refer to the outstretched arm, fingertip, the skin, the dress and the senses of touch.

In relation to the wearer (who is different from the viewer only when they are not viewing their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror or other exhibits during the experience of wearing dress), the edges of the wearer's external dress space are traced by the fingertips in the air throughout the act of getting dressed. This can be at any distance from the torso (where the measurement is suggested to be mapped from) between the skin and the furthest point of the longest outstretched finger. (See Figure

22). These distances can be mapped in 360-degree circumferences around the body at any one moment.

Figure 22. 'Measuring dress space', Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

Paterson's definition of proprioception is useful here. He defines proprioception as the 'Perception of the position, state and movement of the body and limbs in space' (Paterson 2007:ix) He suggests further that this 'Includes *cutaneous*, *kinaesthetic*, and *vestibular* sensations.'(Paterson 2007:ix) Beyond the proprioceptive sense, Paterson further advocates a 'proprioceptive body', which is able to sense 'bodily boundaries' and has the 'ability to navigate through complex spaces' (Paterson 2007:124). Interestingly, Warwick and Cavallaro describe dress as a 'boundary', which 'is meant to trace a neat line between self and other'. Elsewhere, they describe dress as a 'margin' that connects 'the individual to other bodies' and 'links the biological entity to the social ensemble' as well as 'the private to the public'. (Warwick and Cavallaro 1998:xvii). 'Boundary' refers to the line of separation between the private and public 'self', whereas 'margin' refers to where the 'body' is connected to other bodies. In the act of getting dressed, when dress, body and self are also in the act of negotiation and renegotiation, I suggest the proprioceptive sense can simultaneously delineate a boundary and create a margin between a wearer's torso and their fingertips in the process of navigating dress onto the body. I suggest, as I mentioned earlier, that these 'boundaries' and 'margins' draw connecting lines between dress, fingertips and torso, and equate what I understand in the context of this thesis to be Wesseling's concept of 'horizon' (Wesseling 2017:119) For the purposes of this thesis these connecting lines can be thought of as 'touchlines' (drawn by the fingertips) to chart a linear perspective in a circumference for the proprioceptive body. This is not just between dress, body and self as a wearer, but also towards their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror (see Figure 22) as a viewer, and further between the sample viewer and the dress exhibit across the 'viewing space' in the dress exhibition. Collectively these touchlines form boundaries, margins and

horizons, which are navigated through the sample viewer's spatially developed *wearing consciousness* across the 'viewing space'.

Mapping 'touchlines'

According to Juhani Pallasmaa, 'We behold, touch, listen and measure the world with our entire bodily existence, and the experiential world becomes organized and articulated around the centre of the body […]' (Pallasmaa 2005:64). The purpose of mapping the boundaries and margins drawn between my torso, dress and fingertips as I get dressed was to visualise this as a spatial structure of touchlines around myself as a wearer during the emplaced process of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror.

In order to define the parameters of the viewer's external dress space as it relates to the viewing space, I use the length of my outstretched arm from the point of the shoulder to the fingertip in order to establish my 'horizon' (see Figure 22). Just beyond my fingertip, across a gap, is the façade of the mirror in which I view my 'aesthetic double'. The viewing space includes a gap between the outstretched fingertip and the dress exhibit to ensure the space for a touch barrier (whether this is architecturally or morally implemented). This forward-facing measurement can be traced around the circumference of my body within this viewing space.

It is through the mirror that I was able to photograph my 'aesthetic double' on 25 March 2015 as I pulled first my cardigan and then my jeans onto my body. I put these together as sets of images in a document, then printed these out on paper. I marked and traced the touchlines I experienced with a pencil and ruler onto the copies and then re-photographed these as a new set of images for the purpose of this spatial mapping exercise (No. 4 in Figure 23). I pencilled in the widest, highest, nearest and furthest points where my hands are positioned to hold and put on both my cardigan and my jeans to illustrate the touchlines identified in the key and photographs below.

Cardigan touchlines

Key Figure 23 (Image 1 - 18):

- The horizontal lines from border to border indicate touch barriers.
- The arrows indicate distances between dress and the body.
- In some cases (e.g. Image 4) the arrows indicate distances between the wearer's touch barrier and the 'aesthetic double' in the mirror.
- Circles indicate 'touch points' where fingertip and dress meet.

Figure 23. *'Invisible spatial structures'* (images 1 – 18) created by putting my cardigan on, Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

Jean touchlines

As I pull on my jeans, I create another set of invisible touchlines, similarly to the experience with my cardigan. Once a structure has begun, every time I move my arms and grasp dress with my fingertips new touchlines are created. Collectively, these dovetail to form criss-crossing lines, which re-structure with every new haptic act.

Key to Figure 24 (Images 1 - 11)

- Images 2, 4, 7 and 8 show the distance between the bottom of the jeans reflected by my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror and the bottom of the jeans on my fleshy body as it is reflected in the foreground of the photograph.

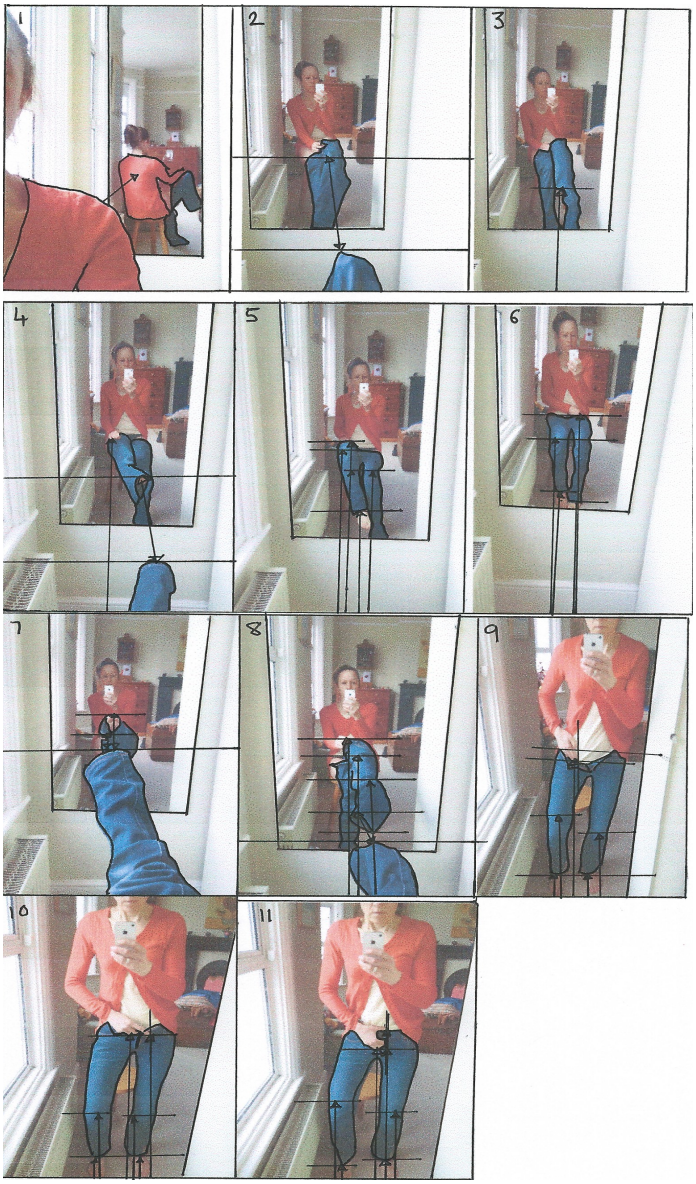


Figure 24. *'Invisible Spatial structures'* (images 1 – 11) created by putting my jeans on, Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

In summary, through this process I observe that some touchlines map the act of getting dressed as an endogenous act and others as an exogenous act. The touchline drawn by my fingertips (from my torso) as I reach out to grasp my cardigan (image 1 in Figure 23) is endogenous. This act extends my sense of touch through space to meet my cardigan (ahead of my fingertips) on the stool. My cardigan is situated within my external dress space. I reach further forward to pick my cardigan up, then I draw

it back towards my torso. My touchlines re-draw themselves to reconnect with the body in an exogenous act. During these acts there are various points when I touch dress (see Figure 23) with my fingertips, which is mapped into the space around my body. These can be thought of as 'points of inflection' where '[…] material ends and sensation begins […]' (Paterson 2007:96). I suggest that points of inflection are where (as discussed in Chapter One) the cutaneous and conscious meet, and when, for a moment, they are in flux. For example, in order to pull my cardigan sleeve down my arm, I first reach out to grasp the end of the cuff with my fingertips. This is a point of inflection, because when my fingertip touches the cuff, I meet a conscious as much as a cutaneous feel.

Collectively my endogenous and exogenous touchlines, horizons and points of inflection map out an 'invisible spatial structure' around my body. I understand that every time I touch my dress it is not only the cutaneous sensation which I experience, but also associated conscious feelings. That every time I touch my dress I do so through pulling and pushing, gripping and brushing, and it is through these acts of touch that I create new points of inflection, and therefore new touchlines, as an ever-renewable trace. This allows me to understand the space around my body as a haptic aesthetic space. This also allows me to understand this space as one in a state of structural flux, never fully drawn and never fully undrawn, simply redrawn between my dress, body and self.

This analysis has mapped three interconnected dress spaces, those of the wearer as a dress space, the viewing space as a dress space and the space inside the mirror as a third dress space which is occupied by the wearer's 'aesthetic double'. I will now explore how these interconnected dress spaces are mapped across touchlines between a wearer and other wearers in the role of viewer, as I now transition across the threshold of my 'front door' into the street.

Space Two: *Transitional*

The street

Now I am dressed, I leave through my front door into the street space. I take with me a situated haptic aesthetic understanding of how my 'invisible spatial structure' of touchlines operates in the act of getting dressed as I view them across the 'viewing space' in front of the domestic mirror. As I enter the street space I anticipate that new touchlines will be created through the haptic of 'wearing' dress, rather than 'getting dressed'. I anticipate these new touchlines to be in response to a 'constant dialogue and interaction' with my environment, because I further understand:

> '[…] that it is impossible to detach the image of the Self from its spatial and situational existence.' (Pallasmaa 2005:64)

This suggests in the first instance that without my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror to provide a horizon for my extended touchlines my horizon now becomes a touch barrier, which marks the edge of my external dress space and the contextual space of the street beyond. The street does not contain domestic vitrines such as wardrobes and drawers, but I observe that my dressed body, situated inside the circumference of my external dress space, now feels vitrine-like and now defines a viewing space. I observe that I am displaying dress, because I am visible to others. Wearers fill the street as moving and static figures also display dress. Without a mirror to view myself in the public 'mind's eye', I view myself through the mirror of my own 'mind's eye' in the context of this north-west London street. I will refer to autoethnographic notes in order to describe this:

> At the end of my street, I cross over the road to stand at the bus stop, waiting for the 452 bus to High Street Kensington. When on the bus, I find a seat. As I sit down, I feel my touchlines re-structuring as barriers nearer to my body. I feel a merging of my external dress space with another's external dress space (e.g. sitting on the edge of someone's coat), which makes me feel that the edges of my horizon are an extension of my epidermic self-awareness. I observe feeling an uncomfortable touch tension with the anticipation of accidental or inevitable touching and an empathy with how this might be felt by the other wearer.
> (Observational notes on the 452 bus, Lucy Gundry 25.3.15)

The uncomfortable *touch tension* I experience is the anticipation of touching the dress space of another wearer (who is not my 'aesthetic double') and the breach of conduct around touch that relates to this. Paterson suggests that tension arises between the immediacy of the cutaneous touch and the deep metaphorical implications of this touch: 'That tension between the quotidian immediacy of cutaneous contact and the philosophical profoundity of touch, between 'immediate' and 'deep' metaphorical touching […]' (Paterson 2). I experienced this when

> I anticipated an accidental touching of a stranger's knee in the act of sitting down on a bus seat with deeper conscious ramifications of embarrassment and anticipated anxiety. To alleviate the tension I felt, I decide to change to an empty seat and sit face to face but a metre away from another wearer to test how this change in distance might consciously affect how my touchlines restructured as a result. (Observational notes, on the 452 bus, Lucy Gundry 25.3.15)

I understand that this *touch tension* was caused by the anticipation of trespassing on another wearer's touch barrier, with conscious implications. As the bus travels down the street and I have moved a comfortable distance away from another wearer, I contemplate a parallel with the *touch tension* I experienced on the bus and the one I observed as an 'ownership barrier' in the *Dress Sense*

experiment. The tension I experience has arisen, as Paterson suggests, between the immediacy of the cutaneous touch and the deep metaphorical implications of this touch. However, the implications of this touch are around boundaries marking the territories of the self, rather than the social or museological.

The experience of wearing dress is a shared phenomenon for all wearers in the world. Each wearer's external dress space is mapped in terms of their invisible spatial structures as an ever-renewable trace re-structuring in flux. The viewer's points of inflection remain within their horizon, yet at the same time touchlines can project beyond the horizon in order to meet 'a highly specific thing' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:159). When touch barriers have been transgressed (in anticipation or actually), a tension is felt. It is a type of *touch tension* which in this instance I experienced as a touch barrier. Once two different wearers no longer behold one another in the proximity of a bus or in passing on the street, their invisible touchlines and barriers retract, reconstruct and restructure separately in response, tensions disappear and touch barriers are no longer felt or need to be observed or in place.

In summary, on the bus and in the role of wearer, when I am viewed by another wearer I feel my horizon becomes a self-conscious touch barrier. Rather than the 'homely' viewing of my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror, when I view other wearers on the bus I become self-conscious of the fact that my eyes touch their horizon, too. Therefore my horizon becomes a strong self-conscious touch barrier for the shared social acts of reaching out to touch (conscious or cutaneous) between wearers.

On this particular autoethnographic journey from my home in north-west London to the V&A museum, I alight from the bus on High Street Kensington (a few stops before the one for the V&A). I begin to walk towards Exhibition Road, passing clothes shops on my right. I stop and look in a clothes shop window, which is vitrine-like, with its glass barrier and dressed mannequins inhabiting the space. On display is a red dress. I observe the desire to touch this dress. This creates a trajectory of invisible touchlines between my proprioceptive body and the dressed mannequin in the shop window, cutaneously prevented in this instance by the glass window. My resolution is to cross the threshold from the street into the shop and transgress the glass touch barrier in the process. Once in the shop the experience of dress becomes less social and more domestic, because the desire to touch, hold and try on dress can be cutaneously satisfied without the social tension of touching another conscious wearer. I see the red dress on a rail, I take it and I try it on. I look at myself in the changing-room mirror (as I did earlier in my domestic mirror) with the dress on and then I decide to buy the dress.

The changing-room

This brings me to the next viewing space I encounter on my journey, which is in front of a changing-room mirror. This is a viewing space I previously experienced when I bought my orange cardigan and

tried on my jeans, as described in Chapter One. In both situations I unfolded the item of dress from a pile or removed it from a hanger in the shop. I looked at it, touched it and took it to try it on in a changing room where I was able to see myself dressing my 'aesthetic double' in the mirror.

Now inside the changing-room of this shop and with the door shut for privacy, I am able to see my 'whole' body in the full-length mirror in front of me and draw parallels with dressing in front of a domestic mirror (Figure 25). I will now map this space with reference to Paterson's 'phenomenological aspects of spatial measure' (Paterson 2007:72) which, for the purposes of this thesis, is embodied within the invisible spatial structure. This now includes the outstretched arm, the touchline, the fingertip, the horizon (boundary, margin), the skin, the dress, the point of inflection, the touch barrier (cutaneous and conscious) and the concept of a *touch tension*.

> As I pull on the red dress, I feel the invisible touchlines I create with my arms and fingertips. These are approximately an arm's length in circumference with a little extra gap depending on how far I stand away from the mirror at any one point. I feel similar sensations and pressures to those when dressing in my orange cardigan as I pull the red dress through points of inflection and along touchlines towards my body. As I observe this in the changing-room mirror I feel my touchlines extend beyond my external dress space and in effect transgress my horizon with a degree of self-consciousness in this social space. (Observational notes in the changing room, Lucy Gundry 25.3.15)

In the process of dressing in front of the changing-room mirror I observe that I transgress my self-conscious touch barrier by moving away from the 'real' space of the street into the imaginary realm. I begin to imagine the dress on myself in other contextual spaces (e.g. a party) where I might wear it. I observe that touching, trying on the dress and looking in the mirror has enabled me to anticipate inhabiting the dress not just cutaneously but with reference to 'previous wearing experiences'. I am able to imagine emplacing myself in a fabricated context that not only runs parallel to my situated one but cannot be felt without the conscious experience of being a wearer at the same time.

Figure 25. 'Trying on a red dress: three stages in a retail changing-room' (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

The transitional space of the changing room has set up an important intercorporeality between my experience of being a socially situated wearer and my 'aesthetic double'. This is because it is through the body that the experience has been able to operate along intersubjective touchlines. Beyond referencing the understanding of dress as a site of negotiation for the *wearing consciousness*, this helps the wearer shift towards emplacing their *wearing consciousness* across touch barriers not only into social contexts but further, into imagined ones. This experience has enabled me to understand that I am able to experience dress through an imagined inhabiting at the same time as a socially situated inhabiting. Therefore, I understand the changing room space to be a container which spatially resembles the viewing space in front of a domestic mirror and the vitrine-like space I experience as a wearer on the street. These parallels enable a social development of the *wearing consciousness* to operate within wider social pressures and codes of conduct around touch and belonging, which merge the domestic with the street.

After I have purchased the red dress, I leave the shop to continue my journey to the V&A. I notice that my 'invisible spatial structure' is now one I am able to feel consciously. It has re-structured to include touchlines which extend not only consciously towards the bag in which the red dress is folded up, but also towards newly anticipated wearing experiences in the dress and an imagined understanding of how it might be viewed by other wearers.

I understand that I now experience wearing dress through what I will term as an *invisible wearing schema* with view to navigating the experience of being a wearer not only in the domestic space but also in the social spaces of the street. The *invisible wearing schema* is one that incorporates an *invisible spatial structure* within a socially developed, conscious understanding of how dress is experienced as a wearer in the world.

Space Three: *Exhibition*

In this last phase of my journey I transition from being a wearer on the street to being a sample viewer in the museum when I cross the threshold of the V&A through its huge glass revolving doors on Cromwell Road. I will describe this transition because it marks an important shift, not only between the role of wearer and sample viewer, but also between the social space of the everyday and the social space of the museum where the architecture and script structure a different experience of dress in space.

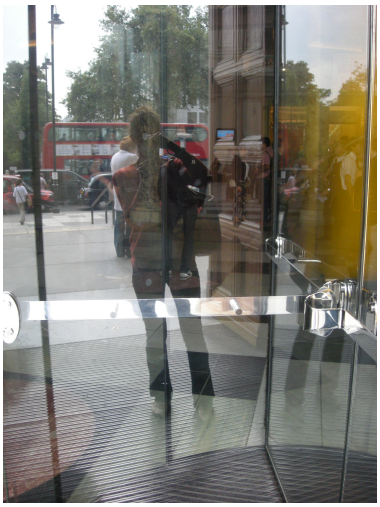


Figure 26. 'My reflection on entering the revolving doors at the V&A' (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 27. 'Going through the revolving doors at the V&A' (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As I place my hand on one of the glass revolving doors and push (Figure 26 and 27), the transparent walls inside begin to move. As I move I observe the feeling that I am passing through a vitrine of my

own, as if I am a dress exhibit. I realize I can see my reflection mirrored in the glass in front of me and behind me. I am fleetingly inside a glass viewing space, which is approximately an arm's length in circumference (a little smaller), and this immediately draws parallels with 'viewing' spaces I have encountered so far (domestic, street, changing room). This is a reference not only to a parallel experience I had on the street (discussed in the previous section) but to an experience I had in Chapter One as I entered the 'Mirror Room'. This is because I see my disorientated, fragmented reflection not only juxtaposed in the glass doors, but also reflected behind me against the backdrop of Cromwell Road. I reflect on myself as a wearer as I enter the revolving doors, and again as a sample viewer when I leave the revolving doors and go into the museum. Like the one in the 'Mirror Room', this threshold experience has allowed me to reflect on how other viewers might view my dressed body as an exhibit. When I exit the doors as a sample viewer it is with the understanding that I begin a navigation of the museum space via my *invisible wearing schema* for the purpose of viewing dress.

In *Civilizing rituals*, Carol Duncan suggests that the exhibition is scripted with 'sequenced spaces and arrangements of objects: its lighting and architectural details provide both the stage set and the script.' (Duncan 1995:12). Exhibition architecture provides a visible script, yet the 'Do not touch' script is both visible and invisible. Visible 'Do not touch' signs include the vitrine, rope and plinth. Invisible 'Do not touch' signs include a laser beep, which is activated when a viewer puts their head or arm too far into the exhibit space (as experienced in *The Vulgar: Fashion Redefined* at the Barbican Art Gallery on 17 November 2016). Other invisible touch barriers include what Claire Wilcox refers to as the 'out of reach' rule (Wilcox 2013), which is the staging of dress exhibits beyond the reach of a viewer's arm length in order to prevent touching. Further, when dress exhibits are staged within 'immediate access' it is the viewer who is required to consciously implement a touch barrier, to prevent themselves from reaching out to touch an exhibit (as I discuss earlier in the *Dress Sense* experiment findings).

Duncan goes on to suggest that this is because 'One is also expected to behave with a certain decorum […] a sign spells out rather fully the do's and don'ts of ritual activity and comportment' (Duncan 1995:10). The ritual behaviour involves keeping your voice down, moving at a slower pace, not eating or drinking, not photographing or sketching, and not touching (Duncan 1995). Duncan speaks of 'decorum' and Eco of 'demeanour'. Both are contextually useful to discuss different spatially aware behaviours. 'Demeanour', however, is more pertinent here in order to understand not only what the viewer brings into the dress exhibition as a wearer but also how this translates into a script which allows the viewer to navigate the space in the dress exhibition. In Duncan's words: 'In art museums, it is the visitors who enact the ritual' (Duncan 1995:12).

'Imaginatively inhabiting'

In this next section I will carry out some initial analysis in the role of 'researcher' in front of an exhibit I cited in Chapter One, which is further illuminating here: 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90' (Room 40, V&A) (see Figure 29). This is in order to explore how the anonymous viewer 'meets' a dress exhibit in spatial terms across the museological viewing space.

I note here that there are contentious dialogues involving the socio-historical aspects of the wearing of stays, relating to the forced altering of a women's bodies and their demeanour. However, although these concerns are focused around pressure from both the male and female gaze (for aesthetic reasons), my focus is on the female gaze (in the terms I outline in my introduction). Therefore, specific discussion on the historic wearing of stays is not useful here beyond the viewer's ability to empathise with what it felt like to wear them, both cutaneously and consciously.

28

29

Figure 28. 'An anonymous viewer', Room 40, V&A (27.2.13). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 29. 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90'. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40, V&A (27.2.17). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In addition to highlighting my autoethnographic observations and theory to support spatial analysis, this example provides corroborating evidence from this viewer who appears to be experiencing a *wearing empathy* or perhaps an *'*imagined inhabiting' of this dress exhibit (see Figure 28). In Figure 28, the viewer on the left is facing another viewer on the right approximately an arm's length away. As I note in Chapter One, the viewer on the left appears to be pushing her fingertips from both hands together and inwards to push her stomach in, as if to experience the pressure of wearing these stays on her body. Both viewers have their heads facing each other and slightly inclined towards the exhibit

as they talk to each other approximately one metre from each other and from the exhibit, creating two juxtaposed viewing spaces.

Through these observations I was able to feel 'closer to understanding how those other people […] imagine. […]' (Pink 2009:23) And I learnt how to recognise my 'emplacement in other people's worlds' (Pink 2009:64). I recognize that I also imagine what the pressure of the stays on my torso would feel like, therefore I was also able to emplace these feelings into my own *wearing consciousness* in order to experience them. I am not sure whether I shared the same subjectivities with the viewers, but I recognise that I share both a cutaneous and conscious understanding of this 'imagined inhabiting' across a 'third viewing space'. This is the one between my situated body as a viewer and both the anonymous viewers at the time of taking this photograph (this is indicated by the point of view this photograph is taken from).

Without definitively knowing what the wearing experience this viewer is (because I did not ask her), as a 'sample viewer' I began to imagine several differently contextualised wearing experiences, which I note here:

> She could be imagining what it would feel like to try the stays on there and then, or what it would feel like if she wore the stays in 1775, or what it would feel like to be the woman who wore the stays in 1775. Equally, she could be empathising with what it would feel like to wear the stays in the context of her everyday life (Observational Notes, in Room 40, V&A, Lucy Gundry (27.2.13)

In summary, this autoethnographic analysis is drawn first from my situated experience as a 'researcher' observing other viewers in real time and place (Room 40, V&A (27.2.2013), and second through photographic analysis at a later date. According to Pink, when recorded on camera a space can be 'remade as a representation of that phenomenological reality' (Pink 2009:101). She goes on to say that 'the ethnographer [can] use their imaginations to create personal / cultural understandings of the representation.' (Pink 2009:101)

The shifts I make between the roles of wearer, 'sample viewer' and researcher are integral to the *invisible wearing schema* the sample viewer brings to a spatial understanding of a dress exhibit. This *invisible wearing schema* is developed with an understanding of how a sample viewer emplaces their *wearing consciousness* in order to imagine inhabiting a dress exhibit with view to this being a temporary home for dress.

Dress as a 'spatial metaphor'

My autoethnographic journey now continues with experiences recorded through the role of sample viewer in the exhibition *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, curated by Judith Clark, which was staged in the V&A Archives at Blythe House,[31] London, 27 April – 27 June 2010. This is for the purpose of exploring the spatial metaphors used to construct imagined 'homes' for dress in the exhibition space. Although I acknowledge that my first-hand viewing experience was on Saturday 12 June 2010 (prior to the date of my autoethnographic journey), the analysis of this experience is conducted through a reflexive 'revisiting' of these experiences with further reference to archived images, texts, articles and an interview with Judith Clark at a later date (20 January 2016). The reason for referring to this exhibition is that it comprises a number of spatial experiences for the viewer, which I align with those I define at the beginning of this chapter. These are corporeal, contextual and imaginative. In particular, the experience of Clark's 'sequenced spaces and arrangements of objects, its lighting and architectural details [which] provide both the stage set and the script' (Duncan 1995:12) for the concept of a 'labyrinth'.

This is helpful in order to relate the spatial experience of dress as a wearer in the world through an *invisible wearing schema* to the one that is spatially constructed for an experience in the dress exhibition.

Re-visitation

I will now chart my experience as a sample viewer through the observation of specific exhibits and the spaces I encountered between them which made up this exhibition experience on Saturday 12 June 2010. On this day, standing outside Blythe House, I press a buzzer to be let through a metal 'kissing gate'. I cross a courtyard and register my arrival in the office, along with a small group of other viewers, ready to be guided around the exhibition. These are my observational notes:

> A man with a big bunch of keys led us (a small group of viewers at a time) into a large utility lift: once the doors were shut it travelled up one floor. When the lift stopped the grille was pushed to one side and the lift door was opened (by the guide) for us to step out. Like a docile herd we were led down a dimly lit Victorian corridor (Figure 41), up a flight of stairs and down a flight of stairs, out on to the roof and then on down to a bunker. Our journey criss-crossed various different spaces, which ranged from tight, wide, long, short and straight, some with round corners. Each time we arrived at a door, the guide would unlock it

[31] Blythe House, built 1899 - 1903 by (Sir) Henry Tanner, is a listed former Post Office Savings Bank Headquarters, and is now the site of the V&A Archives.

with his big bunch of keys, let us through, then lock it behind us. (Observational notes, *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* exhibition, Blythe House, Lucy Gundry 12 June 2010)

Figure 30. A corridor in Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

'Pretentious'

One of the first exhibits we came to was 'Pretentious', hidden inside a rolling stack archive (Figures 31 and 32). When we reach a particular set of black handles the guide stopped and started to turn one of the wheels (Figure 31). The huge stacks started to roll apart to reveal a long rectangular space reaching from the corridor back to the windows.

Figure 31. The rolling stacks corridor, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

Inside the space was a row of dresses hanging on the left, with their moulds in relief on the right. This exposed both the positive and negative spaces of this dress exhibit.

Figure 32. ‘Pretentious’, *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

It was possible for the viewer to enter the space between the two rows of dress exhibits (between Figures 32 and 33). So I will consider this as the viewing space, not least because this space measured approximately an arm’s length across. On the right, the empty dress moulds mirrored the concave ‘inside-out’ versions of the dresses which were hung on the left, exposing their negative spaces on the other side of the exhibit. In this space the feeling was of having been physically invited inside the exhibit. However, at the same time it felt as if at any moment the huge rolling stacks could roll back and the viewer could become squashed into a mould. This both delineated the space of the body through the relief of dress (see Figure 33) and made a conscious comment on the concept of ‘pretentiousness’ in terms of the relationship between dress, body, self and space.

Figure 33. ‘Pretentious’, *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

Unique to *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* as an exhibition was that each exhibit was accompanied by a text; this was written by psychoanalyst Adam Phillips, typed on cards and handed to the viewer (by the guide) upon arrival at each exhibit. This is the text for ‘Pretentious’:

Something pretending to be something that it is.

2

An experiment in excess; excess on trial.

3

The courting and claiming of ridicule; making
embarrassment the solution and not the problem.

4

Exposing a certain blandness in the environment,
a needless uniformity in the situation; a revealing
of assumptions; a reinforcing of conventions.

5

Full of misgiving.

(Clark and Philips 2010:86)

The idea that dress can be 'pretentious' (separately from the wearer) and exhibited as such provokes a conscious viewing experience. In this way these positive and negative spaces of dress, which are situated opposite each other (in between which the viewer is situated), refer at the same time to a haptic aesthetic and a connected, yet separate, 'pretentiousness', which can be thought of as the consciousness. These separate and separated versions of the same dress can also be thought of as the connected yet separate parts of dress, body and self. In this exhibit it is not only the conscious reference to 'pretentiousness' that is called forth but a conscious understanding of the *wearing consciousness* as a 'spatial metaphor'. This connects the viewer's understanding of their *wearing consciousness* to their phenomenological *imagined wearing schema* which plays out through touchlines in the external dress space around the body.

In order to explore how conscious concepts associated with the dress exhibit (as in 'Pretentious', described here) might further provoke the viewer's imaginative understanding of dress as a spatial metaphor I will refer to a sentence from the text above: 'Exposing a certain blandness in the environment, a needless uniformity in the situation; a revealing of assumptions; a reinforcing of conventions' (Clark and Philips 2010:86).

I observe Philips' reference to a 'needless uniformity in the situation' as a conscious desire to wear pretention, in order to counter a 'blandness in the environment', or to reveal 'assumptions' or to reinforce conventions for the wearer. This situates 'pretentiousness' both as a needed yet needless shared phenomenon of wearing consciousness: a phenomenon subject to conscious pressures, tensions and affects which Clark has translated as fragments in the internal architecture of a dress, body and self relationship.

My conscious response to this aesthetic and spatially staged interpretation of the 'worn' concept of 'Pretentious' is as summarised: I understand 'pretentiousness' to be a less homely, hollow feeling, in which a wearer uses dress to create a façade. Characteristics of the experience of the *wearing consciousness* are spatially expanded, exposed and mirrored in this dress exhibit. The effect of exposing the interior space of dress with the detail of its facade leaves the viewer unsure as to what fragment of the *wearing consciousness* is being concealed or revealed – which one is worn on the inside and which on the outside. This seems to equate my conscious understanding of 'Pretentious' with the fabrication of a façade which conceals, yet reveals, fragments of the self that are both positive and negative when observed in a spatial context.

I observe that there are empathetic parallels between the concept of consciously negotiating and renegotiating the relationship between dress, body and self (in Lacanian terms) and the conscious understanding of 'Pretentious' as a visible spatial structure. I suggest that my conscious experience has drawn empathetic parallels with imagined feelings which resonate with another of Phillips' comments: 'The courting and claiming of ridicule; making embarrassment the solution and not the problem'. (Clark and Philips 2010:86)

I experience this dress exhibit through spatial metaphors which allow me to consciously understand what 'Pretentious' feels like to wear within the wider social pressures that are mapped out by Clark and Phillips.

'Armoured'

On leaving 'Pretentious', I was guided down more corridors and up more flights of stairs, until we left through a door onto the rooftop of Blythe House, where I was able to view 'Armoured'. 'Armoured' was a lone female figure, cast in a hard white translucent resin and wearing a dress and bonnet (circa 1761 – 1832), designed and commissioned by Clark (Figure 34). I chose this exhibit because despite the hard materials, exterior location and greater viewing distance, I suggest that I was able to 'imagine inhabiting' this dress exhibit.

Figure 34. 'Armoured', *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

'Armoured' (Figure 34) was centrally situated on a square concrete plinth within a domed circle of classically inspired pillars which make up one of the rooftop sentinels. The surrounding roof architecture is a mix of external pipes and glimpses of other sentinels marking out the edges of the rooftops' corner boundaries. These prevented the viewer from getting closer than several metres away. Within the sentinel we saw the back of this lone white figure. There was no face, just a bonnet facing outwards over the streets of London far below. The pillars created a vitrine-like space, with an open side which resembled the size and shape of a doorway. But there was no door, just a threshold between the space inside the vitrine and the space beyond, in which the viewer is situated. Here is an extract from Phillips' text for 'Armoured' (Figure 35):

'Sustaining belief in the inside and the outside,
the invulnerable space and the essentially unprotected body.'
(Clark and Phillips 2010:22)

Phillips' text describes the interior and exterior dress space in spatial terms, as an 'invulnerable' space, allowing a conscious interpretation of the dress itself.

Figure 35. [REDACTED] Pages 22 – 23 in 'The Concise Dictionary of Dress' book, featuring an image and text for 'Armoured', *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © Violette Editions / 2010 Norbert Schoerner (Clark and Phillips 2010:22-3)

The downward-tilting bonnet and defensive back view of 'Armoured' suggest 'the essentially unprotected body.' (Clark and Phillips 2010:22). Yet the 'invulnerable space' around it absorbs the pressures and provides a pillared armour for this otherwise vulnerable figure.

I imagine this essentially unprotected figure to have drawn her horizon into the interface of the dress space, which no longer acts as an interface but as a touch barrier. Unlike 'Pretentious', in which the relationship between dress, body and self is hollow and exposed, in the case of 'Armoured' I am halted several metres away from this hard, seemingly impenetrable dress inside a concrete pillared fort, a space which I am not invited into. I understand that an 'armoured' way of wearing dress is one of creating a touch barrier to separate and protect the wearer from the pressures experienced in the social space.

As was the case with 'Pretentious' I do not reach out to touch the dress, despite the attraction of the cutaneous contradiction of hard resin in soft fabric folds. The reasons for this (apart from the physical impossibility due to distance), are very different, but also similar to the ones I experienced with 'Pretentious': first, that it would be like touching someone else's dress, which presents an 'ownership barrier', and second because I would be touching an exhibit, which means I would be breaking the museological 'Do not touch' barrier. However, I do experience a *touch tension*, because although I understand I am not allowed to physically touch it, I am not sure if I am allowed to inhabit or extend empathetic feelings towards the dress exhibit. This is because this might impinge on a conscious inhabiting of a dress space, which does not belong to my *wearing consciousness* and therefore is not

mine to inhabit. Suddenly conscious of this 'prying' feeling, I was relieved when it was time to leave 'Armoured':

> As I turn around and walk away from 'Armoured' to go back through the small roof door, which the guide unlocks and locks behind us, I enter Blythe House again. As I reach the other side with the other viewers, I observe that my wearing empathy allowed me to extend my feeling beyond the physical horizon of the dress itself and towards the melancholy of the wearing consciousness I felt to be embodied within it. At the same time, I put a barrier in place so as not to cross into her wearing consciousness and risk making a chink in her or my own armour. (Observational notes, The *Concise Dictionary of Dress* exhibition, Blythe House, Lucy Gundry 12 June 2010)

In summary, through an extension of feeling into seeing in order to reach out in mournful empathy with the lone figure of 'Armoured', I felt I had crossed a touch barrier. However, on reflection, I did not consciously inhabit another wearer's dress space but I did inhabit melancholy feelings which I drew from my own wearing experiences in empathy. I understand here that the physical structure of 'Armoured' as a lone dress situated inside a fortress of pillars was a spatially constructed metaphor which evoked melancholy feelings in the viewer. Therefore I did not inhabit the dress so much as experience the feeling of wearing a heavy, cold dress with a mournful demeanour, which was a feeling I 'imagined inhabiting' through the space of my own *wearing consciousness*.

'Measured'

As I continued up and down corridors and flights of stairs in Blythe House, I came to this exhibit. I choose to discuss it is because it draws the viewer into a consciously 'Measured' dress space without a dress (Figures 36 and 37).

Figure 36. 'Measured', *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

'Measured' was hidden inside a waist-high white cupboard, which had been left ajar so that viewers could peep inside (Figure 36). It was dark, but revealed a tiny room criss-crossed with deep, lidded dark wooden boxes from floor to ceiling. Little round knobs on the lids suggested they could be lifted up (Figure 37). Several of the boxes were open, displaying objects inside. There were a pair of white gloves and two small white figurines. On the exhibition card I was handed were the following words: 'disarray, fitted, proportion, contained and containment' (Clark and Phillips 2010:73). These words seemed to suggest different ways of filling, measuring and matching spaces to objects. The term 'measured' references not just a way of mapping space but also describes a conscious, balanced way of thinking.

Figure 37. 'Measured', *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © Julian Abrams

As with 'Pretentious' and 'Armoured', my observation of this exhibit was that it was a comment on the conscious relationship between dress, body and self. Yet with the absence of a dress I suggest the construction and contents of these boxes (whether visible or invisible) represent what I refer to in this thesis as the *wearing consciousness*: a visual compartmentalising of wearing memories, pressures and associated feelings with being a wearer in the world, illustrated in the open boxes with personal effects (Goffman) e.g. a pair of white gloves and two figurines.

A visual connection is made between these 'measured' boxes (as an example of mathematical precision and execution of craftsmanship) and Serres' concept of the 'black box' discussed in Chapter

One of this thesis. The half-open door allows the viewer to glimpse into this secret chamber with both concealed and revealed aspects of the wearing consciousness.

If I consider 'Measured' to be a visualisation of the *wearing consciousness*, then the secrecy in this exhibition – as in '[...] secrecy wherein they lie' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:149) – is not one that lies within the labyrinth of Blythe House. Instead, the 'secrecy' lies within the labyrinth of the relationship between dress, body and self. Phillips' definition is metaphorically helpful: 'disarray, fitted, proportion, contained and containment' (Clark and Phillips 2010:73). This suggests that a measured approach to the wearing of dress balances feelings of 'disarray, fitted, proportioned, contained and containment' which metaphorically help the concept I have developed of an *invisible wearing schema* in this chapter. This reflexive experience is one which balances the viewing of a spatial metaphor with the experience of transgressing a cutaneous, rather than conscious, touch barrier to further imagine what it feels like to be a conscious wearer in the world.

Leaving Blythe House

After the last exhibit, the group was led back down a spiral flight of stairs (see Figure 38) and along another corridor back towards the lift. I observed that being led along the corridors, stairs, lift, and rooftop and the unlocking and locking of doors by the guide allowed us to transgress and trespass through thresholds. All were all as much a comment on dress as the dress exhibits themselves. These contextual spatial structures within Blythe House reflected those.

I reflect on the corporeal forms in this exhibition, which played with scale and the viewer's perception of space by engaging the viewer's imagination. Along the way there was a sense of the exhibits filling and belonging to the contextual space they occupied. One of the most interesting aspects of this exhibition was its reference to a conscious understanding of what it means to wear dress even without museum mannequins. Therefore, I suggest the original context for dress is not only the situated body (Entwistle 2001) but the situated *wearing consciousness*, which is in and around the wearer through a spatially experienced haptic aesthetics of dress. I now understand that this conscious wearing of dress allows a spatial understanding that is not just negotiated and renegotiated, structured and restructured, along cutaneous and conscious touchlines; it is also one that has to be navigated spatially through different contexts and across different thresholds from the everyday into the museum. This is one which spatially unites the sample viewer (as a conscious wearer) not only with other wearers and viewers in context but to the context itself through the haptic aesthetics of dress in space.

Figure 38. Spiral flight of stairs, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

As I exit the lift and leave Blythe House I think back to how I described entering the V&A Museum earlier in this chapter through its glass revolving doors (Figures 26 and 27) at the Cromwell Road entrance. I reflect on a parallel between Storrie's concept of the delirious museum (2005) and Clark's use of historical references as spatial metaphors. In *The delirious museum Storrie* suggests '[…] that it can *only* be brought into existence retroactively and it is, in effect, a construction of nostalgia.' (Storrie 2006:3).

I suggest that through Clark's spatial metaphors I was able to access conscious experiences of what it feels like to be a wearer in the world in corporeal, contextual and imaginative spaces. This is not just a parallel between the cutaneous and conscious spaces within the wearer but the interior and exterior of dress spaces, which are mirrored in all sorts of dress exhibits (in dress mirrors and dress as a mirror) which must be navigated across the viewing space and throughout the museological space. I suggest the dress exhibits I 'met' in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* are spatially understood as bodies of dress (as is the viewer's 'aesthetic double' in the mirror and 'anonymous' viewers in the contexts of the street and exhibition) towards which the viewer is able to extend a *wearing empathy*. Along invisible touchlines and across touch barriers, the viewer is further able to 'imaginatively inhabit' dress without leaving their proprioceptive body. The viewer 'henceforth inhabits both bodies simultaneously' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:412).

Conclusion

Chapter Two has provided a clear understanding of how the haptic aesthetics of dress are subject to context, and as a result can be thought of as being contextualised by different 'homes'. Some of these 'homes' are physical spaces, some of them are conscious spaces and some are imagined. Physical spaces range from the domestic wardrobe, street and shop to the exhibition context. Conscious spaces are those experienced through the *wearing consciousness*, which include a *wearing empathy* or an 'imagined inhabiting'. All of dress's 'homes' are subject to cutaneous, conscious, social and environmental pressures. A wearer maps out a home through touchlines, structures and metaphors that are consciously drawn from each 'wearing experience'.

As a wearer transitions into the street, a socially developed *wearing consciousness* is formed through haptic aesthetic engagement with other wearers. When a wearer crosses a second threshold into the museum (in my case the V&A), I understand that the wearer has entered a different home for dress now they are in the role of 'sample viewer': a home which is subject not only to social and cultural pressures but also museological pressures, which are further subject to a specific architecture and script that relate to the 'Do not touch' barrier. In the role of sample viewer, I understand that in the context of the dress exhibition I view dress exhibits as a further collection of 'homes' within the wider contextual home of the exhibition space, which is further situated within the context of a museological space.

The Concise Dictionary of Dress is especially revealing when analysed in this way. I suggest Clark's exhibits combine a physical, conceptual and conscious space to create a spatial metaphor which is experienced as part of a wider spatial metaphor for the concept expressed in the exhibition's title itself. This is further experienced within the situated museological space of Blythe House itself. The metaphors of 'Pretentious', or 'Armoured' and of 'Measured' create 'homes' for dress which the viewer can reference within their *wearing consciousness*. This creates a series of conscious homes for dress which transgress and trespass into the realm of the imaginary, allowing the viewer not only to reference these spatial metaphors but also to experience them through their own feelings as an imagined inhabitant. This is my experience of 'Armoured'.

In summary, Paterson describes the way a haptic aesthetic experience is felt thus: 'From the active touching, reaching out and measuring of space, we consider how we become touched and affected by things through artworks' (Paterson 2007:79). In this case, the act of 'reaching out' and the 'measuring of space' is crucial for the 'sample viewer' to be able to feel touched by 'dress' (I suggest a 'dress exhibit' can be thought of as an 'artwork' in this instance) in the context of the exhibition. However, as in the dress exhibition, where 'active touching' (cutaneous) is not permitted, I suggest the viewer experiences a 'conscious touching' through the haptic aesthetics of dress to feel 'touched and

affected by things' such as the dress exhibit. This is through a conscious measuring of space navigated through a sample viewer's *invisible wearing schema*, which they bring into the dress exhibition as a conscious wearer.

Therefore the 'Do not touch' code of conduct creates a unique space in the dress exhibition, one that allows an imagined touch to fold in a haptic aesthetic way into actual touch along invisible touchlines. These allow the sample viewer to reach out and further emplace their *wearing consciousness* into other spatially contextualised spaces within the dress exhibition. These are spaces the 'sample viewer' navigates in order to adjust as the context alters, because the dress exhibition is just another space a viewer enters as a wearer, inhabiting it as such in the same way they do in the everyday.

Chapter Three: *Moving Dress*

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to gain an understanding of dress as a *moving* phenomenon in the dress exhibition. This is in terms of how haptic aesthetics are worn into dress by the wearer during the act of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror and when walking in the street. Understanding this as haptic kinaesthetic knowledge is what I aim to bring into the experience of viewing dress in the exhibition as a 'sample viewer' through this chapter.

In 1992, when interest in the body was growing in fashion theory, Elizabeth Wilson identified the lack of movement in the dress exhibition as 'faintly uncanny'. She wrote this account of her visit to the *Pierre Cardin* exhibition at the V&A Museum (10 October 1990 – 6 January 1991):

> Strangest of all were the dead white, sightless mannequins staring fixedly ahead, turned as if to stone in the middle of a decisive moment […] without the living body, they could not be said to fully exist. Without movement, they became oddly abstract and faintly uncanny. (Wilson 1992:15)

Sigmund Freud suggests that it is '[…] the impressions, processes and situations that can arouse an especially strong and distinct sense of the uncanny in us […]' (Freud 2003:135) and he attributes this to a '[…] doubt as to whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate'. (Freud 2003:135) This is helpful for an understanding of the issue of liveliness and movement in the dress exhibition, and the haptic kinaesthetic analysis of dress exhibits when viewed in stillness.

In 2000, Entwistle added the insight that 'What it cannot tell us is how the garment was worn […]' (Entwistle 2000:10). This placed an emphasis on how dress is worn (on a body), and further, on how it moves. More recently, in 2016, Oriole Cullen and Brix Smith met with Glenn Adamson at the V&A Museum to record a podcast, *Curating contemporary fashion*[32]**.** During the conversation Glenn Adamson asks Oriole Cullen:

> Is it difficult to put fashion in a museum, because we think of fashion as something that is worn on the body and obviously the body moves? It's a way you experience the world. When you put it on a mannequin and it is still, do you lose something?

[32] 'Curating contemporary fashion' podcast, season 1, episode 8 was produced and broadcast by the V&A in 2016. Accessed 15.9.20: http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/v-and-a-podcast-curating-contemporary-fashion/

In response to Adamson's question, Cullen agrees that 'Absolutely, I think there is that factor that you do lose' (V&A 2016). Entwistle goes on to add that 'without movement'; dress cannot tell us how […] the garment moved when on a body […] and how it felt to the wearer' (Entwistle 2000:10). This emphasised the importance of the *felt* experience of wearing dress in the exhibition.

These quotes suggest a connection between dress 'without movement', an intellectual uncertainty as to whether dress 'might not perhaps be animate' (Freud 2003:135) and the feeling that dress, 'without the living body, could not be said to fully exist' (Wilson 1992:15) in the exhibition context. However, in the three decades since Wilson's comment, dress *has* been exhibited in motion in many different ways in the exhibition space, some of which I will illustrate with the examples in this chapter.

For the purpose of kinaesthetic analysis I suggest that Wilson's comment about the dresses in the *Pierre Cardin* exhibition at the V&A Museum in 1991, '[…] without the living body [they] could not be said to fully exist' (Wilson 1992:15), is pertinent. I take this forward to investigate whether 'living movement' (movement from the living body) is *felt* to be inherent in the dress exhibit by the 'sample viewer' and whether, through a *wearing empathy*, the viewer can feel what it would be like to wear dress in motion. This is in order to understand the kinaesthetics a 'sample viewer' brings into the viewing of dress, physically and consciously. This chapter is thus to some extent an exploration of what is both lost and found.

Further to this enquiry, I focus on the kinaesthetic rendering of 'living movement' rather than 'live motion'. This is because 'live motion' is a mode of physical movement in which dress can be exhibited – for example, through video footage, film projection, digital simulation, streaming or even (as I discuss later) techniques such as 'Pepper's ghost'[33]. 'Living movement' renders movement from the living body itself into the translation of dress in motion in the exhibit. Examples of this are the use of gesture and the living mannequin. Therefore, through living movement I am able to make a connection between the kinaesthetics a wearer experiences when walking in the street and the kinaesthetics a sample viewer experiences when walking and observing dress in the exhibition. Further to this, living movement is one that is felt through the haptic aesthetics of dress.

What is moving?

In this chapter I aim to identify *what* is moving, *how* it moves, and most importantly how I, in my autoethnographic research, *feel* it to be moving through specifically chosen examples of each. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first explores theory and supporting research exercises in order to establish the tacit haptic knowledge of kinaesthetics as a resource for analysis and

[33] 'Peppers ghost' is a special effects technique used to create transparent ghostly images.

autoethnographic research. Section Two is an autoethnographic walk which begins from the same act of dressing in front of a domestic mirror as in Chapters One and Two, but in this chapter the focus is putting on my shoes. This is a metaphor for the walk I go on in which I begin in the domestic space, then journey out onto the street, in order to then enter the museum. In both sections I reference dress exhibits that were selected to further my analysis. All the exhibits have been selected in order to examine the different dynamics and types of living movement a viewer engages with in the dress exhibition.

Apart from an assessment of different living, moving kinaesthetics, there is a spectrum which ranges from dress exhibits in 'museum stillness' (which is the stillness of an unlived-in room) to dress exhibits in full living movement. I have selected two examples in order to exemplify different ends of this spectrum; both are curated by Claire Wilcox.

In conversation (29.1.2013), Wilcox cites 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle 1775', **i**n the *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800* vitrine (Room 40 of the Fashion Galleries, V&A Museum) as an example of 'arrested movement' staged in 'museum stillness'. Although I cite this vitrine in previous chapters, in this chapter it is pertinent for the feature of the dropped shoe (next to the green socks). This is positioned in the middle ground of the vitrine, lying on its side looking as if it has recently been knocked off the plinth where its pair remains upright in the foreground (Figure 1) of the vitrine.

Figure 1. 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775' and 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90'. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40 (14.10.17), V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

At the other end of the spectrum is Wilcox's *Fashion in Motion* series (staged at the V&A since 1999) in which dress is exhibited on living mannequins with the greatest degree of movement. Wilcox's

inaugural *Fashion in Motion* (*FIM*) show was staged on 16 June 1999 in order to exhibit Alexander McQueen's Spring/Summer 1999 collection on 'living' mannequins for the first time in the V&A. To date *FIM* continues as a bi-annual (sometimes tri-annual) exhibition in the form of a live catwalk show in which contemporary fashion designers show their collections (usually their latest collection) on living mannequins in Room 48a (the Raphael Cartoons gallery) within the V&A. The first few *FIMs* (featuring collections by Alexander McQueen in 1999 and Tristan Webber in 2000, for example) introduced a new format into the museum, in which the 'living mannequins' walk around the museum, in and out of galleries, upstairs, downstairs and even out into the garden to exhibit dress, with viewers following behind. However, this changed around 2001 when the exhibition space was restricted, initially to the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries and later moving to the Raphael Cartoons gallery where it is held today in a traditional catwalk format, with living mannequins walking down the catwalk and the viewers seated.

The 'living mannequins' employed in the *FIM* series are professional fashion models, whose role outside the museum is to model dress on catwalks around the world. The transition into the museum to become a 'living mannequin' provides an interesting connection between the everyday and the museum for the 'sample viewer'. Historically, 'living mannequins' first modelled dress for clients in the windows of the fashion houses in Paris in the late 1800s, and consequently in the early part of the nineteenth century in England the living mannequin began to evolve into a 'fashion model' (Evans 2013).

As I outline in my Introduction to this thesis, when a fashion model enters the museum to exhibit dress I suggest the model can then be thought of as a 'living mannequin', aligned with the other mannequins who exhibit dress in this context but differentiated from the museum, digital or Stockman mannequin by the fact that they are 'living'. In conversation, Oriole Cullen (2013) suggested that Wilson's approach was adopted to "[…] counter that idea of the static body and to give the clothing back its true character to see it as it should be worn." (Cullen 2013)

Kinaesthetic analysis

Analysis in this chapter, as in the two previous chapters, consists of an intertwining of three separate points of view. One is the wearer (who is also a viewer of their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror and other wearers on the street). Another is the 'sample viewer' in the dress exhibition. The third is the (haptic aesthetic) researcher. Each point of view approaches the analysis of moving dress separately, but collectively these build a comprehensive understanding.

Analysis as a wearer is autoethnographic through the experience of dressing in front of a domestic mirror and crossing the threshold to walk down the street. Analysis as a sample viewer is both

autoethnographic and observational (of other viewers) which I experience when I put myself in another wearer's shoes and walk with another in the museum. Analysis as a researcher is investigative, with elements of autoethnographic and observational approaches within this. This is through the experiences of being a wearer and a 'sample viewer', which draws together theoretical references and insight, as well as supplementary drawings and observational research in parallel. For example, 'gestural' movement is examined by observing other viewers in Room 40 at the V&A, which involves the experience of being a wearer, sample viewer and researcher at the same time. Analysis in the dress exhibition is not from a curatorial point of view, or with an interest in assessing the effectiveness of curatorial approaches or devices. The purpose of analysis is to develop a haptic (kin)aesthetic understanding of dress in the exhibition where 'living movement' is 'grasped' (a concept developed in Chapter Four) by the 'sample viewer'. This is in order to understand *how* living movement is integral to the sample viewer's experience through a kinaesthetic empathy.

This is the concept I will develop later in this chapter, but at this point I will support the concept by referencing Amelia Jones' foreword to *Kinesthetic empathy* (Reynolds and Reason 2012). In this, Jones connects the concept of kinaesthetic empathy to the experience of viewing a static artwork. She explains that '[…] All experience is durational, and technically speaking (in terms of how human perception works) there is no moment of non-kinaesthetic empathy in our apprehension of creative or even everyday objects and bodies in the world'. (Jones, in Reynolds and Reason 2012:12)

The exhibits discussed in this chapter are analysed through past viewing memories, photographs, visitor data, curator interviews and photographs. Observations are recorded through notes, drawings and photographs. This is cross-referenced with other sample viewer experiences elicited from visitor data, questionnaires, archived online images and videos.

Kinaesthetic theory

Kinaesthetic theory, in this chapter, is partly drawn from the methodology and theory developed in Chapters One and Two. In Chapter One, I explored the concept that the viewer can identify with a dress exhibit using their imagination ('imaginative identification', Lacan 1999:43) in the same way that they would with their 'aesthetic double' in a domestic mirror. This is an identification between dress, body and self which allows haptic aesthetic movement across the viewing spaces in a form that can be thought of as a *wearing consciousness*.

In Chapter Two I further map this haptic aesthetic movement across the viewing space in terms of 'invisible touchlines', created between fingertips and dress. Collectively these form *invisible spatial structures*, which further enable a wearer to emplace their *wearing consciousness* into another

wearing experience or dress space. This is an act of 'imaginatively inhabiting' (Paterson 2007:10), which is indicative of a conscious living movement across the 'viewing space'.

In Chapter Three, in order to develop a kinaesthetic analysis I bring these two concepts together to explore how the proprioceptive body (which I discuss in Chapter Two) consciously moves in the viewing space in response to either an 'aesthetic double', another wearer or a dress exhibit to form what I term an *invisible wearing schema*. This is further understood in this chapter in terms of 'wearing' dress as a kinaesthetic experience.

According to Paterson, 'kinaesthesia' can be considered within the concept of the haptic, and is 'The sensation of movement of body and limbs […]' (Paterson 2007:ix). Collecting these thoughts on how I move as a wearer and a 'sample viewer', I suggest that the kinaesthetics of my body include those experienced when wearing dress and those created by my dress that extend towards the edges of my external dress space when I engage across the everyday and exhibition spaces. In this chapter I explore how a kinaesthetic empathy informs my *invisible wearing schema* and therefore the concept that a viewer can experience a *wearing empathy,* which allows a sample viewer to imagine wearing a dress other than their own as a 'moving' inhabitant of it.

For the second section, an autoethnographic walk, I base my methodology on Pink's proposition that the researcher '[…] learns or knows through her […] whole experiencing body […]' (Pink 2009:25) to which I add *in movement.* Conscious movement is observed in terms of Evans' reference (from Foster) to the fact that the historian (or 'sample viewer' in respect to this thesis) further experiences within '[…] her own body [that there is] a longing to find the vanished bodies of history, arguing that the historian always has a stake in her findings and thus develops a kind of 'kinesthetic empathy' with the bodies of the past, an unofficial type of identification.' (Evans 2013:221)

Therefore, as the 'sample viewer' in this research I observe the degree of movement that is felt to be in a dress exhibit firstly through the concept of a 'kinaesthetic empathy', which allows my experience as a viewer to move along touchlines, cross viewing spaces, trespass across touch barriers and broach thresholds to experience dress in living movement even when dress or the 'sample viewer' remains still. In order to explore where, when and how a viewer experiences a kinaesthetic empathy, I make further connections in this chapter to propose the concept of an *invisible wearing schema* which allows a *wearing empathy*. I will now offer an understanding of this concept as it relates to viewing dress in the exhibition.

Wearing empathy

First, I suggest a kinaesthetic empathy (as experienced by a wearer and a viewer) is a prerequisite to the experience of a *wearing empathy.* This is because in order to experience a *wearing empathy* it is important to understand how the viewer empathises with a dress exhibit through kinaesthetics specific to the wearing of dress.

According to Reynolds and Reason, in discussing their case study of dancers in *Kinesthetic empathy* (2012), the experience of an 'inner mimicry' (Martin) is '[…] a physiological dimension, involving movement memory, anticipation and associated changes in physiological states […]' (Reynolds and Reason 2012:19). Reynolds and Reason further claim that this '[…] allowed spectators direct access to dancers' feelings […]' (Reynolds and Reason 2012:19). Their case study explores the empathetic language of movement between dancers and analyses the kinaesthetics experienced between dress, body and self, specifically in dance. However, I argue that there are parallels between these and the kinaesthetics experienced between the viewer and the dress exhibit.

I argue that a viewer can experience an 'inner mimicry', whether the dress exhibit is viewed in stillness or movement (as long as the viewer feels there to be a reference to living movement) because I suggest the viewer's kinaesthetic sensations are felt through their *wearing consciousness*. Therefore, even in stillness the 'sample viewer' is able to reference a conscious wearing experience.

I will now analyse a set of images which were taken to document the exhibition *Dance and Fashion*, held from 13 September 2014 to 3 January 2015 at The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York. This is in order to understand how the concept of 'inner mimicry' might be experienced when viewing gestural acts between fingertips and dress when staged in stillness.

The curator, Valerie Steele, exhibited ballet, modern dance and flamenco dresses with African-Caribbean and flamenco inspiration from the nineteenth century to the present day. These dress exhibits were staged on museum mannequins, some with heads and some without: most had legs, but most pertinently *all* had arms and hands with which they were able to *hold* their dresses in the gesture of a dance move (Figure 2). My investigation is into whether the still yet gesturing mannequin retains a reference to 'living' movement for the viewer and thus a kinaesthetic or a haptic kinaesthetic experience for a viewer.

Figure 2. ‘Images 1 – 4’ *Dance and Fashion* exhibition, (2014 – 2015) The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. Images © The Museum at FIT

This analysis involved two drawings which I constructed for the purpose of decoding the images with reference to gestural theory. One I refer to as a ‘Touch point drawing’ (Figure 3), which focuses on the circled points where fingertips hold dress. The second I refer to as a ‘Gesture line drawing’ (Figure 4) in which I focus on the lines I draw into the images made by the dance movements between the fingertips and dress. Although I was not able to experience this exhibition at first hand, I was able to view this exhibition space at FIT in New York, in conversation with Valerie Steele on 30 January 2015. Therefore I was able to imagine the exhibition space for these dress exhibits.

Touch point drawing

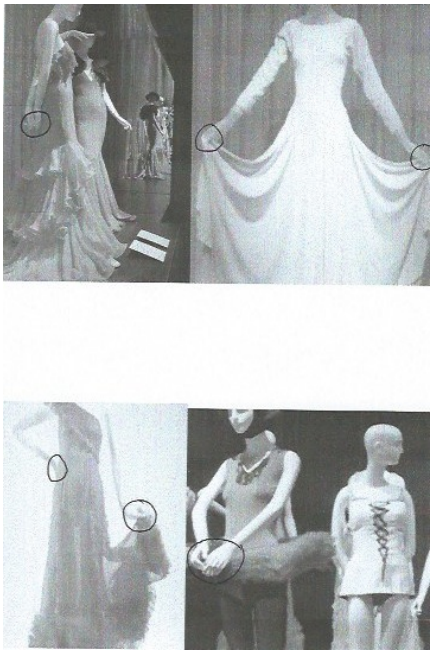


Figure 3. ‘Touch point drawing’ © Lucy Gundry. Images from *Dance and fashion* exhibition (2014 – 2015) © The Museum at FIT

In the exercise I refer to as 'Touch point drawing' (see Figure 3), I have circled the points where the mannequin's hands hold the dress. For example, in the top right-hand image I suggest that a viewer standing in front of this exhibit would be drawn to the pull of the fabric as it falls away from both hands to create connecting swathes between the end of the outstretched arms and the point at which the dress is fitted to the body at the waist. These are important points of reference for the viewer, because this is where the fingertips 'grasp' (a concept I develop in Chapter Four) dress. I suggest these touch points can be thought of as 'points of inflection' (Deleuze) where 'living' meaning can be identified.

Gesture line drawing

I build on this in my 'Gesture line drawing' (Figure 4), which is helpful in order to connect the way the viewer experiences the point of gesture as living meaning through lines which connect dress to the body.

Figure 4. 'Gesture line drawing' © Lucy Gundry. Images from *Dance and fashion* exhibition (2014 – 2015) © The Museum at FIT

In order to 'decode' my Gesture line drawing, I refer to Marilyn Revell DeLong's concept of 'open form' analysis within her 'apparel-body-construct' (DeLong 1998:26). This is in order to focus on the gestural movements created by the arms of the mannequins in dance poses. These gestures are arrested movements on individual mannequins, yet they offer a variety of movements which, captured collectively, refer to a dance.

DeLong describes her apparel-body-context 'In popular terms [as] […] the "look," the "presentation," or the "appearance" of the body, clothing and accessories as a visual unit' (DeLong 1998:26). She goes on to say this includes 'interactions within the clothing ensemble, the clothing to the body, and those of the cultural context.' (DeLong 1998:27) DeLong's open form […] has many discontinuous lines that seem to incorporate the space around it' (DeLong 1998:83), which I will now apply to Figure 4 (above).

> In the top right-hand image, the mannequin is pulling the hem up in order to perform a dance move. The shape of the 'hand on hip' stance is echoed by the extended gesture down to the hem. The two gestures are holding the body and dress in the pose of a dance move. Second, the image in the middle far left image, the hands are outstretched either side of the body at waist height: both hold the dress by the hem. In example one, there is movement in the folds of the dress, a tension, which is held in the moment of pose. Third, in the bottom far left image the mannequin's is entirely inside the dress, creating an internal tension as the dress stretches over the arms. (Observational analysis, Lucy Gundry)

I suggest that these gestural observations not only highlight the kinaesthetics of dress in these dance moves singularly and collectively; they also allow a trace of living meaning to be conveyed, through the point of gesture (where the hand grasps dress), which is followed through with the gestural act of the arm. These represent a connection between the point and line to make up an instant of movement as it fits within a series of movements between body and dress in dance. I observe this series of movements as relating to the preceding and succeeding actions which follow one another in an order, but change direction in a way which I cannot work out by looking at the image; but this does not matter. My analysis of this is that body and dress communicate in a multi-directional state of flux created by the points of my fingertips as they grasp my dress, and it is at these points that inflection occurs and the state of flux is a continuum.

In summary, it is the gestural implications of Steele's mannequins which provide a reference to living kinaesthetics integral to the viewer's experience of a 'moving' element in a dress exhibit. This is because if live motion is rendered through reference to touch points and invisible touchlines which make up an invisible structure in an exhibit and can be experienced through an inner mimicry, then the dress exhibit is able to tell us how […] the garment moved when on a body […] and how it felt to the wearer' (Entwistle 2000:10).

In order to deepen an understanding of the relationship between viewer and dress exhibit in terms of gestural kinaesthetics and the impact of this on a viewer's *invisible wearing schema*, I will re-visit an

exhibit which features throughout the chapters. In conversation with Wilcox, she cited 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775' in Room 40 at the V&A Museum as an example of 'arrested movement'.

I have argued thus far, through kinaesthetic theory, that even when dress is viewed in stillness (where it is worn in the everyday or not-worn in the dress exhibition) there is residue of kinaesthetic movement that can be felt by the viewer. However, the context in which dress is viewed can offer a varying degree of stillness. Wilcox refers to the concept of a 'museum stillness', which, she explained, is different from a room that has 'just been left' (Wilcox 2013). Wilcox suggested that within museum stillness an 'arrested movement' (such as a dropped shoe) can be curated to create the feel of movement, because, unlike a room which has just been left, the museum stillness is stiller and therefore this act will be viewed to heightened kinaesthetic effect. Whilst a room that has just been left holds residues of living movement which at any moment can be disturbed by new movement, the curated stillness inside a vitrine is heightened because this space is undisturbed, enclosed and compliant with the 'museum script' (Duncan 1995). In the example of 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle 1775' the reference to dropping a shoe disturbs this stillness.

Figure 5. 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775' and 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90'. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40, 14.10.17, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In order to make sense of how this gestural act conveys living movement, I refer to the work of the linguist David McNeill. McNeill suggests that 'living meaning' occurs in the moment of gesture:

> Gesture […] is inhabited by the same "living meaning" that inhabits the world (and beyond that, the discourse). Thus, a deeper answer to the query – when we see a gesture, what are

> we seeing? – is that we see part of the speaker's current cognitive being, her very mental existence, at the moment it occurs. (McNeill 2005:92)

McNeill's discussion relates to gesture in the everyday. However, McNeill suggests that meaning created by a gesture relies on the '[…] relationship of a point to a background […]' (McNeill 2005:107), which I understand to mean the relationship between a gesture and the context in which it is made.

In terms of 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle', McNeill's gestural theory can be assessed in terms of the following *invisible wearing schema*, which I imagined during my viewing experience:

> The dropping of the shoe, the arranging of the stockings and the feel of the petticoat mannequin standing silently behind it enabled me to imagine that the petticoat's wearer (possibly the woman in the portrait painting behind) might pick up the flat body-less stockings, pick up the dropped shoe and its pair off the shelf and put them both on. I leave this viewing experience with the sense that the stillness inside this vitrine has been disturbed by the moving together of hands and feet, echoed by my own actions at the beginning of my walk in the process of putting my shoes on. (Observational analysis, Lucy Gundry)

This experience was 'imagined', rather than 'invisible'. This is because as a viewer I was able to bring my knowledge of being a wearer (in particular the experience of getting dressed), to imagine the kinaesthetics of picking up these items of dress, including the shoe, and putting them on. This meant that this was visible to me because I could imagine the feel of these movements in relation to my own kinaesthetic experience of wearing dress.

Figure 6. Detail of 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775' Room 40 14.10.17, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

This is a reference with which the 'sample viewer' will be able to make a parallel in terms of their own structure and restructure of invisible touchlines between dress, body and self in the everyday experiences worn into their 'imagined' *wearing schema*.

I will now embark on my autoethnographic walk, in order to analyse what kinaesthetics the viewer brings into the dress exhibition as a conscious wearer and what kinaesthetics the sample viewer feels *move* in a dress exhibit.

An autoethnographic walk

I begin my autoethnographic walk by putting on my shoes. This is because they provide an embodied metaphor for walking. Once my shoes are on I focus on what it feels like to wear dress as I walk. In particular I notice the difference between the way I walk in my bedroom and the walk I adopt on the street and beyond into the V&A Museum. The first threshold is my front door, between the domestic and street space. Once I have shut my front door, I cross over my street and walk for a couple of minutes along the populated pavement of Chamberlayne Road to a bus stop. I board a 452 bus towards the V&A Museum in South Kensington. After forty-five minutes I alight opposite the Royal Albert Hall, cross over Kensington Gore and walk a few minutes down Exhibition Road towards the V&A, situated at the bottom of the road on the left-hand corner of Cromwell Road. I then enter the V&A through its big glass revolving doors (as I document in Chapter Two) and cross this second threshold from the street into the museum. Once inside the V&A I shift my focus to that of sample viewer and my analysis to observe through slower, quieter movements of my body, as dictated by the museum script (Duncan 1995).

Putting on my shoes

According to Entwistle, 'The phrase "getting dressed" captures this idea of dress as an activity' (Entwistle 2000:11), and therefore putting on my shoes is the final act in becoming a 'conscious wearer' (as I propose the viewer is throughout this thesis).

I will now analyse the act of putting on my shoes. I first reach out to pick up my right shoe (reflected as my left) and bring it up to my right foot (which I had raised to a comfortable height) to slip it on (Figure 7). Merleau-Ponty suggests that when a wearer reaches out, their '[…] hand traces a complicated path through the air […]' but that the 'final position' cannot or does not necessarily need to be worked out:

> ‘If my hand traces a complicated path through the air, I do not need, in order to know its final position, to add together all movements made in the same direction and subtract those made in the opposite direction.’ (Merleau-Ponty 1962:161)

As a wearer, I suggest this is because my hand movements are repeated. In the act of putting on my shoe I am tracing invisible touchlines over the top of one another and this is repeated every time I reach out and put my shoe on. The movements of my hand, leg and shoe are all layered into one invisible kinasthetic structure (Figure 9).

Figure 7. ‘Putting on my right shoe, images 1 - 2’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

Figure 8. ‘Putting on my left shoe, images 1 - 3’, Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

For example, in this exercise, as I put my second shoe on, my left hand (reflected as my right) moves downwards towards my foot as my knee moves upwards at the same time. Once the two are connected (Figure 8, image 2 in the sequence) the knee starts to move downwards to the ground (Figure 8, image 3 in the sequence) when my hand disconnects and moves back up to where it rests. Image 4 in Figure 9 is a layering of these three kinaesthetic movements.

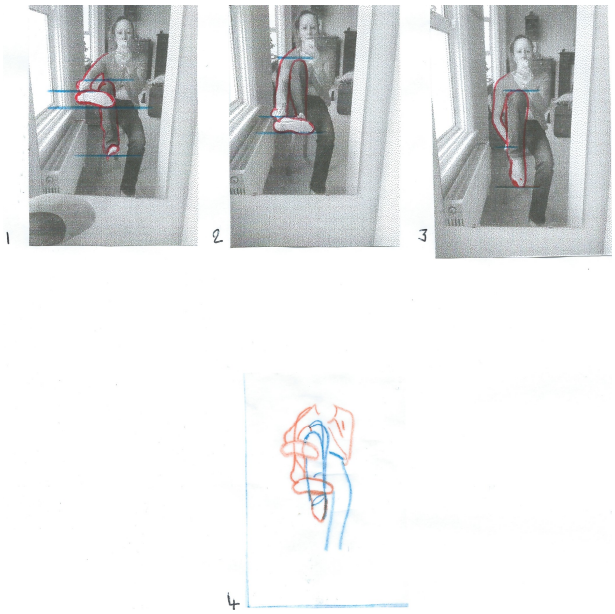


Figure 9. ‘Drawing for the *invisible wearing schema* for putting on my shoe, images 1 – 4’, Kensal Rise (11.10.17). Image © Lucy Gundry

My experience of putting on my shoes provides a catalogue of movements which, through the sensations of kinaesthesia, at any given moment allow my body to sense where my limbs are and how they will move with my body in order to get my shoes on my feet. These are those I capture at points in the photographs (Figures 7 and 8). Further, I observe that my shoe, as I reach out to pick it up with the grasp of my fingertips and bring it through the air towards my foot, has drawn a series of invisible touchlines, which begin to build an invisible structure of these movements. These form a map of kinaesthetics that are external to my body yet connected to the internal ‘excitations’ (Merleau-Ponty), which generated them. Merleau-Ponty’s concept of ‘excitations’, described as ‘[…] coming either from outside or from one’s own body […]’ (Merleau-Ponty 2005:124) provide the energy for Deleuze’s concept of ‘elastic forces’ (Deleuze 2010:13) which enable the thought of a ‘potential action’, such as reaching out to pick up a shoe, to be carried out.

What this suggests is that an *invisible wearing schema* is folded and unfolded in terms of invisible touchlines responding to ‘[...] elastic forces […]’ (Deleuze 2010:13). These reach from inside to outside the wearer, and vice versa, in the act of reaching out, creating not only a connection but a force of energy which allows living movement to travel between body and dress.

The kinaesthetic understanding between shoe and fingertip is marked out firstly as points in space (images 1 – 3 in Figures 9). When these points are joined up like a ‘dot to dot’ drawing they create a set of invisible touchlines for each set of movements (as sketched in image 4 in Figure 9). In reference to the nature of these invisible touchlines which are created not just when I put my shoes on but also when I take them off, I refer to Merleau-Ponty’s concept of a ‘sum’, which he says can be thought of

as if you were 'to add together all movements made in the same direction and subtract those made in the opposite'. (Merleau-Ponty 1962:161) This phenomenological sum is abstract, and conversely, as Merleau-Ponty also points out, it is one 'I do not need in order to know its final position'. Through this I assume an understanding of the *invisible wearing schema* to be one which allows the body to understand where a hand's 'final position' will be (for example, securing the shoe on my foot). This is a position known to the wearer before the hand gets there, because the hand has repeated this movement daily in the act of getting dressed, and therefore the touchlines are being re-traced.

Finally I would like to examine 'excitations' as invisible movements inside the body which can 'take the place of actual movements' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:124) externally. If I align 'excitations' with invisible touchlines which, as I have established, are driven by the intention to create a potential action, this gives them the elasticity to move back and forth, and even vertically, and these lines are not only left in the form of invisible touchlines (which I am able to trace into photographs) externally to the body; these invisible touchlines, like actual movements, can also leave a 'kinaesthetic residua' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:124). This is an important concept in this chapter.

This is because invisible touchlines are invisible to the eye but not to the 'seer' (Merleau-Ponty 1968:138) in the body. Therefore, 'If my hand traces a complicated path through the air' it leaves a residue of kinaesthetics, which I cannot see but which I feel to be there and therefore I am able to connect from my hand to my shoe before the two have touched.

The idea that I understand how my hand will move through the air before it does is tacit knowledge built up between my dress, body and self. It is a mix of potential act, act and residue of this act which has forged an invisible touchline which can be re-traced, not just in terms of haptic kinaesthetic actions but in terms of haptic kinaesthetic feelings in my *wearing consciousness* before and after each action. In the next section, with a focus on the pose, I will discuss the notion that imagined kinaesthetics can 'take the place of actual movements' (Merleau-Ponty 2005:124) cutaneously and consciously.

The pose

Once my shoes are on, I am dressed (Figure 10). As I stand dressed in front of the mirror, in the stillness of a pose, I am now subject to the scrutiny of my own haptic aesthetic analysis (which I later apply to the dress exhibit). However, I also observe, through my 'whole experiencing body', the internal kinaesthetic sensations that the act of putting on my shoes (the final act in *getting* dressed) has left me with. I observe these as the tiniest of twitches and energies from preceding dressing motions, which are still humming through me. I also observe that I find it hard to stay still, because I feel the pull (from pressure) to move my *invisible wearing schema*. This is poised to restructure as

soon as I take a step. I observe that I do experience anticipated movements before actual movements, and I contemplate Merleau-Ponty's proposition that these can take the place of actual movements.

Figure 10. 'I am dressed', Kensal Rise (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry

Gabriele Brandstetter's concept of the 'paradox of the pose' (Brandstetter 2007:256) is helpful here. She describes the pose 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'. (Brandstetter 2007:256). I suggest that these 'blended motions' are previous movements merging into anticipated and then subsequent movements, termed by Merleau-Ponty as the 'preceding, successive, present and remainder' movements which in 'one's present position' 'dovetail' together (Merleau-Ponty 1962:162):

> '[…] dovetailed into the present, and present perception generally speaking consists in drawing together, on the basis of one's present position, the succession of previous positions, which envelop each other […]' (Merleau-Ponty 1962:162)

Revell DeLong explains this as a 'schema': 'Perceived patterns form a schema by which what is seen is evaluated, and these patterns become a part of the expectations brought to one's next experience […]' (DeLong 2015:4) DeLong is referring to an awareness of movement, which takes shape as it flows through the body in the form of patterns linked to new wearing experiences. I suggest my reference to an *invisible wearing schema* is a pattern that is repeated daily, building in new wearing experiences and adjusting accordingly each time. This confirms an earlier observation that tacit haptic kinaesthetic knowledge allows imagined movements to be felt before they are made, which suggests they are not only stored in the *wearing consciousness*, but can be accessed and applied in the instant before an act.

Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'motor memory' similarly frames what I suggest is embedded as tacit kinaesthetic knowledge by the repetition of daily wearing acts which hold a memory of 'successive' instants of movement – these emerge from 'present movements' which do not lose sight of 'previous movements' (Merleau-Ponty 1962 161-2). Brandstetter's 'paradox of the pose' further conflates past, present and future movements into one. As I stand in front of the mirror I observe that this dovetailing not only helps my inner and exterior kinaesthetics to connect but also that I am able to make these connections through my *wearing consciousness*.

As a result, my *invisible wearing schema* consciously anticipates movements at the same time as understanding past movements, which collectively enable my *wearing consciousness* to imagine actual movements in the present moment. When in pose I am in between a before and an after movement. This suggests that my *invisible wearing schema* can be thought of an operating structure for my *wearing consciousness,* not just spatially but kinaesthetically as a conscious wearer. I will hold on to this notion for the purpose of viewing dress as a 'sample viewer' later in this chapter.

Stepping into the street

Now I have my shoes on, I cross the threshold of my front door and step into the street. Once on the street I observe the elasticity of my *invisible wearing schema* responding to the feel of societal pressures from other wearers on the street. For the purpose of this thesis, the other wearers I observe on the street are female, for the reasons I outline in the Introduction.

Arriving in Kensington, I walk down Exhibition Road on my way to the V&A. In the street where bodies are in flux, I observe as I walk. These movements differ from those I conducted in the mirror to create an *invisible spatial structure* of touchlines between dress and body. In this context my movements are as a living, walking wearer. Dress, instead of being moved between my fingertips as it is pulled onto my body, is moving as a result of the rhythm of my moving body where it touches my skin.

I draw a parallel here between Susan Leigh Foster's observations of bodies walking along a city street in the United States and my walk down Exhibition Road, which, partly populated by vehicles and partly pedestrianised, is busy with wearers in the context of a major city (London). Foster identified that wearers walk in rhythms. This consists of a 'step' and 'position' where a wearer might 'stop', 'turn', 'gaze skyward' and 'shift from side to side' (Foster 2002). This description is an example of how in each instance an *invisible wearing schema* dovetails with previous instances to form a rhythm through repetition. I suggest that Foster's observations identify two key behaviours. One is how a wearer walks when wearing dress, which relates the structure of the *invisible wearing schema*. The other is how a wearer imitates the walk of another, even if temporarily. This is structured into the schema. In particular, Foster describes what she calls a 'demeanour':

> 'Imagine we are walking along the downtown streets of a major North American city, not strolling in the manner of the *flâneur* nor marching resolutely towards an urgent rendezvous […] to register the criss-crossing of trajectories that bodies accomplish so deftly at street corners. […] We scan the street. They are not alone. Bodies situated at irregular intervals stand waiting; then each falls in behind a new passer-by, exaggerating ever so slightly the demeanour of their new leader […]'. (Foster 2002)

She suggests that ways of walking are '[…] exaggerated ever so slightly […]' (Foster 2002:125) between one wearer and another. Although I am not walking as a *flâneur*, or to an 'urgent rendezvous', as in Foster's description, I am walking with the purpose of meeting a curator in one of the world's leading museums, and so present a different demeanour. My demeanour is pensive yet purposeful. I record the following kinaesthetic experiences as I walk down Exhibition Road:

> I observe the feeling of my dress arrested for a moment on my body as I pause on the kerb to look left and right for cars. In my arc of vision I see other dressed bodies moving in their own trajectories towards me and away from me. I wait until I see a gap through which I can move without touching. I take into account my own external dress space. The feeling of my jeans sliding up and down my legs as I walk across the road and turn the corner from Exhibition Road into Cromwell Road. The feeling of my sleeve stretching as I raise my hand to shield my eyes as I look upwards to the exterior of the V&A. The feel of the hems on my jeans brushing my ankles, and the lighter feel of my cardigan brushing my moving arms, as I walk up the steps into the V&A. My cardigan slides away from my wrists as I reach out to push the glass panel of the revolving doors and walk into the V&A. (Observational notes, 25.3.15)

During this walk I become aware of other wearers moving in and out, connecting and disconnecting with the edges of my touch barriers. I become aware that I, too, imitate and 'exaggerate ever so slightly' (Foster 2002) the demeanour of another wearer in front of me. Pink suggests that 'By walking with someone, it is thus possible to learn to inhabit a similar place to them […] (Pink 2009:77) which is how I observe this experience as a haptic aesthetic researcher. For example, I imitate the demeanour of a woman walking in front of me who demonstrates an awareness of socially acceptable touch barriers and distances.

> I look ahead, observe traffic, navigate quietly along the street and change pace when I cross the road (I speed up, as others do) with a small step up onto a kerb

> with my head tilted a little downwards. I am purposeful in direction. I find it easier to fall behind the slipstream of another wearer who is walking with a similar demeanour. However, I observe there are others who are walking with different demeanours. Different in energy, style, rhythm, step, deportment and purpose depending on who they are. My kinaesthetic empathy first enables me observe the demeanour of the woman in front of me, but also other wearers' demeanours. This ability to extend my kinaesthetic empathy to a variety of other female wearers and their kinetic wearing schemas becomes part of my wearing consciousness, which I bring into the V&A as a viewer. (Observational notes, 25.3.15)

As I approach the entrance of the V&A from the street, where I view dress in motion on wearers, I think about the connection between the moving wearers on the street and the dress exhibits I am about encounter in the V&A (largely static). I think about walking into the museum in the role of 'sample viewer', and adhering to a museum script, along with other viewers. I am aware that what I bring into the dress exhibition is prior knowledge not just of what it feels like to wear dress in motion but also of seeing dress in motion on other wearers and understanding how *invisible wearing schemas* work not just through actual movements but previous and anticipated movements which are dovetailed together. Not just dovetailed together for one wearer, but when external dress spaces meet, so do *invisible wearing schemas* at the point of shared horizons, which act as touch barriers.

It is this dovetailing of conscious and cutaneous kinaesthetics that makes up my elastic, *invisible wearing schema* with fluctuating edges that I bring with me as I push through the huge glass revolving doors of the V&A (Figures 26 and 27 in Chapter Two) and that I hold on to as I emerge as a 'sample viewer' in the museological space.

A viewer's walk

As soon as I am on the other side of the V&A's huge glass revolving doors, I enter the museum script. I proceed at a slower, quieter, contemplative pace across the entrance hall and then turn left to make my way down to the Fashion Galleries, to Room 40 at the end on the right.

At this point in my autoethnographic journey, I feel it is important to consider not just my moving kinaesthetics as I have examined these so far (in the street and walking to the museum script) but also the implications of touch points, lines, structures and empathy through theory in relation to the kinaesthetics of the sample viewer in the dress exhibition.

For this reason I would like to pause my autoethnographic journey here in order to refer to observational research I carried out in the role of researcher in Room 40 at the V&A. (I 're-visit' this observational research which was conducted on 27 February 2013).

My observations are that on entering Room 40, without a predetermined route, viewers navigate their way around this circular space (Figure 11) in order to view exhibits in their own different directions. There are two entrances/exists on opposite sides of the room, which means that viewers can enter from either side then turn clockwise or anti-clockwise as they felt inclined. What I observe is viewers not only moving in different directions around Room 40, but criss-crossing the space, turning back and even missing out vitrines. The viewers are all moving in their own different trajectories, indifferent to others yet observing the edges of other wearer's external dress spaces. I note here that I am able to draw a parallel to this criss-crossing of movement with my analysis of a wearer's invisible touchlines in the domestic mirror (as I explored in Chapter Two), and with my analysis drawn from both the 'Touch point drawing' and 'Gesture line drawing' I cited earlier in this chapter.

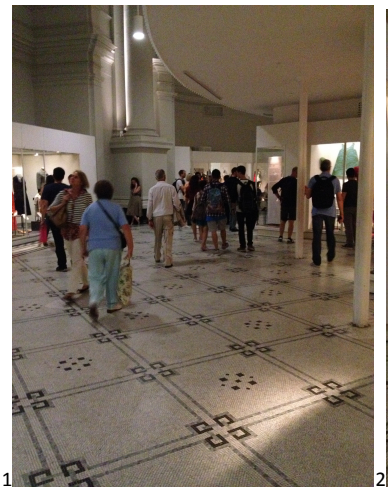
1  2

Figure 11. Viewers walking around Room 40, image 1 and 2 (27.2.13) V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In her book *Civilizing rituals* (1995) Carol Duncan asserts that '[…] In reality, people continually "misread" or scramble or resist the museum's cues to some extent; or they actively invent, consciously or unconsciously, their own programs according to all the historical and psychological accidents of who they are.' (Duncan 1995:13) I suggest these kinaesthetics are an extension of each viewer's own set of invisible touchlines, which they continually restructure in their external dress space, presenting fluctuating touch barriers at the edges. I refer to touch barriers here to make a link to how these may impact on the viewer when they move around the exhibition space.

In order to capture the viewer's kinaesthetics as they view exhibits, I position myself next to several different vitrines. Although the viewers are mostly moving between exhibits, the dress exhibits are static, as are the viewers when they pause to view the exhibits.

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1) The 'Forward Tilt', 2) 'Backward Tilt', 3) 'Up-close Encounter', 4) 'Lurch Forwards', 5) 'Lurch Backwards'

6

7

8

6) The ‘One-metre Stance’, 7) ‘Palm Point’, 8) ‘Point’, 9) ‘Half Point’, 10) ‘Contact Point’

Figure 12. Viewers photographed in Room 40, images 1 – 10, 27.2.13, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

During the course of the day, I observed and identified ten different movements: the ‘Backward Tilt’, the ‘Up-close Encounter’, the ‘Lurch Forwards’, the ‘Lurch Backwards’, the ‘Palm Point’, the ‘Point’, The ‘Half Point’, the ‘Contact Point’, the ‘Hand on Mouth’ and the ‘One-metre Stance’. In the ‘Forward Tilt’ (Figure 12, image 1) the viewer is tilting forward from the waist upwards whilst keeping their feet back. The viewer’s head moves close to the glass barrier. In the ‘Backward Tilt’ (Figure 12, image 2) the viewer is leaning their upper body from the waist backwards to move their body further from the glass barrier. In the ‘Up-close Encounter’ (Figure 12, image 3) the viewer has moved their whole body, including their feet, very close to the glass barrier. In the ‘Lurch Forwards’ (Figure 12, image 4) the viewer is using their whole body to reach out closer to the exhibit beyond their legs, although they have taken a step here. In the ‘Lurch Backwards’ (Figure 12, image 5) the viewer is leaning backwards to get a wider view, yet their feet remain rooted to the spot. In the ‘One-metre Stance’ (Figure 12, image 6) the viewer observes the ‘out of reach’ rule between where they are standing and the glass barrier.

I suggest that these movements can be thought of collectively as forming, more than a kinaesthetic structure, a kinaesthetic *schema* for a viewer in front of an exhibit. In particular the Forward Lurch, for instance, might be followed by a Backward Tilt, or a Forward Tilt might follow through to a Forward Lurch, which indicates a spatial structure. Combined with gestural kinaesthetics, these can be thought of as operating as a schema. Gestural kinaesthetics include the ‘Palm Point’ (Figure 12, image 7), using the hand openly. The ‘Point’ (Figure 12, image 8) is a direct finger point towards an item or detail in the exhibit, to draw the attention of another viewer. The ‘Half Point’ (Figure 12, image 9) is gesturing using a finger to roughly indicate a detail in the exhibit. The ‘Contact Point’ (Figure 12, image 10) is a way of pointing in which the fingertip actually touches the glass vitrine. The ‘Fingertips on Chin’ is a gesture of contemplation.

Overall, my observations of the exhibition viewers in Room 40 have established that a viewer in the exhibition space moves in a sort of viewing rhythm, which creates points of inflection where experiences are felt and even consciously reciprocated through empathetic gestures. This enables me to understand and visualise my living movements as part of a restructured recontextualised *imagined wearing schema* for my role as 'sample viewer', as I now continue my auotoethnographic journey through the V&A.

I will now extend my kinaesthetic focus to analyse the impact of the living mannequin in the exhibition of dress with an extended analysis of Alexander McQueen's *Fashion in Motion* show. This is important to draw parallels between the everyday (street) and the museum, as both the mannequin and viewer are living wearers. The significance of this analysis is to understand not only how the viewer's walk shifts as they cross the threshold into the exhibition space from the street, but how the living mannequin shifts from the role of fashion model in the everyday to living mannequin in the museum. This is analysed from the point of view of the 'sample viewer' as both a conscious walking wearer *and* a conscious walking viewer. I further consider what the balance is between these two roles in the exhibition, and how this might affect the kinaesthetic experience of viewing dress.

Alexander McQueen, *Fashion in Motion* show, V&A 1999

I now situate myself in the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries, to start an autoethnographic walk through a series of V&A rooms and corridors in order to revisit McQueen's 1999 *FIM* show. I reassert Pink's proposition that the researcher '[…] learns or knows through her […] whole experiencing body […]' (Pink 2009:25) *in motion* as I begin this analysis. Although I did not attend this event, it was video recorded, and I can view this via this link on my mobile phone: https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/fashion-in-motion-alexander-mcqueen.

Footage from the event was taken and edited into a short film (7.52 minutes long) featuring an interview with Alexander McQueen for the V&A. For the purposes of this walk I will focus on the footage of the mannequins rather than on the interview with McQueen. My viewpoint throughout is via the camera lens as it follows the mannequins through a variety of viewing angles, including moving around the mannequin's body through 360 degrees. I am aware that, unlike the viewers present on the day, my point of view is not only dictated by the camera lens; it is also digitalised and scaled down. However, I see McQueen's mannequins moving as bodies (digitalised living mannequins) in a pixelated version of the spaces within the V&A.

The format of McQueen's *FIM* show was unorthodox not only within museology at the time but also for the viewers, who were not used to walking around the museum in the footsteps of 'living mannequins'. This set up a juxtaposition not only with the different bodies but also between static

and mobile viewing in the museum. In the *FIM* show, McQueen's mannequins move, to some degree, in the way Caroline Evans refers to in *The mechanical smile* (2013) as the 'fashionable mannequin walk'. This is a style of walking and posing which is particular to the catwalk, and different to people's normal everyday walking style. In this instance, McQueen's dress was worn by living mannequins who brought this way of walking not only to the museum but also to this exhibit.

To analyse the type of walk the living mannequins adopted in the early *FIM s*hows, I refer to a conversation I had with fashion designer Tristan Webber, whose work was featured in a *FIM* show at the V&A on 19 April 2000. In Webber's opinion, each of the *FIM* mannequins modeling his dress cultivated her own walk and pose (see Figure 13). In conversation on 28 January 2016, Webber suggested that:

> […] because it wasn't a show necessarily, models weren't so self-conscious […] they had a different feel about them…in fact it came down to individual characters as well. Some of them felt like they were presenting…modelling in a very traditional way. There was one girl who was a little unsure because it was out of the standard fashion context…I can remember speaking to some of them…saying 'look, walk in a certain manner, just feel elevated – this is a really beautiful environment [….]' – but that's a lot to expect of people when you've got the general public walking around. (Webber 2016)

Figure 13. *Fashion in Motion:* Tristan Webber*,* 2000. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Interestingly, Webber's observation that the mannequins were less self-conscious 'because it wasn't a show necessarily' was evident despite the 'general public walking around'. He also noted that their walk varied depending on their individual character: some presented in a traditional walk and some

were unsure and needing guidance. This suggests the living mannequins experienced a dilemma about how to walk and what was appropriate, as their role shifted from fashion model to living mannequin in the museum where a viewer's museological contemplation frames dress as an artifact. Evans notes that in 1934 Marcel Mauss suggested, in his writings on 'techniques of the body', that ways of walking were 'acquired' rather than 'inherent', learnt as 'education and copying through 'prestigious imitation'. (Evans 2013: 224). These first *FIM* mannequins were the pioneers of a new hybrid walk, which was an 'acquired' mix of catwalk, everyday and museum kinaesthetics. I will analyse these in relation to McQueen's mannequins; however, there was one aspect of all the living mannequins' presentation at the *FIM* shows which contrasted with the museological script. This was the way that the viewers (including Webber himself) were led at a fast pace around the museum.

> LG: How close did the public get […] did they sort of follow […] at a suitable distance?
> TW: Yeah, they did, particularly because models came in advance walking fast ahead […] studio team carrying music systems as well and there were a number of onlookers who followed us and tailed us around. Some of them quite close, some of them quite curious about the materials, but didn't touch the girls. (Lucy Gundry, in conversation with Tristan Webber 28.1.16)

This fast motion of the mannequins meant that the viewer also had to acquire a way of viewing them quickly. Although models move swiftly along a catwalk, their motion is contained and visible from a seated position; McQueen's viewers, however, not only had move fast but view the models quickly, in a manner much like that of the wearer on the street. I suggest, therefore, that McQueen's mannequins, therefore, rather than adopting Evans' 'fashionable mannequin walk', walked in a newly acquired way, one which was a hybrid between the walking styles adopted in the everyday, the catwalk and the museum. I refer to this as the 'living mannequin walk'.

In the film of the *FIM* show, the *FIM* walk begins after an introductory montage presenting McQueen, McQueen's mannequins and McQueen dressing his mannequins. The pace of the walk is fast and unpredictable at points (unlike the museum script I adhered to, described above), leaving some contextual information a blur and the walks between locations hard to identify. Between the fast walking sections, however, the living mannequins slow down to pause and pose individually and in groups in the gallery spaces. Therefore, there are some identifiable locations within the film, which I focus on in the order they appear. In each one I analyse either a pose, a series of poses or a section of the walk.

The first location is a few seconds in the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries. Second is a scene where a mannequin becomes a blur of dance moves in the green William Morris café. Later there is a collective walk down a corridor followed by a flight of stairs, where the mannequins move into the

Cast Courts (Room 46a). There is also a scene in the foyer of the Museum. The final shot follows one mannequin as she walks out into the V&A's Pirelli Garden, where the film ends.

A pose in the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries

I start following the film from the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries, where I am situated, looking at the screen of my smartphone. At this point in the film the camera is focused on the heeled feet of one mannequin, who is still in a moment of pose. A minute later she begins to twirl and the camera stays still, she stands still and the camera begins to pan. It moves around the mannequin's feet and continues up the thick, light green fitted sleeveless dress embroidered with a twisted vine that she wears, until the whole mannequin is seen framed against the backdrop of the Cast Courts. The mannequin continues to pose, expressionless, as the camera slowly circles around her.

In this scene, the most striking kinaesthetic is the mannequin's stillness, in a momentary pose. She offers an example not only of Brandstetter's 'paradox of the pose' but also of Wilcox's 'arrested movement', referred to earlier in the analysis of 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle, 1775'. Brandstetter's paradox of the pose was applied to living mannequins (models) in the everyday, and Wilcox's 'arrested movement' was applied to dress exhibits. Both concepts are applicable here. The mannequin's motionless pose conveys the residue of living movements, which I experience as faintly uncanny in this context. This is because her stillness is not only arrested from living movement but she is juxtaposed with the stone figures in the cast courts. These figures, too, appear to represent arrested living movement held in their swathes of stone folds. The arrested movement of the living mannequin merges aesthetically with that of the stone figures, because at the moment of juxtaposition I am reminded of the classical story of Pygmalion and his sculpture[34], and just for a moment their latent movement creates an aesthetic uncertainty about whether they might move from their pose too. This aesthetic uncertainty, allows the anticipation of a kinaesthetic empathy: the residues of living movement transferred from the living to the non-living seem to take the place of actual movements, and in this way I understand these through my '*imagined*' wearing schema.

When this living mannequin suddenly moves out of her pose and into her 'living mannequin walk' along with the other mannequins, this kinaesthetic empathy is freed, as is the arrested movement the living mannequin held in her pose. This movement was freed from its folds to move forward with the living mannequin, and the aesthetic connection between the living and non-living figures dissipated.

As the living mannequin walks, I observe her deportment, which I suggest derives from what Evans referenced as the adoption of dance styles by performers and models – for example by the actress

[34] Mark Paterson refers to Pygmalion as told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book X in which '[…] the story of Pygmalion is an imaginative exercise ascribing a living, breathing, embodied sensory consciousness to an inanimate object, a statue crafted by a man in the startlingly realistic from of a woman.' (Paterson 2007:81)

Cecile Sorel, whose '[…] famous 'pantheresque' walk, with its springing step with hips well forward and head thrown back' was imitated by […] mannequins all over the world.' (Evans 2013:224-5). In the light of Webber's observations about his living mannequin walk I suggest that this style is mixed with the rhythm that wearers adopt on the street, pausing, slowing down and speeding up in order to navigate other wearers who may or may not be moving in the same direction. Although these mannequins follow the same trajectory, unlike the way in which for mannequins move on the catwalk this is less prescribed (perhaps even un-prescribed), requiring the mannequins to navigate the spaces between each other and viewers who may come too close, in order to observe touch barriers through their '*imagined'* wearing schemas. I observed that I understood this by empathising through those of my own.

As I watch the camera panning around McQueen's mannequin in the Cast Courts, the mannequins begin to leave this space and move towards the café area. One mannequin is dressed in a white textured dress: the camera follows her. However, viewers are also captured in the footage glimpsed around the edges of the video. I observe how they move in terms of where I imagine their invisible touchlines to retract to, extending and shifting as they navigate between bodies without trespassing on each other's touchlines. Suddenly I observe that McQueen's mannequins, McQueen's viewers and myself (as an immersed viewer via the video camera) are all now mingling in the V&A café.

Through my screen, I observe that I experienced a kinaesthetic empathy in that moment, extending to the feeling of a collective kinaesthesia. On one hand I reconnect with my experience of walking down Exhibition Road with other wearers and viewers, and on the other at one remove through the camera lens I am able to connect with the exhibits as the mannequins walk together in similar fashion, independently of the viewers. Exhibits walking as exhibits, viewers walking as viewers, the latter following the former. At the same time I have been following the trajectory of these mannequins on foot through the V&A via my mobile phone, and now I am in the V&A café I am able to situate and even imagine the collective kinaesthesia in this space. I observe that my *invisible wearing schema* has extended to incorporate the immersed, situated, revisited and imagined experiences of wearing and viewing dress which blur the references to being an active wearer and viewer in the context of the V&A café.

A baton-wielding dance, William Morris Café room

As McQueen's mannequins walk through the café, they enter the green William Morris room (image 14), where the camera remains still to record one mannequin who performs a solo baton-wielding dance. She begins to move her baton around in front of her. The movements speed up as she twirls it, creating a blur on the camera screen. Throughout, the camera holds still. There is then a change in the mannequin's demeanour, from the strutting, living mannequin walk to a dynamic cheerleader-like

dance pose. The effect creates a distraction (as Steele suggests) from the dress, first because the baton is illuminated in the semi-darkness of the café, drawing attention to the baton rather than the details of the dress itself. However, the kinaesthetics of body and dress moving together demonstrate how the wearer is consciously acting out her living movements in this dress exhibit.

Figure 14. Empty green William Morris V&A café room (20.5.17) V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Through an 'inner mimicry' I observed that I was also able to empathise with these motions in the way I felt the living mannequins would be experiencing their kinaesthetics, not just as their body moves in dress but through the feel of dress touching their skin during this movement. I consider this in reference to Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'excitations' that passed through my body like echoes of vibrations. This experience is useful in order to convey how these excitations are transferred through haptic aesthetic observations, not because of, but despite, a digital screen, because this experience is grounded in my own kinaesthetic sensations.

In fact I experienced a kinaesthetic empathy with the way the mannequin was moving, not with the way the dress was moving, which is supported by Steele's argument (in conversation, 2015) that motion in the museum can be a distraction from the physical dress itself. On the other hand, it is the living movement observed through this living mannequin that conveyed the motion, which allowed me to empathise with what it would feel like to wear dress in motion. However, I suggest that equally this was heightened by walking in step behind the living mannequins and observing the rhythm of their walk in relation to one another and my own. It occurs to me that this living movement, however pixelated, encouraged me to imitate it, to experience a kinaesthetic empathy.

Further, if I compare my pixelated video experience to my walk along Exhibition Road, I suggest that if a viewer is at some distance from a dress exhibit when it is moving fast, they are less able to see the textile at close range in the same way that I am able to on the street. Therefore it is the overall experience of body and dress moving together which creates the conscious feel of wearing dress. It is this conscious feel of wearing dress which allows the viewer in the dress exhibition to experience a kinaesthetic empathy across a viewing space. Focusing not on the dress itself, but on the feel of wearing dress in motion, contributes to the overall experience of wearing dress observed through the *wearing consciousness*.

A winged mannequin walks down a corridor

I see in the film that as soon as the mannequin enters the gallery rooms again she slows down and resumes a calmer walk. I feel my kinaesthetics slow down, too, in empathy with her change of pace. The camera is now in step behind McQueen's mannequins as they move out to walk down a corridor. I am focusing on the back of a mannequin who is wearing a pair of large white sculpted wings, which jut out behind her (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Winged mannequin, *Fashion in Motion:* Alexander McQueen*,* 1999. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As the winged mannequin emerges, other mannequins fall into place behind her. They part, and continue walking in parallel groups past a plinth in the corridor, flock–like, aware of their own kinaesthetics and how the edges of their kinaesthetic wearing schemas are restructuring in relation to the other mannequins in order to leave what can be thought of as a viewing space around each other. In this instance, with the viewers following behind, these dress exhibits have to observe one another as an exhibit, as well as moving as an exhibit – not just in speed, but in style. The purpose of the living

mannequin's walk is to exhibit dress in motion. There are strong parallels to the kinaesthetics observed by wearers on the street, who form a rhythm consisting of a varied speeds, stops and starts, a collective falling into step and an exaggerated demeanour copied between wearers, as both Foster and Mauss suggest, which I observed walking down Exhibition Road.

I now consider whether it is possible for viewers to mimic not only other living wearers (on the street) but also living mannequins in the museum by empathetically 'walking' with them. As an immersed viewer I observe this 'living mannequin walk' to be one that follows a rhythm similar to that of wearers on the street, and therefore this is a rhythm I have not only observed but walked with as a wearer in this chapter. However, I find this particular rhythm harder to mimic as a sample viewer in the museum. This is partly because in the role of 'sample viewer' I adhere to the museum script and partly because the living mannequins move in a hybrid walk that is neither that of the wearer in the everyday, nor that of the museum script or the fashion model, but a mixture of all three. Therefore, not only is their walk unique to this environment, it is not one I am able to mimic, for the reasons I cite.

However, I acknowledge that within any style of walking there are similar *invisible wearing schemas* through which a wearer navigates their dress, body and self in different contexts. These can be experienced in terms of deportment, rhythm and trajectory, all of which are similar kinaesthetics to those I experience in my *invisible wearing schema*, and therefore these are ones through which I am able to experience a *wearing empathy* with these living, walking mannequins.

Posing in the Cast Courts

Later in the film, after arriving in the foyer to a mass of viewers, McQueen's mannequins collect for a moment to pose in the Cast Courts alongside other non-living McQueen mannequins. The living mannequins stand still and motionless, side by side with non-living mannequins. One non-living mannequin is wearing a balsa-wood dress and rotates on a plinth (In Figure 16 this mannequin is in the background between the two living mannequins on the right).

In this photograph I suggest that the mannequins exemplify Mauss's concept of 'prestigious imitation' (Evans 2013: 224) in terms of the way the four mannequins (Figure 16) are all holding visually similar poses in a collective group. Non-living mannequins appear to be mimicking living mannequins in their deportment, but in fact it is the living mannequins who are mimicking the non-living ones. However, I observe that this happens when mannequins are posed in stillness rather than in movement. This apparent mimicking is the style of pose among mannequins, which has the effect of aesthetically uniting the living and non-living mannequins.

What is interesting is that if living movement is felt to be present in a non-living mannequin I suggest this can be attributed to '[…] doubt as to whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate'. (Freud 2003:135). I suggest this is also heightened by the presence of living mannequins in close proximity, staged in similar poses. At first glance the difference between the living and non-living mannequins is not distinguished by the style of pose, and not proven until the living mannequins move and the non-living mannequin remains static. These mannequins are staged to arrest a living movement in stillness, to hold living meaning in a pose. In the museum, where exhibits are expected to be static and in a pose, dress is expected to be viewed in a museum stillness: the uncertainty about whether these living mannequins will move or not is attributed not so much to an assessment of whether they are living or non-living, but rather that if they are living, whether they will move out of a pose or not. I observe that I imagine the anticipated rhythm of movement that the living mannequins will walk in, yet doubt remains about whether the non-living mannequin will move with them. This suggests that through mimicking the living mannequins' aesthetic by the non-living mannequin, the non-living mannequin appears to be imbued with living movement.

Figure 16. Collective Pose, *Fashion in Motion:* Alexander McQueen, 1999. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As McQueen's living mannequins move out of their pose I feel an intellectual uncertainty as to whether one particular still and non-living mannequin is able to move off the circular plinth and join the other mannequins as they continue on their walk round the museum. However, it is a movement I can imagine feeling through a *wearing empathy* with the non-living mannequin.

Figure 17. Close-up of collective Pose, *Fashion in Motion: Alexander McQueen,* 1999. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Walking out into the V&A garden

The last shot in McQueen's *FIM* show footage is of a lone mannequin walking down a corridor out of a door and into the V&A's Pirelli Garden. The camera follows the mannequin's back (I cannot see her face); she is seen from the hips up, wearing an opaque floral lacy fitted dress. Sleeveless but capped, it features a high-necked leather-lined shoulder pad, buckled at the back of the neck with three straps reaching up to the hairline (Figure 17). As the mannequin mingles with viewers and the outside dynamic of the public social space of the garden her isolation is lost: she effectively disappears.

In summary, the experience of viewing the footage of McQueen's *FIM* show was that I too had walked with the mannequins. I followed in their footsteps through video footage, felt their demeanour, their deportment, felt their walk and then felt the museum stillness arrest their living movements when in pose and reclaim their occupied pace once they had moved through it. My experience of walking with the mannequins was not viewed through actual kinaesthetics, because I was not actually walking behind these living mannequins. However, I suggest I experienced this through an inner mimicry drawn from my own motor memory of wearing dress as a living wearer in the everyday and as a conscious wearer following in their footsteps in the V&A throughout the video.

McQueen's dresses presented different textures and styles of material, which created different characteristics of being worn as indicative of a wearer's kinaesthetics. For example, in Figure 17 the central mannequin facing the camera is dressed in fitted, buckled leather-like material across the shoulders, and the mannequin on the right is corseted to the waist. In contrast, a floaty white lace material falls softly below and onto the thighs to brush the mannequin's legs as she moves. Both mannequins look as if their faces are being propped up by the high, rigid neckpieces. My kinaesthetic empathy becomes attuned not just to the restricted movements I imagine this living mannequin to

experience, but also to the feeling of wearing a stiff leather neckpiece which contrasts with the feelings I draw from wearing a white lacy skirt. These haptic kinaesthetic experiences are contextualised by the museological space of the V&A as distinct from the everyday, yet inextricably linked via the living kinaesthetics the viewer experiences in the shared and not-shared spaces within the museum. This is not only as a conscious wearer but also as a conscious viewer observing the kinaesthetics of dress, in living movement through McQueen's *Fashion in Motion* show (1999) and in a living stillness through the 'arrested movement' in 'Dropped Shoe with Buckle 1775'.

Walking out of the V&A

In order to I leave the V&A, from the garden I head towards the Cromwell Road exit of the museum. First I walk through the café, then along the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Galleries. This becomes a way of retracing my steps and creating new steps on top of these. Along the way I observe the movements of other viewers in the museum, who also walk quietly and slowly, often pausing to contemplate a piece of work. Some criss-cross others and change direction, some walk as if in a line, and some walk counter to the majority (Figure 18), as I observed in Room 40 at the beginning of this chapter. I also observe the juxtaposition of the still sculptures with the moving viewers, and reflect on the relationship between movement and stillness which I suggest is embodied within the *wearing consciousness*.

This includes the concept that arrested movements are held in the paradox of the pose, that when living and non-living wearers are juxtaposed in a pose of stillness within the same space there is an aesthetic transferal of living movements from one to the other, which is observed by the sample viewer. With this is an aesthetic uncertainty as to where one might come to life through anticipated living movements which might or might not take the place of actual movements. Equally, how the viewer might imagine living movements which take the place of actual movements that are felt to fall either into a rhythm that is subject to the living mannequin in the museum or one that is influenced from the everyday. All of these are not only imagined but felt by the sample viewer through a *wearing empathy* that feels living movement in dress, whether exhibited in stillness or living movement, on living or non-living mannequins.

Although what I observe is that the proximity of a living mannequin is helpful to the 'sample viewer' for the kinaesthetic understanding of still dress in the dress exhibition, I will also propose here that it is helpful for the living sample viewer to be present in the exhibition, to transfer living movements through their *imagined wearing schema* towards a dress exhibit. This is not only to experience a non-living mannequin as holding living movements (in stillness) but also to imagine how their movements might fit into a rhythm of conscious deportment or demeanour when walking. I suggest therefore it is helpful for the sample viewer to view other living viewers in close proximity to dress exhibits.

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Figure 18. Viewers in the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Galleries, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 19. Viewers in the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Galleries, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As I observed the kinaesthetics of these moving bodies, I felt a degree of elastic kinaesthetic empathy extending towards the other viewers as wearers. My *invisible wearing schema* expanded and retracted, depending on their proximity to the edges of my '*imagined*' wearing schema. I also observed that there is not one way but many ways in which these viewers were walking though the museum, which drew a parallel with Foster's observations of how wearers form walking rhythms on the street. I observe that my *invisible wearing schema* extends to include several experiences in parallel. These include different styles of deportment brought into the museum by wearers from the everyday. As I walk through the exhibition space I observe how different wearers (viewers) fall into step with one another in a varied but shared deportment for the purpose of viewing in the museum. This is characterised not only by the viewers in the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Galleries (Figure 19) but the viewers walking around Room 40 (see Figure 11) viewing dress exhibits. In front of the vitrines I recorded viewers exhibiting ten different 'viewing' movements (see Figure 12).

Every version of my *invisible wearing schema* is contexualised not just by my environmental space but also by the spaces in my body, memory and imagination which have accumulated on my walk from the threshold of my doorstep, along the street, on the bus, down Exhibition Road and around the galleries in the V&A. These are the 'sum' of the haptic kinaesthetics I bring into the exhibition experience as a conscious walking wearer when viewing dress. The fact that I am able to experience any or all of these at any one time when viewing dress is equally moving in my experience as a sample

viewer. This is because these are experienced through my own *imagined wearing schema*, which is grounded in haptic kinaesthetic sensations when viewing dress in the exhibition.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter my analysis has focused on the connection between the kinaesthetics of being a conscious walking wearer in the everyday and those of the sample viewer in the dress exhibition. Living movement was identified as most pertinent to the analysis of the haptic kinaesthetics of dress both inside and outside the exhibition space, in particular the gestural act, because of its reference to 'living meaning' (McNeill). Merleau-Ponty's theory of excitations and kinaesthetic residua is linked to Martin's further concept of inner mimicry and Deleuze's touch point. Brandsetter's paradox of the pose enables a direct connection between movement and stillness as it is observed in a moment of pose both in the domestic mirror as a wearer and as a viewer in a dress exhibit. In this chapter it emerged that it is important that the viewer moves to the museum script, even if this is in kinaesthetic empathy with a new form of walking dictated by living mannequins.

This is most pertinent because the focus in this chapter is not the different methods employed to engage dress in motion, or their effectiveness as a curatorial tool to address the issue of liveliness. Rather, I propose that via the haptic aesthetics of dress, a viewer can feel that dress moves and feel moved by dress when exhibited with a degree of living movement. My argument is that because the viewer is a living wearer, they carry inside them a sense of dress kinaesthetics, and this is utilised when viewing the haptic aesthetics of dress, which pertain to living movement in an exhibit. This is possible because the viewer feels that dress, even though it may be static, carries the kinaesthetic residue of conscious movements through being worn and inhabited by a living wearer, whether present or absent. This suggests that a dress exhibit is never experienced as having no movement at all.

In summary, living movement in a dress exhibit can be suggested through arrested movement, the paradox of the pose, gestures, and a stillness which creates an intellectual and aesthetic uncertainty about whether a dress might move independently or not. Most importantly, I suggest that if a viewer is able to access their *wearing consciousness* in order to imagine a dress moving in the way that Pygmalion's sculpture came to life then the kinaesthetics of dress can be transformed through haptic aesthetics into the realm of the imaginary. Further to the imagined identification I propose in Chapter One, or the imagined inhabiting I propose in Chapter Two, in this chapter I propose that the viewer is able to *imagine* not only a wearing schema which allows dress to move when it is still, but also that their *wearing consciousness* moves in the form of a *wearing empathy* too. I suggest that imagined movements (which take the place of actual movements) are consciously 'grasped', which establishes the context of a concept for dress as communication in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: *A Dress Voice*

Introduction

In this chapter I analyse the proposition that dress has a voice. That dress has a voice is recognised by professionals working in the fields of dress, fashion, costume and curating. Therefore, understanding what is meant by this is a prerequisite for understanding the way dress communicates in the everyday, and for my proposal that a viewer can feel 'touched by' dress in the exhibition.

Freddie Robins agrees: 'I do think dress has a voice […]' (Robins 2015) and suggests that there is a symbiosis between the dress and its voice: 'the voice creating the dress creating the voice' (Robins 2015). Tristan Webber takes this proposition literally and uses his dress designs to create a female voice, which he calls 'She'.

In light of Robins' assertion I question here whether a voice is already embedded in the fabric: that this helps to create a voice in dress. Or whether a voice is constructed with the dress. Yohji Yamamoto reportedly said: 'Fabric is everything. Often I tell my pattern makers, "Just listen to the material. What is it going to say? Just wait. The material will probably teach you something"'. (V&A 2011) Yamamoto believes it is the voice in the fabric that helps the designer create a 'dress voice'.

Yamamoto's approach is not one I will take forward in this chapter, because rather than considering the fabric alone (and the cultural references which feed into this), my enquiry is into how dress communicates through the relationship between dress, body and self (the *wearing consciousness*). Therefore I simply consider Yamamoto's comment as representing a thought about the process of designing a dress. Instead, in this chapter I focus on how the *wearing consciousness* is voiced through the characteristics of being worn and unworn as they are embodied in dress when worn in the everyday and, as with previous chapters, how this transitions into the dress exhibition.

In terms of the exhibition of dress, fashion curator Ligaya Salazar suggests (as Robins also does) that what is voiced can be thought of as the 'intention of the object'. Judith Clark describes what is voiced as an 'attitude' with 'aspirations' (Clark 2016). Both of these suggest that the voice is a conscious part of both creating and curating dress. This recognition by curators that dress carries a voice is an important notion for this chapter because it can be seen in parallel with the concept (which I developed in Chapter One) that dress embodies a *wearing consciousness*.

Therefore I will now continue to focus on the haptic aesthetics of dress as the communication of intention, attitude or aspiration of dress. In this chapter I aim to understand to what extent the haptic

aesthetics of dress are voiced through the *wearing consciousness*, and how this enables the viewer not just to consciously touch dress but to consciously feel touched by dress in the exhibition.

Voices in dress

In this chapter, as with my previous three chapters, I make a division between the everyday and the museum. This marks the threshold between touching and not touching, worn dress and not-worn dress, wearer and viewer. In the everyday I propose there are three voices which become embodied in dress: those of the designer, the wearer and the viewer. In the dress exhibition, I propose that there are six different voices in a dress exhibit: those of the designer, the wearer, the theorist, the curator (the museological voice is embodied within the curatorial) and the viewer.

The designer's voice embodies the designer's worldview in the construction of a dress. To reach a clearer understanding of the designer's voice in this chapter I refer to a conversation with Tristan Webber about his muse, 'She' (Webber 2016). The voice of fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto is heard through a conversation with Ligaya Salazer, who curated the exhibition *Yohji Yamamoto* at the V&A Museum from 12 March to 10 July 2011. And Olivier Saillard's is articulated through his curated performance as a fashion designer in *Eternity Dress* (2013).

The wearer's voice is explored in the everyday through a conversation with Freddie Robins (9. 12.15). In the dress exhibition this is explored through the role Tilda Swinton plays in Saillard's *Eternity Dress* (2013), Webber's imagined muse, 'She', and Yamamoto's muse, the late Pina Bausch. These wearers are both living and non-living, realized as imagined, iconic and fictional voices. In this thesis (for reasons I outline in my Introduction) all the wearers are female.

The curator's voice (this embodies the museological) has the last word in the dress exhibition. This voice can camouflage, enrich or embellish a dress voice by choosing how to mediate not just the designer's voice but also that of those who speak as the wearer's voice in the dress exhibition.

I refer to a conversation with Judith Clark, who recontextualises dress within different narratives in order to curate an attitude about dress into a story of some sort '[…] so it's really to me about the attitude to what happens not necessarily with the unique garment but what happens to the garments combined to form another kind of story' (Clark 2016). A conversation with the director of the Fashion Space Gallery at London College of Fashion, Ligaya Salazar, on 4 February 2016 explored a curatorial collaboration with Yamamoto for the *Yohji Yamamoto* exhibition at the V&A, 2011.

The theorist's voice is a contextualising voice in this chapter. This is observed with reference to the psychotherapist Adam Phillips, who contributed texts on cards that accompanied the exhibits in

Clark's exhibition *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (2010). In terms of this thesis, and with reference to my autoethnographic role, the theorist's voice helps the analysis of the dress voice with respect to a wider conscious thinking about what it feels to be a wearer in the world.

The viewer's voice is one I examine through autoethnographic research. Analysis from previous chapters feeds into the viewer's voice in this chapter, to deepen the observation of how the haptic aesthetics of dress are voiced.

Although I have separated these voices for the purpose of identification, overlaps happen not only between the voices; some voices embody one or other dress voices at the same time. Often one or two voices will be amplified over other voices in a dress exhibit. I propose that any one dress exhibit is an amalgamation of six different voices communicating six different wearing consciousnesses, embedded in the exhibit by the hands of all who have touched the dress exhibit from creation to curation. That this amalgamation of voices forms what I propose as the 'wearing voice'.

In order to understand how the haptic aesthetics of dress are voiced to the viewer in the dress exhibition, I will now evaluate a number of theoretical approaches to dress as communication for the purposes of this thesis.

Haptic aesthetics of dress as 'grasped'

The following seminal texts help to situate the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode of communication in the everyday and the dress exhibition. Malcolm Barnard proposes that dress communicates through a '[…] medium or channel in which one person would 'say' something to another person with the intention of effecting some change in that other person'. (Barnard 2002:30) The suggestion that dress communicates in the same way as verbal dialogue has provoked intellectual discussion in different fields of study, from anthropology and psychology to, more recently, fashion theory. Discussion establishes dress as communication, but debate remains around *how* dress communicates. This chapter offers a contribution to this debate.

J. C. Flügel's *The psychology of clothes* was published in 1930 and introduced the concept of the psychological impact of clothes. A few decades later, in 1981, Alison Lurie*'s The language of clothes* was published. *The language of fashion,* a collection of previously unpublished writings by Roland Barthes on fashion was published in French in 1993-5 and in English in 2006. In this, Barthes analysed the fashion pages in a number of issues of the magazines *Le Jardin des Modes* and *Elle*. Although Barthes expresses doubt as to whether images of dress carries meaning, he acknowledges that fashion has a 'signifying nature': 'I am right at least to apply a linguistic method of analysis to it […] [because] that will *prove* to me the signifying nature of fashion clothing.' (Barthes 2006:41-2). In his

analysis of how a fashion language can be constructed, Barthes identifies a system in which '[…] secondary meanings rest on initial meanings […]' (Barthes 2006:46), which he classifies as 'signifieds' or 'signifiers'. Onto these he maps a language for fashion. As I propose in my Introduction, dress is an umbrella term for the different ways a body is clothed, of which fashion is one way, and therefore the concept of a linguistic approach is one I can consider for dress too.

However, a linguistic approach, although helpful towards the concept of structuring the way dress communicates, does not account for the way a viewer experiences the haptic aesthetics of dress as developed in my previous chapters. This is a communication which focuses on the relationship between dress, body and self as an embodied, emplaced and kinaesthetic practice, and is therefore more somatic than semantic. Therefore, my research for a pertinent model takes me to Tim Dant's argument in *Material culture in the social world* (1999), that 'fashion' can be accessed via a combination of linguistic codes and (material) semiotics. Further, Barnard proposes a semiotic approach, in which he identifies the syntagmatic[35] and the paradigmatic[36] (I outline these in the Introduction). Syntagmatic dress choices are made between 'this *and* this *and* this.' (Barnard 2002:90) and paradigmatic dress choices are made between 'this *or* this *or* this.' (Barnard 2002:90)**.** Each of these sets of choices indicate how a wearer might decide to put voices together on their body, all of which communicate meaning. Dress choices can be thought of as conveying meaning in terms of Georg Simmel's 'style adjectives'. Michael Carter, author of *Fashion classics: from Carlyle to Barthes* (2003), cites Simmel's seminal essay 'The philosophy of fashion', (published in 1905) in which the following terms are cited: 'elegant', 'smooth', 'svelte', 'cool', 'hip', 'cute', and 'camp' (Carter 2003:63). These 'style adjectives', however, move closer to linking the appearance with the feel of dress. I will now refer to Dant, who further notes that there is little research on how fashion communicates through the experience of being a wearer. This is because historically fashion theory has often neglected '[…] the characteristics of clothes as they are worn […]' (Dant 1999:107).

This illuminates the important connection here between a dress voice, the characteristics of being unworn and the concept of a wearing consciousness. However, the question still remains as to how these 'characteristics of being unworn' communicate. Rather than considering this linguistically or through the application of semiotics (only 'helpful' as a visual metaphor) or with a solely aesthetic approach (denoting the ability to affect a change in the viewer), my investigation turns instead to the haptic aesthetics of dress.

In her essay 'Tension, time and tenderness: indexical traces of touch in textiles' (2010) Claire Pajaczkowska argues more specifically that the iconic and indexical traces of touch are '[…] founded

[35] 'The relation between the elements in a syntagm is 'this *and* this *and* this.' (Barnard 2002:90) Barnard exemplifies it as '[…] the difference between the collar, cuffs, buttons, sleeves, shoulders, front panels and back panels of a shirt […]' (Barnard 2002:90)

[36] 'The relationship between elements in a paradigm is 'this *or* this *or* this.' (Barnard 2002:90) 'Paradigmatic difference is the difference between the different collar styles (e.g. turndown, cutaway, button-down, tab and pin […].' (Barnard 2002:90)

on embodied knowledge and effect […] these exist as indexical traces of the touch, handling and holding […]' (Pajaczkowska 2010:1). These indexical traces of touch identified by Pajaczkowska are those I suggest are embedded by the designer's or maker's hand through stitching, folding or cutting dress as characteristics of being unworn (as I outline in the Introduction).

Further to the indexical traces of touch identified by Pajaczkowska, there are the indexical traces of touch I identify as characteristics of being worn in Chapter One. In Chapter Two, I referred to Deleuze's concept of exogenous and endogenous folding to underpin the concept that a wearer leaves indexical traces in the form of invisible touchlines, which can extend and retract to form an invisible kinaesthetic structure around the wearer in motion. I suggest that these invisible touchlines can be thought of as felt lines of communication between dress, body and self, which carry kinaesthetic residues of cutaneous and conscious pressures between one wearer and another. If, as I suggest, these lines carry residues of felt pressures, I question how these pressures are translated through the materiality of dress across the viewing space to a viewer.

In *Dress code* (1995), Toby Fischer-Mirkin proposes that dress communicates through 'code'. He claims that items of dress are 'encoded with fascinating but usually unexplored meanings' which can be decoded by a wearer to 'resolve the discrepancies between your "look" and your inner self.' (Fischer-Mirkin 1995:3) Fischer-Mirkin's observation about 'encoding' and 'decoding' interestingly revolves around the 'discrepancies' between a wearer's 'look' and 'inner self'. I suggest a parallel between this and my discussion of the tensions created between the cutaneous and conscious pressures a wearer experiences in a domestic mirror, on the street and in the dress exhibition.

This leads to my investigation of theories relating to the relationship between dress, body and self, which include those of Joanne Finkelstein, in *The fashioned self*, published in 1991, and Alison Bancroft, in *Fashion and psychoanalysis* (2012). In the latter, Bancroft cites Luke Thurston's more contemporary approach to the subject of fashion as 'aesthetic self-invention' (Thurston, in Bancroft 2012:162). These concepts link the aesthetic relationship between dress, body and self to the translation from sensation to pressure to feeling, a concept I discuss in Chapter One. It is clear that I need to link these two parallel concepts in order to understand how dress communicates through haptic aesthetics. Therefore, finally, and most pertinently, Dant proposes that dress has '[…] to be grasped aesthetically and in relation to modes of thought' (Dant 1999:93-4). The term 'grasped' is pertinent here. If a viewer is able to aesthetically grasp a wearing consciousness in a dress exhibit, then, as the very nature of term 'grasp' suggests, the experience is at the same time as much cutaneous as conscious.

Following Dant, David MacDougall suggests that our ability to 'grasp' dress is dependent on the extent to which the viewer's feelings extend into their viewing:

> We assume that the things we see have the properties of being, but our grasp of this depends upon extending our own feeling of being into our seeing. In the process, something quintessential of what we are becomes generalized in the world. (MacDougall 2006:1)

Therefore, the mode in which dress communicates – in other words, its voice – is in fact neither audible nor capable of being transcribed into words. This communication is structured neither linguistically nor in code, nor as a set of signs and symbols, as in semiotics; instead it is 'grasped' through the haptic aesthetics of dress, effecting a '*felt*' change in the viewer.

'Grasping' dress

I will now outline how I understand the haptic aesthetics of dress to be 'grasped' in an analysis which links the experience of being a wearer in the everyday to that of being a viewer in the dress exhibition.

Dant asserts that the '[…] engagement of the wearer with the garment [is] such that they become part of each other, [and] also gives clothes meaning.' (Dant 1999:107). Therefore it is through the relationship between dress, body and self that dress can not only speak, but also convey conscious meaning. As cited earlier, Barnard suggests that what is said from one wearer to another through dress can effect a change in another. He suggests that a change is effected because dress carries the 'intention' '[…] of effecting some change in that other person' (Barnard 2002:30). Robins identifies the 'intention' of dress is to be worn in the everyday on a body (Robins 2015). Further to this fundamental intention, the designer embeds intentions in dress prior to it being worn, contextualised through their own worldview. The intention of the designer's worldview may resonate with a wearer who chooses to wear specific items of dress. A wearer's dress choice may carry the intention of communicating aspects of their *wearing consciousness* for other wearers to grasp, or in the exhibition context this dress choice may carry curatorial intentions for viewers to grasp.

Therefore, if the intention of dress is to be worn, then I suggest that the characteristics of being either worn or unworn provide an important haptic aesthetic 'intention' to say something about what it feels to wear dress, which may effect a change in a wearer. Bancroft's citing of 'aesthetic self-invention' (Thurston, in Bancroft 2012:162) supports the concept that a wearer (in the everyday) plays with the aesthetics of dress through self-presentation to voice an intention. Jen Grace Baron echoes this when she suggests that '[…] self-presentation through the body and clothing is an omnipresent leverage point in shaping one's identity in positive ways […]'. (Baron 2013:2) She refers to the intention of shaping one's identity through dress choices as a 'curation of the self', capable of effecting a 'positive' change in the wearer. Therefore, in the everyday a wearer's intention may be to

curate a positive change in their identity by wearing their dress choices on their body. A wearer might want to communicate this positive intention by saying something to another person through their dress choices.

Curator Ligaya Salazar suggests that in the dress exhibition, dress holds the 'intention of the object' more specifically (Salazar 2016). Therefore, I suggest that if a viewer is affected by what they 'grasp' through a dress exhibit's characteristics of being worn, then the curator has said something that has effected a change in the viewer. It is this rationale which allows the haptic aesthetics of dress to have a voice which can be curated by the designer, wearer and curator and that can be grasped by the viewer.

A dress voice methodology

In order to conduct research and analysis into how these various voices are in effect embedded in dress as 'characteristics of being unworn and worn' (through the hands of designers, wearers and curators) and grasped in the exhibition I conducted a series of interviews to further explore each of the voices. Further, I examine a selection of dress exhibits, each identified to deepen the analysis of how these voices, singularly and collectively, are grasped in the dress exhibition.

In this chapter I do not conduct autoethnographic analysis of myself as a wearer prior to entering the dress exhibition as I have done in the previous chapters. This is because I have established how the haptic aesthetics of dress are experienced as a wearer in relation to the *wearing consciousness* as an embodied, emplaced and kinaesthetic relationship between dress, body and self through my 'aesthetic double' in the first three chapters. Therefore, for the purpose of analysis in this chapter I have found it more helpful to identify a wearer who is able to articulate a conscious relationship with dress. Through this face-to-face conversation, as a researcher I am able to observe and 'grasp' the concept of a 'wearing voice' through this wearer.

Therefore, as a haptic aesthetic researcher I apply a reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated analysis involving face-to-face conversations, observations and analysis of dress in the everyday and in the exhibition. This is drawn from an understanding of what it feels like to be a conscious wearer through the terms I have explored in previous chapters. My focus in this chapter remains on the process rather than the subjective meaning itself, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore, my personal wearing experiences remain observations in order to support reflexive analysis (such as the reference to wearing dungarees in my interview with Robins) rather than as a way of identifying what wearing my particular dress choices identify for me.

A wearer's voice in the everyday

The first voice I examine is that of Freddie Robins, whom I met at the Royal College of Art on 9 December 2015. I suggest that it is through reflexive analysis of Robins' dress choices, which I document through observational notes, that I am able to record conscious insights into a haptic aesthetic understanding of the relationship between dress, body and self, as worn by a female wearer in the everyday. This is important to grasp before engaging in further conversations with designers and curators about the exhibiting of dress.

I identify Robins for analysis not only because she considers dress to have a voice but also because she proposes that there is a symbiosis between the dress and its voice: 'the voice creating the dress creating the voice' (Robins 2015). In fact, Robins feels that *all* items of dress have a voice. She considers that the juxtaposition of these voices when the wearer gets dressed creates a 'story of some sort'. This demonstrates an aesthetic awareness and conscious understanding of how she curates dress choices on her body with the intention of communicating and effecting a change in another person.

Rather than offer a photograph of Robins (because she is not a dress exhibit) I will offer the following observation notes on how she was dressed when I meet her:

> Robins is wearing a pair of indigo-dyed (dark blue) straight-legged denim dungarees, with a front chest button down pocket and two side pockets for hands. Underneath the adjustable denim straps, which fold over her shoulders, she is wearing a red gingham shirt with a small neck bow tied at the front. On this day Robins is at the Royal College of Art, where she is Reader in Textiles. In this context, there is an association with the studio, which is echoed by her choice of functional dungarees. However, Robins' dungarees are dark and clean (not covered in paint) and worn with a shirt that has a bow. The bow is pretty. Gingham has associations with schoolgirl summer dresses, as well as utility wear, such as 'dinner lady' pinafores. Gingham is a woven cotton fabric, which, like denim, is natural. This brings an honest pairing together of two humble, straight, strong dress voices rooted in the overall materiality of a dress style. However, the neck-bow, although neat in style (not flouncy), offsets an otherwise feminist look with one that is more feminine. (Observations of Robins, 9.12.15)

Robins' worldview emerges from her practice as an artist who uses a knitting machine to create full body-sized and shaped objects as well as carrying out her role as Reader in Textiles at the Royal College of Art. This influences her view that items of dress are 'objects'. She says: 'I, increasingly with

my own "dress", see all these things I own and wear as objects'. Robins sees items of dress as objects before she owns them and when she owns them (whether she wears them on her body or not):

> When I see an object without a body in it, I don't necessarily think about the body in it. I will be drawn to it not thinking about wearing it […] primarily it's because I like it as a thing and I have certain types of objects I really enjoy. (Robins 2015)

Robins asserts that it is difficult to articulate exactly how her clothes speak, but she suggests that 'lots of things are tacit, inherent, they are all to do with visual triggers, tactile triggers.' By this I understand she is suggesting that the haptic aesthetics of dress create value through meaning. She suggests that it is through 'values' that a dress acquires a (strong) voice. 'I put the same value on the things that I wear as an object I own […] I like everything to have a strong voice'. She further explains that she connects a voice to a story: 'Somehow it is referencing or is linked to a story of some sort that I understand'. (Robins 2015) These values are embodied in the dress object independently of whether she wears an item of dress or not, because an item of dress remains an object for her: an object before, during and after she wears it on her body.

By choosing which dress objects to juxtapose on her body, Robins is able to curate a narrative between these voices which goes beyond Barnard's concept of the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic (Barnard 2002:90), or Carter's concept of style adjectives, because Robins has subverted the characteristics conferred by the designer to make them part of a new story. This process can be thought of as 'curating the self'.

> '[…] I've come to realise more recently that I, in the way I choose to buy things […] respond to them as an object – not necessarily that they go together or […] it's necessarily the image I want to portray, but I love that object and I wear those objects.' (Robins 2015)

As I talk with Robins, I observe that I own a pair of dungarees identical to those she is wearing. I ask her what speaks to her about dungarees: 'I really enjoy dungarees [...] it's something about it that speaks to me and I might not always know what that is till maybe later on.' (Robins 2015)

As I observe the way Robins has juxtaposed her dungarees with other dress 'objects' (the red gingham shirt with a bow) I observe that I experience a wearing empathy with the practice of getting dressed in *my* dungarees:

> I recalled a sequence which starts with stepping inside the legs of the jeans whilst holding onto the sides of the waist, then flipping the bib up, then one shoulder strap after the other,

> flipping them over my shoulders and then clicking the buckles into place at the top of the bib (Observations of Robins, 9.12.15)

I was further able to observe that although our dungarees are identical, we wear them differently, and this difference of juxtaposition with other dress objects on our bodies creates a different story. This is because, as wearers, we move differently, and our daily lives are subject to different cutaneous and conscious pressures that voice different *wearing consciousnesses* as they press on our dressed bodies in different ways. However, this *wearing empathy* effected a change in me. I observed that there are some fragments of my *wearing consciousness* which I share with another wearer, but there are also some fragments that remain subjective to me.

One fragment of my *wearing consciousness* that I share with Robins is an understanding of how social pressures are felt as conscious pressures, and can have the effect of dictating a dress choice as a result. This is in terms of how a wearer chooses to wear an item of dress (for example with the hems turned up or buckles undone, and so on) and how to juxtapose this item with other dress items on their body to curate an 'intended' story of some sort, such as Robins' decision to wear a pair of dungarees with a red gingham shirt with a bow.

I observed that it was the reason for different dress choices which effected a change in me, rather than the dress choice itself. Therefore, I suggest that what I 'grasped' was not only the haptic aesthetics of Robins' dress choices but the story she 'intended' to curate, which is what effected a change in me. I understood this story as connecting external and internal conscious pressures which are processed through the *wearing consciousness* and that I am therefore able to empathise with.

In terms of how Robins views the juxtaposition of dress items on her body to tell a story, further into our conversation Robins explains that: 'I might covet it as an object or a thing…' (Robins 2015) because '[…] I like that thing of being able to put things on my body. Like my charms and badges […] you then carry them around all day […] you are like a museum of objects. Everything plays its role' (Robins 2015). This suggests that her intention it to use her body as a space to exhibit dress objects in such a way as to tell a story.

Robins' understanding of dress demonstrates that she not only 'grasps' the designer's voice embodied in dress (in terms of the characteristics of being unworn) but also that she intentionally re-contextualises these characteristics to create a different story of some sort through her 'wearing voice'. I suggest this is how Robins grasps her *wearing consciousness*, which is an awareness of how she grasps the voice she feels to be communicated in each item of dress.

In summary, my meeting with Robins has provided an insight into how a *wearing consciousness* contributes to the process of curating dress on the body for a wearer in the everyday: how conscious pressures dictate dress choices, and how curating these is done with intention to communicate. Further, how a wearer is aware of the voice in dress (embedded by the designer), which allows Robins to covet an item of dress prior to wearing it. It is this coveting of dress as an object which holds a narrative value for Robins, and as such is one which she voices, and therefore is one which can be grasped by a viewer.

I grasped the intention of Robins' dress choices through a reflexivity with my own intentions as a conscious wearer. This helped me to understand how I grasped Robins' wearing voice, which provokes further thought about whether I might be similarly able to grasp a dress exhibit as a viewer in the dress exhibition.

Voices in the dress exhibition

The rest of this chapter is focused on observations of dress in the exhibition. The dress exhibits I select all communicate in one or more of the voices I identify in this chapter. Further, these exhibits chart a shift into different sorts of stories through voices with different 'intentions' for dress. The intentions voiced by the designer and wearer are different from those of the 'curator' and 'theorist'. I analyse these voices through semi-structured reflexive face-to-face interviews with fashion designers and curators and first-hand observations and analysis of dress exhibits, supported by site visits and further by online reference to archived images and video footage and film.

For the purpose of defining dress voices it is important to note that initial findings indicated that voices were not clearly defined, because they are juxtaposed, they overlap and are even absorbed into each other, and that the curatorial voice can embody the designer's voice, and vice versa. Tristan Webber exemplifies this in conversation about his *Fashion in Motion* show at the V&A in 2000. Webber explained that as the designer he also had curatorial control 'up to a point […] in terms of how I dressed the mannequins and how I positioned them'. He went on to say that the curator relies on '[…] the designer to give a certain amount [for the] curator to draw on […] then adds to it […] so it becomes more than the sum of its parts' (Webber 2016). The curator is at times also a designer. This is exemplified by Olivier Saillard's performance in *Eternity Dress*, 2013, which I discuss later in this chapter. Visible voices are also explored through the work of Saillard, who, more than just playing the role of a designer, in fact curated *Eternity Dress*. This exhibit exposed the relationship between a wearer (a client played by the British actress Tilda Swinton) and a fashion designer through the construction of a dress. This is supported by reference to an online interview with Saillard on Swinton ('Represa 2013').

A curated voice emerged in conversation with Judith Clark on 20 January 2016. She spoke about her thinking behind *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* exhibition at Blythe House in 2010, and described her curatorial approach as 'declaring our hand' (Clark 2016). Another curated voice emerged in conversation with Ligaya Salazar (4.2.2016), who advocated a 'mediated' curatorial approach, which dictates a less visible role. Further interviews with fashion curators Karen Van Godtsenhoven on 9 February 2013 at MoMu, Antwerp, Jessica Regan on 30 January 2015 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Ariela Elia and Valerie Steele on 30 January 2015 at The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York, helped to develop an awareness of the curatorial voice in the museum.

The exhibits I have chosen in this chapter explore each of these voices individually and collectively. The impact these have on how dress is felt to communicate for the 'sample viewer' is experienced through differently felt haptic aesthetics. The sequence of these exhibits charts a trajectory for the purpose of analysis. I refer to *Fashion as communication* (2002), by visual culture theorist Malcolm Barnard, from which I take forward the notion that the source of meaning in dress originates most plausibly from outside the dress. He suggests this comes firstly from the designer, then the wearer, then the spectator – the spectator includes the fashion critic, the journalist, or even a parent (Barnard 2002:73). The sequence I chart deals with dress in the everyday separately to the exhibition: these are two separate contexts for the purpose of analysis. Therefore I first offer an analysis of the wearer's voice in the everyday, with the acknowledgement that the designer's voice is already embedded in dress and influential to the wearer's dress choices. I then follow a sequence that charts the designer's voice and how it overlaps with the curator's voice for the purpose of curating dress in the exhibition. This revisiting of the designer's voice is analysed through two exhibits and two different designers who work at the intersection of these roles. Analysis progresses to further examples of overlaps between designers, curators and wearers in differently curated and exhibited stories. These exhibits existed in real time and space. I visited some of these exhibits at first hand and some at one remove, which I indicate in my analysis of each exhibit. All the exhibits are discussed through post-exhibition personal recall, research documentation, curator interviews, and visitor data/questionnaires.

In terms of the dress exhibit and a plausible sequence, I suggest that the curator and theorist sit somewhere between the wearer and the spectator (viewer). Yet all the voices are experienced at the same time across the viewing space for a viewer in an exhibition. As with the previous chapters, analysis is focused on dress (as opposed to the mannequin) and how the concept of a *wearing consciousness* is embedded, embodied, emplaced and further embraced by the viewer, who 'grasps' the haptic aesthetics of dress in relation to everyday experiences as a conscious wearer in the world.

'Grasping' *Eternity Dress*

The first exhibit is *Eternity Dress*, which was the second of three performances staged between 2012 and 2014 at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. It was curated by Olivier Saillard as part of the Festival d'Automne à Paris, and performed on four consecutive nights from 20 - 24 November 2013.

Although *Eternity Dress* does not fit the traditional concept of a dress exhibit in the museum, analysis of this performance enables a transitional experience of dress which is exhibited outside the museum space yet within a contemporary dress museology. Further, this exhibit is useful in order to examine how the process of creating a dress can be curated (as this is not typically possible in the museum, for conservation reasons) and therefore offers an understanding of the design process as it is communicated between the voice of the designer and that of the wearer. In the following analysis I focus on how Saillard has staged the designer's voice with an awareness of his curatorial voice, interwoven with the wearer's voice.

In the role of designer, Saillard constructs a dress from scratch for his client, played by Swinton. In an interview with Rosslyn Hyams, Saillard explained that *Eternity Dress* is a reflection on: '[…] how to make a dress before it is presented, and how making a dress can be a pure moment' (Hyams 2013).

During this hour-long performance Saillard shifts Swinton's voice subtly between different 'wearing voices', from client to fashion body, to muse and then to wearer. Also, a colleague of Saillard's took on the role of design assistant at certain points. This highlights the shifts between different types of identity that an individual wearer can enact, and played with what can be voiced through dress choices. This was demonstrated by Swinton when she tried on a series of different dress fabric options, beginning with a muslin silk shift dress (Figure 1) and concluding with a midnight blue satin dress, with three other potential dress options in between. These 'fittings' were staged by the curator to 'fit' a dress to Swinton not just in terms of the fabric but also in relation to the dress choices that Swinton and Saillard made that make up the characteristics of being unworn in Swinton's dress.

I will now refer to an edited version of this performance, which I visited via the following online link: https://vimeo.com/90653338 as it was performed on 20 November 2013.

The opening scene shows Saillard with a tape measure and spectacles, measuring Swinton's body. Hyams describes the audience's first view of Swinton: '[…] this evening there is a tall, svelte pale woman with a carved asymmetric haircut, barefoot on a plain wooden pedestal wearing a fine, skin-coloured muslin silk shift: there's Tilda Swinton' (Hyams 2013). Saillard is taking Swinton's body measurements in order to construct the dress he will make during the performance.

As I watch this process unfolding between Swinton and Saillard I experience an empathy with the process of mapping Swinton's body, as this is an exercise (outlined in my Introduction) I myself carried out, specifically to deepen a haptic aesthetic understanding of how dress is constructed. Taking my own body measurements created dual sensations which gave me both an understanding of the feeling of touching the points that translate into a dress at the same time as experiencing a haptic understanding of being touched by my own fingertips, and by someone else's for the measurements I was not able to reach. I was able to recall these sensations when viewing Swinton in the performance.

The parallel I draw here is with the invisible touchlines created in the act of getting dressed in front of a mirror (explored in Chapter One), in which there are similarities and differences. The reason for drawing a parallel is to explore the extent to which invisible touchlines created in the act of getting dressed are brought into the viewing experience when a *wearing empathy* is experienced.

This is not just an experience of the sensations and pressures of dress on the skin: what is folded into this is an understanding of how dress is manipulated to fit the body, and consciously manipulated to fit the body and self. Throughout my own body-mapping exercise, a cutaneous awareness connected with my conscious understanding of the construction of dress. Further, these points related to a mapping of bodily spaces between what translates as seams onto the edges of my skin. It is in this haptic intersubjectivity between hands and creating dress into an aesthetic form that the viewer may experience a *wearing empathy* towards what emerges as a wearing voice. This is a process which, for the viewer, resembles the act of dressing their 'aesthetic double' in a domestic mirror as a wearer. As such, it is a process I bring into the analysis of how the creation of a dress is grasped by the viewer through this curated account.

I will now describe these measurements in the order I observed them. Saillard first measures Swinton's head, horizontally then vertically (Figure 1), then her waist (Figure 2). Then he measures across the front and back of her shoulders, around her bust, her upper arm, wrist, individual thighs, then across both thighs. The tape measures the lines between Saillard's fingertips and points on Saillard's body which equate to the seams, edges and points where dress touches the wearer when worn.

Figure 1. [REDACTED] Saillard taking Swinton's 'head measurement' with a tape measure. *Eternity Dress*, Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/10/eternity-dress

Figure 2. [REDACTED] Saillard taking Swinton's 'waist measurement' with a tape measure. *Eternity Dress*, Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/1/eternity-dress

Not all viewers would have had the experience of being measured for a bespoke item of dress, but all viewers are conscious wearers, who entertain their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror through dress choices experienced not just in dual sensations but in quadruple sensations (as I discuss in Chapter One). Through the experience of being a conscious wearer, the viewer will be able to bring conscious haptic aesthetic knowledge to the correlation between the seams and the edges of the skin with quadruple sensations when empathising with Swinton's performance. I draw a parallel here between observing Swinton's body being measured and anticipating, through imaginary touchlines, how each touch point for measuring can be spatially mapped towards the construction of a dress. For example, seams are stitched together in places for practical purposes, such as across the shoulder blades of a shirt to create a yoke, or a cuff, or a series of buttonholes down the front, in order to allow space for the body to fit inside and wear dress. Therefore each wearer can reference these dress measurements in their own wearing terms. This happens through an empathy with the

intersubjective haptic aesthetic dialogue between dress, body and self, experienced through a *wearing empathy* with Swinton's performance. This is a dialogue which for the viewer, along with the quadruple sensations experienced, forms part of what is understood as the *wearing consciousness*, as it is aesthetically curated into the dress and therefore contributes not only to the concept of a dress voice but also to the haptic aesthetics a dress can voice to a viewer.

When Saillard, as the designer, has all the spatial measurements he needs, he is able to map out the edges of Swinton's bodily form as a set of two-dimensional dress measurements. During this process a haptic aesthetic communication has been witnessed between Saillard and Swinton via dress for the viewer.

A paper dress

The performance continues to develop a relationship between dress, body and self as Swinton's body measurements are translated onto paper to form a pattern for the panels of the dress. The paper panels are then cut out separately. Saillard cuts the paper pattern out and hands the pieces to Swinton. New invisible touchlines are drawn not just between Saillard and the paper toile, but also between Saillard, the paper toile and Swinton, then between Swinton and the paper toile as she holds it up in front of herself. Swinton juxtaposes these pieces by holding them between her fingertips, approximately in the way they will be stitched, to create a three-dimensional dress shape inside which her body will be placed (Figure 3).

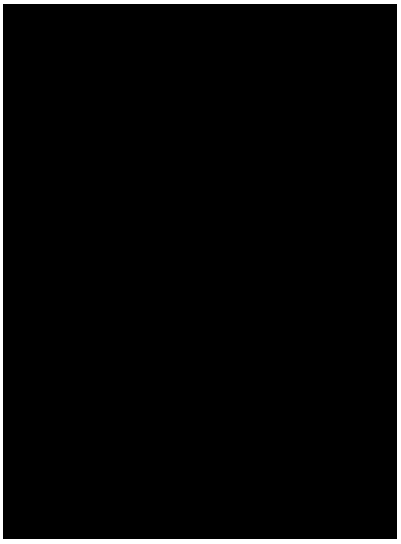

Figure 3. [REDACTED] Swinton holding three separate 'Paper pattern' dress pieces between her fingertips. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © Piero Biasion [Internet] Available at: http://theheritagestudio.com/2013/11/eternity-dress-olivier-saillards-performance-starring-tilda-swinton/

Throughout the performance each step is annotated by Swinton's deliberate gestures, beginning with the gentle folding of her paper skin. Her voice as a wearer leaks into the paper pattern, as does Saillard's as a designer and curator through the indexical traces of touch they both leave behind with their fingertips as they tweak and pin. The experience of holding a dress up in front of one's body draws further parallels with the wearer in the everyday, again echoed in the experience of getting dressed in front of a domestic mirror. As Kaat Debo suggests, '[…] Every pattern carries within it the potential garment and, therefore, the potential body'. (Debo 2003:9) As I noted before, this allows the viewer the opportunity to witness the creation of a relationship between dress, body and self through the intersubjective haptic aesthetic communication between designer, curator and wearer towards a dress voice that combines all three.

Debo's reference to a potential body can allude to the fashion body, the ideal body and body image (which I outline in the Introduction), all of which may be referenced by Swinton to some extent in a particular moment. Or so I imagine, to some extent, through a *wearing empathy* with Swinton as she plays with the potential fit of a paper pattern with her dress, body and self.

Therefore I suggest that Swinton helps the viewer to imagine how separate pieces of a paper pattern can work when stitched together as a whole by holding the template pieces up in front of her body between her finger and thumb (Figure 3). I suggest that Swinton can imagine these panels as a fabric dress for herself and is able to imaginatively identify the look and feel of this potential dress on her body. Swinton's performance may further allow the viewer to experience a *wearing empathy* through both an imagined feel of wearing dress themselves and an 'imagined' *wearing empathy* with Swinton's.

A calico toile

The paper pattern therefore carries with it not only a potential dress and body, but also a potential wearing experience. This is further realized or imagined when it is then transferred onto calico, cut out and then stitched together to make a three-dimensional toile (Figures 4, 5 and 6).

Figure 4. [REDACTED] Saillard cutting out dress pieces from calico held by Swinton. *Eternity Dress*, Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/12/eternity-dress

In the next stage the designer draws further invisible touchlines between fingertips, dress and body, mapped out through marking, pricking, pinning, tucking, snipping, stitching, unstitching, taping, un-taping, wearing, undressing and dressing to approximate the look and feel of the finished dress in calico. This is the next 'fitting' stage involving dress, body and self by Saillard and Swinton.

Figure 5. [REDACTED] Swinton holds a pin cushion for Saillard to pin the toile to her body. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/3/eternity-dress

In the role of designer (with an assistant, shown in Figure 5) Saillard reaches out to manipulate the toile with tools such as pins and tape, needle and thread and scissors. This embeds more of the designer's voice into the 'skin' of dress, as witnessed by the viewers. The dress voice is forming as the designed characteristics of being unworn.

Figure 6. [REDACTED] Swinton models the toile while Saillard makes tweaks. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/4/eternity-dress

In order to explore how a designer's and wearer's conscious choices can become embedded in dress, I will now offer some further parallels. Throughout the performance, Swinton's body goes through a series of dressings and un-dressings (although she never takes off her silk shift), which are called 'fittings'. These fittings are designed to create a dress which not only fits the body but that also fits the concept of a 'wearing voice' (the one this dress will wear). 'Fitting' a dress is both a cutaneous and a conscious process which allows the everyday wearer to project, align themselves with or imagine how to fashion or dress their voice as a wearer.

As part of the process of fitting dress to a wearer, the designer must make decisions about which aesthetic characteristics of being unworn to include and which to exclude. As part of the paradigmatic process, dress decisions must be made between '[…] 'this *or* this *or* this.' (Barnard 1996:90), translated in this context as this 'long fitted' sleeve, *or* this 'loose, flouncy sheer' sleeve, *or* this 'to the wrist and voluminous with a gape' sleeve in the performance (Figure 7).

Figure 7. [REDACTED] Saillard assesses a sleeve fitting on Swinton. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/5/eternity-dress

As described by Hyams, 'Swinton lists all the different types of collars and necklines in French from A – Z…then Saillard and an assistant alternately add and remove a range of different sleeves in different fabrics as Swinton pivots and half-twists on her box in a casual three-way choreography […]' (Hyams 2013). During the process of adding and removing different sleeves, yet another set of haptic aesthetics are created between Saillard and Swinton, which connect along now oscillating touchlines which connect a dress voice between designer, wearer and dress.

I will now explore how Swinton imagines the fitting of a further five dresses by wrapping one swathe of fabric after another around her body (Figures 8 – 10), imagining the style and fit of a dress.

Five imagined dresses

Imagined dress 1: The midnight blue fabric dress

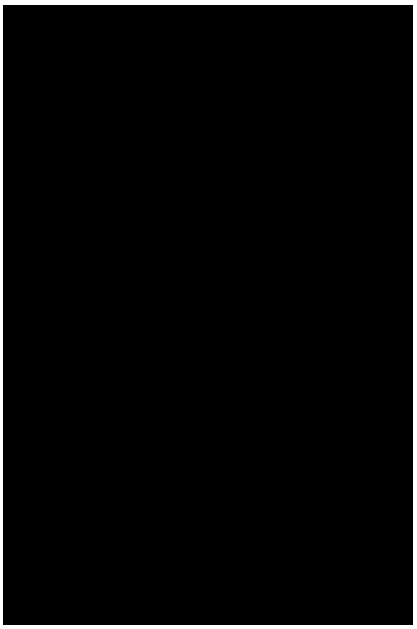

Figure 8. [REDACTED] Swinton swathes herself in midnight blue fabric. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © Piero Biasion [Internet] Available at: http://theheritagestudio.com/2013/11/eternity-dress-olivier-saillards-performance-starring-tilda-swinton/

Imagined dress 2: The bright red fabric dress

Figure 9. [REDACTED] Swinton swathes herself in bright red fabric from a roll. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/7/eternity-dress

Imagined dress 3: The bright yellow fabric dress

Figure 10. [REDACTED] Swinton swathes herself in bright yellow fabric from a roll. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/8/eternity-dress

Imagined dress 4 was in a sheer fabric with white dots. Imagined dress 5 was in a pale pink fabric. Swinton discarded these last two imagined dresses, along with the second and third, to choose imagined dress 1 in the midnight blue fabric (Figure 8). With each wrapping Swinton posed still for a moment, her eyes closed, focusing on the feel of the fabric and the imagined image of herself in each dress.

Only the midnight blue swathe of fabric was made into a dress, with a round neck, long fitted sleeves, a slit down the back from the nape of the neck to the small of the back and a slit at the bottom of the dress which fell to just below the knees (Figure 11). It is these characteristics of being unworn which Swinton and Saillard choose to voice through this dress.

At the end of each performance (on four consecutive nights) Swinton posed on her plinth for a moment and faced the audience (Figure 11). Hyams describes this final scene:

> In the closing scenes, the model / client Swinton drapes around herself material flowing from long bolts and strikes a pose with each one. You can almost hear the imaginary cameras clicking and whirring as she fixes a half smile (Hyams 2013)

This performance demonstrates how a dress voice not only is constructed but also communicates through the haptic aesthetics of dress, and is indicative of the relationship between dress, body and self.

Figure 11. [REDACTED] Swinton models the final midnight blue dress and mimics photographing the audience. *Eternity Dress,* Olivier Saillard / Tilda Swinton, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013). Image © DazedDigital.com. Available at: https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/gallery/16990/13/eternity-dress

In summary, there are four different types of intersubjective haptic aesthetic engagement between Swinton and Saillard in the performance.

The first is a mapping of dress measurements taken by Saillard's fingertips on points on Swinton's body using a tape measure. The second is an engagement between Swinton's fingertips and dress in order to hold dress in a way which allows Swinton to imaginatively inhabit her own dress before she is able to wear it. The third is in the construction of the calico toile and later the 'fitting' of dress to the body and self. As Swinton goes through the fitting stage, haptic aesthetics are mapped out with tools which mark, prick, pin, tuck, snip, stitch, unstitch, tape, un-tape, wear, undress and dress to shape the look and feel of the finished dress. The fourth is a fitting of the dress made from the midnight blue fabric with a round neck, long fitted sleeves, a slit down the back of the dress from the nape of her

neck to the small of her back and a slit at the bottom of the dress which falls to just below her knees (Figure 11*).*

During this performance (which I viewed via the video link) I was able to draw parallels between my experiences as a conscious wearer in the everyday (for example when making dress choices in front of the mirror, trying on different items of dress in different juxtapositions and with different characteristics of wearing, such as having the sleeves rolled up or down) and Swinton's performance. This is because Swinton's performance plays out the haptic aesthetic engagement between designer and wearer (client or muse) through a series of 'fittings' which can be thought of as a series of dress choices. This allows the viewer to grasp the haptic aesthetics of dress through the voices that have become interwoven into the process of creating and curating dress through the shared experiences of being a wearer in the world.

Grasping 'She'

I will now refer to a conversation I had with fashion designer and academic Tristan Webber on 28 January 2016 at the Royal College of Art. This conversation enables an analysis of two of the same voices explored by Saillard and Swinton (designer and wearer); however, rather than working with a living client (a wearer), Webber's client is a fabricated muse whom he imagines to be wearing his dresses. Through conversation I gained a deeper insight into a designer's worldview as it is formed and voiced through dress. This was a conscious understanding, rather than one gained through the practice of dressmaking, to understand how a female wearing voice is created by Webber who essentially designs dress for a female body and self.

In conversation, I question how Webber designs a dress for an imaginary wearer (or muse) that he calls 'She'. He explained that through his design process he aims to 'build a picture' (Webber 2016). This '[…] starts off from humble, humble beginnings…' (Webber 2016): for example, inspiration from a piece of music or a text which 'speaks' to him. In Webber's words, he then 'throws various sorts of details around' (Webber 2016) it. In this sense he sources and blends different types of conscious thoughts to create a 'female wearing consciousness' for 'She':

> I like to work through text, my initial response to that piece of music', which would usually be 'lists of thoughts […] sometimes referring back to old collections, cutting methods, advances in human dynamics, ergonomics […] soundtracks […] it's quite broad in that sense[…] quite shapeless initially (Webber 2016).

Webber describes his design process as being multisensory and non-linear, combining the imaginary with the practical. Webber visualises his muse through drawings, and sometimes he gives her a name

beyond 'She', and a profession. However, Webber describes her as not a single-faceted woman, but one whose identity is created from fragments of literary, musical and visual inspiration which changes with each new collection. In conversation, this is how Webber described 'She':

> LG: Does 'She' have a name?
> TW: No, 'She' would occasionally have a reference…often, literary names from books that I might have been reading or really like.
> LG: Is 'She' identifiable?
> TW: 'She's quite identifiable, she's powerful, self-assured, very smart, self-sufficient to a large extent, capable […] physically and intellectually as well…that's the constant that runs throughout […] ['She' is] […] identifiable through my drawings in terms of posture […] almost as if this person is so kind of adept, dextrous, so kind of open-minded as well…absorbing my information and becoming expert in that realm.
> LG: Does 'She' change from collection to collection?
> TW: It changes subtly…more characteristics of that one person remain constant. How 'She" changes is a lot to do with her discipline…as a sports person…as a scientist or programme coder.
> (Webber 2016)

In one way, what Webber tells me echoes Barnard's suggestion that meaning comes initially from the designer, '[…] Thus those thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires that the designer has are somehow expressed or reflected in the garment/ensemble that s/he produces' (Barnard 1999:74).
If Barnard suggests that 'intentions' (Barnard 1999:74) equate with a designer's worldview that includes feelings, then Webber's 'She' becomes a conscious fabrication of his intentions.

If I compare this to *Eternity Dress*, I suggest these are two sides of a designer's voice. Saillard voices the construction of dress (on a body), whilst Webber voices the construction of a 'self'. In conversation with Webber I was able to grasp how 'She' allowed a *wearing consciousness* to be communicated through his designs and how in effect Webber 'exhibits' the characteristics of 'She' through his drawings and words. Here 'She' is ascribed the following *wearing conscious* characteristics by Webber: '[…] powerful, self-assured, very smart, self-sufficient [and] to a large extent, capable […] physically and intellectually as well […] this person is so kind of adept, dexterous, so kind of open-minded as well…' (Webber 2016)

Webber's words enable the viewer (or researcher) to grasp how 'She' performs the task of '[…] absorbing my information and becoming expert in that realm'. (Webber 2016). Webber's words offer an explanation of how the haptic aesthetics of dress enable the designer's voice to be grasped through what can be thought of as a dress voice when it is 'exhibited' (in words or in its material

form) by a wearer (a muse, or client). Establishing an understanding of how dress can absorb the designer's voice and become 'expert in that realm' is a concept I will refer to as a 'wearing voice'.

Grasping 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress'

This next exhibit 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress', in the exhibition *Yohji Yamamoto,* at the V&A (2011) allows an examination of how the fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto speaks through a female muse (Pina Bausch) more directly in a dress exhibit (as staged by curator Ligaya Salazar in the V&A exhibition). Yamamoto's 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress' was designed for his Spring/Summer collection 1992 and exhibited as a satellite installation in the Edwin and Susan Davies Galleries, Room 81 at the V&A, for the duration of the 2011 *Yohji Yamamoto* exhibition (Figure 13). This exhibit helps analysis for the following reasons. First, this exhibit explored a direct balance not just between the designer and a wearing voice but also with the separate voice of the curator. Further that Yamamoto believes his dresses begin to 'have a life of their own' (Salazar 2016) before, during and after they are designed and worn, and this is an important insight in his design process. According to Salazar,

> He has a massive vintage archive of clothes […] packed[…]he goes back to things[…]looks at details […] it really does start for him with the fabric […] His designs are meant to be worn for a lifetime rather than a season […] so the idea of it perishing, or worn or changing over the course of its lifetime is built into the garment […] he is not adverse to that […] they are meant to look a bit worn eventually […] have a life of their own. (Salazar 2016)

Analysis of this exhibit is not focused on Yamamoto's design process, or his muse but rather on how his approach affects the creation of a 'wearing voice' and how Salazar curates this. Yamamoto modelled his 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress' on his close friend and muse, the late German dancer and choreographer Pina Bausch. The curator, Salazar, worked very closely with Yamamoto over a two-year period prior to his V&A 2011 exhibition in order to mediate his voice (which mediates Bausch's in the process) within the museological context:

> With Yohji I was immersed in that world for two to three years […] it was very collaborative […] making visible his ways of working. He left me to do that quite freely. So his voice I guess he always felt was in his work and he feels like that about his collections. (Salazar 2016)

Including the examples I have discussed so far, Yamamoto's 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress', represents one of a series of female wearing voices (Swinton, 'She' and Pina Bausch) which fulfills the role of a muse for a male designer (Saillard, Webber and Yamamoto) to speak through. I reaffirm here that in this thesis, my analysis is of female dress as worn by female wearers, and that in this instance,

as I go on to exemplify through the example of Yamamoto's exhibit, the male voice is one which is absorbed and worn by the female.

I will now describe how I meet Yamamoto's 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress'. The first meeting is at one remove through archived images on the V&A website. The second meeting is on 25 May 2016 with an imagined image of this dress, where I am situated in the satellite space where the exhibit was staged five years previously. Analysis is situated through a blend of these two meetings. On 25 May 2016, as I walked down the red Edwin and Susan Davies Galleries on the third floor of the V&A Museum, I imagined the Yamamoto 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress' standing on a mannequin at the end (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Edwin and Susan Davies Galleries, Room 81, 25.5.16, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As I got nearer to the position, I visualised the dress, with its back to me, facing towards the light coming from the large arched windows above the stairwell (Figure 13), exactly as it would have been situated at the time of the exhibition in 2011.

Figure 13. 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress', *Yohji Yamamoto,* 2011. Image © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

In this next interview extract Salazar asks Yamamoto about his female 'wearing voice':

> LS: Who do you design for? Is there a person, or is it the idealised woman that you've described before?
> YY: […] Every time there is a deep, hidden story in the clothing, and very few members of the audience […] very few people can get it. In that setting, my mythical or iconic woman is always changing. She exists, but I can't describe her precisely, because she is always changing. (Yamamoto and Salazar 2011:82)

In the exhibition catalogue text, Yamamoto acknowledges that he is unable, as a man, to speak with an authentic female voice through his dresses: '[…] I'm not a woman, so I don't have a woman's body, I can't design by inspiration of the skin or body consciousness […]' (Salazar 2011:85). But he can observe and interpret what he observes as female characteristics to tell a story which his describes as '[…] women's spirit, women's bodies, women's skin, women's vibration.' (Salazar 2011:85) I will take these female attributes Yamamoto cites to form something of the characteristics of a female wearing voice.

Like Webber, Yamamoto's female wearing voice is defined by certain characteristics, which form a 'mythical or iconic woman who is always changing'. However, for Webber, his 'She' '[…] changes subtly […] more characteristics of that one person remain constant [however]. How 'She' changes is a lot to do with her discipline […] as a sports person […] as a scientist or programme coder. (Webber 2016)

However, where Yamamoto differs is that his muse can also be a living icon, for example Pina Bausch. Bausch's body is also fused with Yamamoto's idea of the perfect silhouette, so this demonstrates how the aesthetics of dress also become part of the 'wearing voice'. Yamamoto's focus on the curve of a woman's back is a feature both he and Salazar chose to exhibit in the staging of this dress.

The haptic aesthetic relationship between Yamamoto and dress, Yamamoto and Bausch, Yamamoto and Salazar, tell a story of the way this dress was worn by a 'female wearing consciousness' in life and death. In conversation, Salazar actively connects this dress to Bausch and indicates her mediation of Yamamoto's voice, and in turn Bausch's, as gazing into another world: 'Pina Bausch died a year before the exhibition was formed. So it was a single figure […]her, I guess […] basically looking out of the window.' (Salazar 2016).

Salazar speaks of a 'gap' that Yamamoto creates in his work for other people to fill imaginatively. 'This sense of incompletion in Yohji Yamamoto's garments, the gap he leaves for other people to fill with their own imaginations or physiques […]' (Salazar 2011:42) I suggest is how a viewer grasps Yamamoto's 'Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress'. As the perfect silhouette of a woman who loved to dance inside her dress as the fabric pressed lightly on her skin allowing conscious residues to form from her movements.

Grasping 'Comfortable'

Figure 14. 'Comfortable', *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London (2010). Image © Julian Abrams

I chose this next exhibit because in an interview with the curator Judith Clark she described her curatorial approach as one of 'declaring our hand' (Clark 2016). She offered insight into her curatorial thinking informing this next exhibit. 'Comfortable' was staged in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, at the V&A Archives, Blythe House, 28 April – 27 June 2010 (Figure 14).

I first became aware of 'Comfortable' in a talk, 'Habit, Habitus, Habitat', at the Royal College of Art (20.3.13), during which Clark cited 'Comfortable' as an exhibit which has 'zero tension with the system' (Clark 2013). Subsequently, in conversation with Clark (2016), I asked her what she meant by this. She indicated that this 'system' is the code of conduct by which institutional and permanent collections are curated, adhering to conservation concerns and the 'Do not touch' rule. Secondly, I understood that 'Comfortable' is curated with zero tension between the concept of 'comfortable' curating and a 'comfortable item of dress'. I viewed 'Comfortable' at first hand on Saturday 12 June 2010, during which I recorded the following haptic aesthetic characteristics:

> 'Comfortable' is a white nightdress made of plain loose linen pleats that fall down to the ankles without touching the skin on the way. Sleeves twist around the mannequin's prosthetic arm in ruches with generous amounts of fabric, narrowing at the wrist then creeping over the back and palm of one hand. The fabric arms of the nightdress are both gauzy. Opaque in places, they form lacy patterns of big leafy stems growing upwards from the wrist to the shoulder seam. This nightdress is voluminous enough in places to suggest a wearer is in part still present; the mannequin's prosthetic knuckles emerge from the lacy cuff. This nightdress is staged on a partially limbed mannequin, suggesting both the presence and the absence of a wearer.

Clark exhibited 'Comfortable' in a custom-made traditional vitrine made of dark wood with full-length glass panels, raised on a plinth. This reference to traditional museum exhibition architecture recontextualises the everyday narrative into that of the museum. Clark suggests that dress 'Behind glass sometimes makes things falsely precious, it's really dramatising […] something about the museum presentation which now is so historically specific itself it could stand in the way […]' (Clark 2016) Clark's reference to 'dramatising' the presentation is illuminating here, as is the notion that placing dress behind glass can create a 'falsely precious' feeling. This translates the curation of dress into narratives of belonging.

Analysis of *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* in Chapter Two explores Clark's references to architecture in order to stage dress within narratives of spatial metaphor. I suggest, in regard to 'Comfortable', that the 'spatial metaphor' is a reference to museological narratives. As a result, for the viewer 'Comfortable' is a consciously curated metaphor for a 'comfortable' belonging, in terms not only of

the relationship with body and self as a nightdress, but also with the contemporary dress museology of the vitrine.

In *The concise dictionary of dress* exhibition catalogue (2010), an anonymous question raises this point: 'There seem to be two categories of embodiment implied by the commission, the ghost-like presence of clothing once inhabited and the absent body of the archivist. What sort of relationship between curator and curated do these shadows and voids suggest?' Clark's answer to this was: 'The installations invite the visitor to imagine the archivist or curator. They acknowledge intervention as part of interpretation.' (Clark 2010:113)

Therefore Clark suggests that what is grasped when viewing 'Comfortable' is an invitation to imagine the curatorial hand. Importantly, Clark highlights the connection between 'intervention' and 'interpretation'. Therefore, how the viewer grasps dress is dependent on the interpretation of the interventions of voices embodied in the haptic aesthetics of the dress. In the case of 'Comfortable', Clark's 'intervention' is not just to dress this nightdress on a mannequin, but also to choose to stage this nightdress in the wider narratives of belonging, not just to a wearing voice but also to a museological 'system'. This is one which keeps dress inside the vitrine and behind the 'Do not touch' barrier.

Further interpretation can be made through the intervention by Adam Phillips. On the text card for 'Comfortable', Phillips wrote these words:

1
A refuge; a nostalgia; the calm before or after.
2
The affluence of ease.
3
Fear of the future, rehearsed.
4
Pleasure as convenience; measured longing.
5
Space protected to forget that protection is required.
6
Invisibly armoured.

I suggest that the words 'ease', 'pleasure', 'protection', and 'nostalgia' can be interpreted as comfortable feelings. Clark asserts that ultimately comfortable feelings come from the viewer (who brings the experience of being a wearer into the exhibition space), who projects these onto dress. 'For the visitor [...] it's a projection, isn't it […] the visitor projecting their own assumption onto the dress because the actual wearer […] the physical wearer is not there […]' (Clark 2016).

I suggest this links not only to comfortable feelings of dress belonging to a body and self for the viewer in the dress exhibition, but also to earlier discussions in this thesis around the tension created between dress, body and self. This is when dress is perceived as having been pulled apart from body and self in the exhibition, when 'the physical wearer is not there' (Clark 2016). Although I counter this with the suggestion that a wearing voice is grasped through the haptic aesthetics of dress in the exhibition, for now this raises a pertinent point about belonging.

Clark identifies two sorts of belonging: 'original active' belonging and 'its individual' belonging (Clark 2016). I understand the first to refer to the 'original wearer' (whether this is a designer's fictional muse, a living muse, or an identifiable or unidentifiable body in history), which to some extent remains 'active', or rather 'conscious', for the viewer in relation to their own *wearing consciousness*. I understand the second to refer to a dress in terms of 'its individual' experiences, both cutaneous and conscious, from those hands who have touched and manipulated dress from creation to curation, which result in the balance of voices I discussed earlier in terms of the 'wearing voice'. Clark goes on to say that:

> If you are re-imagining it as a presence rather than an absence […], who is this person? […] is it the wearer, is it the designer, is it the reference? […] what are the aspirations of the dress? […] so if it's had lives, it's had lives in which narratives? (Clark 2016)

First, if a viewer imagines the presence of a 'wearing voice' in the absence of a visible wearer, then, as Clark asks, 'who is this person?' As I have discussed thus far, I suggest this 'person' can be thought of as wearing voice. This can be a reference to a 'wearer', whether living – in the case of Swinton – or non-living – in the case of Bausch. However in terms of 'Comfortable', I suggest that rather than the designer Paul Poiret (1879 – 1944) who designed this white linen nightdress for his wife, Denise Boulet, I suggest the 'person' or wearing voice in this exhibit is in fact Clark's 'reference' to the concept of 'comfortable' curating.

When Clark asks, 'what are the aspirations of the dress?' (Clark 2016), I understand that this relates to what Robins and Salazar cite as the 'intention of the object'. However, Clark's aspirations aspire further to the concept of whether dress has had lives, and if so, 'lives in which narratives?'. The 'aspiration' of 'Comfortable' for Clark is to curate a dress within a comfortable narrative, which has zero tension within the 'system' of museology. Clark explains that:

> In the *Concise Dictionary*, I put it in the category 'comfortable' and it was a joke in that I put a comfortable nightdress […] a very precious one […] but what the installation was about was the glass cabinet. Comfortable curating in the sense that it is a solution that has been tried and tested. […] We know the Victorian cabinet is

> OK from the official point of view, but now it is so much so that it is quotable. (Clark 2016)

In summary, I suggest that Clark has curated 'Comfortable' with the intention for it to be grasped by the viewer, as it is grasped by her. It is not so much the designer's and wearer's voice but the intention and aspiration of the curator's voice. Clark communicates her grasped understanding of the museological system and how the dress, designer and wearer fit into this. Clark recontextualises this system within her own system. Further, I suggest that Clark's system in this instance can be grasped as one which is both comfortable and uncomfortable with the museological system. Clark asserts this through the 'joke' of the 'Victorian cabinet' for this 'very precious' dress. This is museologically comfortable, yet it has a 'dramatising' effect, because, as she says, there is 'something about the museum presentation which now is so historically specific itself it could stand in the way […]' (Clark 2016). This suggests that a system of 'declaring our hand' is one that is capable of evoking narratives for dress which can be grasped in terms of both comfortable and uncomfortable feelings for the viewer about how it feels to be a wearer in the world.

Conclusion

All the dress exhibits in this chapter embody one or more *wearing consciousnesses*, which communicate one or more narratives of feelings with the intention to effect a change in another. Whether the voices are united in a dress exhibit, separated, removed or amplified above another, or fabricated to create a set of different voices to form a narrative, is subject to the relationship between dress, body and self which belongs to the wearing voice as 'grasped' by the viewer.

Olivier Saillard suggests that there is a value beyond the commercial in the haptic intimacy between the designer and dress that is created in the making process. This is where the wearing experience of dress begins. Judith Clark's reference to the 'aspirations of the dress' and Yohji Yamamoto's belief that dress has its own autonomy through ongoing individual wear and tear, both on and off bodies, all contribute to the idea that the dress itself embodies 'a story of some sort' (Robins 2015) beyond any living occupancy. I suggest that the concept of haptic aesthetics is the sum of these vocal fragments, a way of looking that achieves a greater intimacy and imagination by thinking about dress as fragments of 'wearing voices', which speak of a *wearing consciousness*.

The collaboration between the designer's voice and the curator's voice (the 'curated' *wearing consciousness*) is a sensitive balance. It could be that the hearing of Yamamoto's voice in his dresses is critically dependent on the presence of the living wearer, for which the usual lifeless mannequin is a deadening substitute. This further suggests that Yamamoto acknowledges that his voice will be changed, even unheard, in competition with the way it is curated. Webber suggests that the two voices, when working together, can collectively become 'more than the sum of their [individual] parts'

(Webber 2016). Salazar, however, asserts that 'I feel very uncomfortable with the authorial voice that my profession now affords' (Salazar 2016), whereas in Clark's approach the curatorial 'hand is being declared' (Clark 2016).

Further to this, not only are fashion curators today having to 'define their practice' (Salazar 2016); fashion designers are also doing so in terms of how they choose to curate both their final pieces and their work in progress shows (Webber 2016). Saillard speaks about this when he focuses on the purity of the making practice in *Eternity Dress* (2013). I suggest that wearers, too, empathise by defining their *wearing consciousness* through dress, as Robins does. Further to fashioning and styling the body and self, new ways of 'curating the self' include curating the dress, body and self. Robins articulates a form of self-curation, which blurs the boundaries between wearer, viewer, designer and curator by using her own body as a site for the curation of dress. This is evidence to suggest that the practice of 'mediating voices' is one the wearer carries out in the everyday when making dress choices in front of a domestic mirror. Therefore the 'mediation' of dress voices in the curation of dress is one which the viewer as a conscious wearer in the exhibition can empathise with.

All wearers experience conscious wearing feelings when wearing dress. All wearers mediate these conscious wearing feelings when getting dressed to form a 'story of some sort' through their dress choices. All wearers mediate this narrative of feelings through the haptic aesthetics of dress. If a viewer experiences conscious wearing feelings empathetically when viewing a dress exhibit, then a dress exhibit has been able to communicate an 'intention' which has effected a change in that viewer (Barnard 2002). It is this 'intention' or 'aspiration', or even 'attitude', which provides dress with the autonomy aligned with its individual *wearing consciousness* communicated through a 'wearing voice'.

In my introduction to this chapter I propose that *how* dress communicates remains subject to debate. In this chapter I have outlined how the haptic aesthetics of dress are capable of affecting a *felt* change in the viewer across the 'Do not touch' barrier. I suggest this is because a viewer 'grasps' not just the cutaneous but also the conscious experiences of wearing a dress, contextualized within narratives of feelings shared by all conscious wearers in the world. These pertain to the concept of the *wearing consciousness* (which I define as a sum of parts in Chapter One), as grasped through a 'wearing voice'.

Conclusion

In my Introduction, I suggested that this research might be of interest to those working in the fields of dress studies (including textiles, fashion and costume), ethnography and museology, impacting on their work to enrich theory, practice and research. Specifically, this concerns researchers, theorists, academics, designers, curators, artists and students who may find the application of the haptic aesthetics of dress useful. The theoretical impact is on the study of the relationship between dress, body and self, the concept of curating the self and the haptic aesthetic communication between different dressed bodies, in different contexts and spaces. Practical applications include the display, exhibition or showcasing of dress in contexts such as the contemporary exhibition space (inside and outside the museum), retail environment, theatrical space or film set or degree show where touching dress is not possible, or is not permitted.

The haptic aesthetics of dress explored and analysed in this thesis can be seen as a mode of communication. My thesis contends that the viewer carries an understanding of the haptic aesthetics of dress into the dress exhibition through the conscious wearing of dress in the everyday, and that it is this knowledge which allows the viewer to grasp a dress exhibit despite the touch barriers which prevent cutaneous but *not* conscious touch in this context. Indicative references in my Introduction include Christopher Breward's provocative comment that 'Fashion comes to the museum to die!' and Joanne Entwistle's description of dress as being '[…] pulled apart from the body/self […]' (Entwistle 2000:10). These can be seen as negative appraisals of the exhibiting of dress in the museum, which have contributed to the doubts summarised in the 'issue of liveliness', as I outline in my Introduction and examine in this thesis.

I set out to counter these appraisals in this thesis by establishing a connection between Entwistle's notion that dress is pulled apart from the body / self in the dress exhibition and Alexandra Palmer's notion that 'The personal knowledge of wearing clothing makes museum visitors connoisseurs even before entering a dress exhibition' (Palmer 2008:32). I explored this through the act of pulling dress onto the body while getting dressed, and observed how dress is felt to be pulled apart from the body / self in the exhibition. The practice of dressing and undressing go hand in hand, stretching the relationship between dress, body and self across the 'viewing space' between the viewer and the dress exhibit through haptic aesthetics.

I also state in my Introduction that for the purpose of 'doing' haptic aesthetic research into how dress communicates (in order to analyse how dress is viewed in the exhibition) I needed a haptic aesthetic methodology for dress. By referring to Pink's theory of 'sensory ethnography' (2009) I was able to explore the process through which the haptic aesthetics of dress can be recorded in the experience of viewing dress in reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated terms. It is through this approach that

insights can be gained into how a viewer feels touched by dress in a context where touch is not permitted. In the role of haptic aesthetic researcher, these experiences are subsequently recorded through an autoethnographic journey. In each chapter, autoethnographic analysis began in the everyday and transitioned into the museum.

In Chapters One to Three, autoethnographic analysis of the viewing space began in front of a domestic mirror (in my house in Kensal Rise). In Chapter Two I explored the transition from my domestic space into the space of the street (in north-west London), into the space of a seat on the 452 bus (to High Street Kensington) and a changing-room space in a dress shop (in High Street Kensington). In Chapter Three I explore the space of the street in a walk down Exhibition Road to the V&A.

Transition into the museum was through the V&A's huge glass revolving doors. In Chapter One, I viewed dress inside vitrines (in Room 40), including 'Zemire' by Christian Dior (1954), 'Evening Coat' by Elsa Schiaparelli (1937) and 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90'. In Chapter Two I analysed dress as a 'spatial metaphor' through *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (2010) by Judith Clark, in the rooms and corridors of Blythe House (London). In Chapter Three I walked behind Alexander McQueen's *Fashion in Motion* mannequins (1999) as they travelled through the galleries and corridors of the V&A itself.

In Chapter Four my autoethnographic approach followed a different format. In the everyday I conducted two semi-structured interviews with Freddie Robins and Tristan Webber for analysis of the wearer's and designer's voices. Further analysis of the designer's and the curator's voice combined as one was through Olivier Saillard's *Eternity Dress,* Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2013) before crossing the threshold into the museological space. In the V&A I further examined the mixing and overlapping of all these dress voices through exhibits that included **'**Long Off-white Sleeveless Dress', in *Yohji Yamamoto*, at the V&A (2011), curated by Ligaya Salazar and 'Comfortable', in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* at Blythe House, London (2010), curated by Judith Clark**.**

It was through this autoethnographic approach that I was able to gain an empathetic understanding of the cutaneous and conscious pressures, sensations and feelings which inhabit our *wearing consciousness.* I was further able to record how these feelings were voiced through dress across the 'viewing spaces' I experienced throughout the chapters in this thesis.

I began this research to question how a viewer can touch, and *feel* touched by, dress in the context of the dress exhibition where touch is not permitted. I set out to explore this question through the haptic aesthetics of dress when it is worn on and off the body (worn and not-worn). It was this connection (between being worn on and off the body) that I focused on to counter Breward's

provocative comment and support Palmer's observation that viewers 'measure meaning and value in terms of their own life' (Palmer 2008:32) in the dress exhibition.

In my Introduction I cite three contributions this research offers to the concept of a contemporary dress museology. These are a 'haptic aesthetic literacy', the 'invisible touch barrier' and the problem of 'belonging' (in respect of the 'issue of liveliness'). I understand all three of these to be embodied in the *wearing consciousness*. However, the key outcome of this research, as explored in Chapter Four, is that rather than a haptic aesthetic 'literacy' for dress, my contribution is the haptic aesthetics of dress as 'grasped' by the viewer in the contemporary exhibition space. This is because haptic aesthetic communication (through dress) is not simply linguistic or semiotic but a mix of these, including the impact of *touch tensions* caused by touch barriers and an empathy with the problem of belonging. Without being able to touch a dress exhibit, the viewer must use their tacit haptic knowledge of wearing dress to empathise with how dress would feel to wear. This feeling is one that is only possible to 'grasp' through the haptic aesthetics of dress as a conscious wearer in the world.

I will now outline how, through each chapter, concepts were explored to build a deep haptic aesthetic understanding of how conscious wearing experiences are 'grasped' by the viewer in the dress exhibition.

Haptic aesthetics of dress as grasped in the exhibition

Each exhibit was selected from first-hand experience or cited in interview. The dress exhibits I chose, and the order in which I chose to 'meet' them in this thesis, marked important steps in the process of developing concepts specific to each chapter. Through each exhibit I was able to establish how these concepts fold out across the 'viewing spaces' I encountered on my autoethnographic journeys. This began with the cutaneous and proprioceptive, then the kinaesthetic, culminating with a conscious 'grasping' of what it feels to wear dress on the body.

There are four different concepts I explore in this thesis in order to build an understanding of the haptic aesthetics of dress as communication. These are focused on separately and defined within Chapters One to Four respectively through the following series of connections.

- The connection between pressure, sensation and feeling (cutaneous and conscious).
- The connection between domestic, street and exhibition space (via the viewing space).
- The connection between the viewer, kinaesthetic empathy and the dress exhibit.
- The connection between the viewer, the dress voice and grasping dress in an exhibit.

I will now summarise each of these connections in terms of how they are explored in Chapters One, Two, Three and Four. This is with a view to understanding how the connection in each chapter feeds into the next chapter, and how all the connections are interwoven to build a clear picture through the dress exhibits in this thesis of the haptic aesthetics of dress as a sum of parts. This charts the *wearing consciousness* first as an embodied concept, then as an emplaced concept (across the viewing space), and finally as one which transgresses touch barriers and thresholds to experience a *wearing empathy* – an imaginative inhabiting, even – which allows the viewer to consciously grasp dress in the exhibition. Collectively these connections deepen an understanding of what the viewer brings into the dress exhibition as a conscious wearer in the world.

Connection One: *Pressure, sensation and feeling*

The connection between pressure, sensation and feeling is key to connecting the sensations of touch on the skin (cutaneous) to the experience of feeling touched (conscious) within the wider social pressures of being a wearer in the world. I chart this connection initially through the cutaneous pressures of dress pressing on the skin in the act of dressing to the conscious feelings around dressing and being a wearer in the everyday. The domestic mirror provides an aesthetic portal through which the wearer views their 'aesthetic double' with a self-conscious gaze. This includes seeing themselves in their mind's eye shaped by conscious and social pressures. It is this dual understanding of viewing and being viewed that is incorporated into the *wearing consciousness*, and that allows the viewer to enter a dialogue with their own *wearing consciousness*. It is through the experience of being a wearer that, as a viewer, I understand the intersubjectivity between dress, body and self through particular wearing experiences and ways of handling dress which become metaphorically folded into the characteristics of being worn in the dress itself.

In Chapter One I analysed the use of the exhibition mirror, firstly through the 'Mirror Room' exhibit in the *SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution* exhibition at Somerset House (2009). On entering the dress exhibit, the viewer 'meets' their 'aesthetic double' in the mirror, which creates a direct reference to the relationship in a domestic mirror, and therefore a belonging between dress, body and self. This is one the viewer can then consciously transfer to the viewing of further exhibits in this exhibition and other dress exhibitions.

More subtly, this approach is used in the vitrines in the V&A's Room 40, exemplified in Chapter One by the 'Zemire' evening ensemble[37] by Christian Dior (1954).

[37] 'Zemire' evening ensemble (jacket, skirt, bodice and under-petticoat), Christian Dior Autumn/Winter Collection 1954.

Figure 1. 'Zemire' by Christian Dior (1954), Room 40, V&A (25.3.15). Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The analysis of this 'exhibition mirror' explored how the viewer is invited into the vitrine and appears juxtaposed with the dress exhibits (Figure 1). This experience allowed the viewer to identify with the dress exhibit in parallel terms to those experienced in the 'Mirror Room' (*SHOWstudio: Fashion Revolution*, 2009) but with a shift towards a conscious felt engagement with the dress exhibit itself. I examined this further in Chapter One with reference to 'Evening Coat', by Elsa Schiaparelli (1937), also in Room 40 at the V&A. Further analysis of the photograph taken of an anonymous viewer in Room 40, V&A, in 2013, also in Chapter One, explored the intersubjective impact of a *wearing empathy* between two viewers and a dress exhibit with *no* exhibition mirror. This concluded that the haptic aesthetics of dress alone acts as a mirror for the *wearing consciousness* if a viewer experiences a *wearing empathy* with a dress exhibit.

Connection Two: *Domestic, street and exhibition space*

The connection between the domestic, street and exhibition space (via the 'viewing space') is one that is also developed from different angles in the first three chapters. Focus on 'space' itself is explored in Chapter Two. In this chapter I explored how the haptic aesthetics of dress can be felt across the viewing space along invisible touchlines between the viewer and dress exhibit.

I map these through the act of getting dressed. This provided an invisible spatial framework for haptic aesthetic communication, which, in extending the circumference around the body further, is interpreted within a wearer or viewer's 'horizon'. I argued that invisible touch barriers can be felt as thresholds, because they draw a strong reference to social and moral codes of conduct around touch

in the everyday. This is exemplified by the experience I had on the bus in Chapter Two when I put a conscious invisible touch barrier in place to prevent myself from cutaneously trespassing into another wearer's *wearing conscious* space. The significance of the touch barrier is that it acts as a touch interface in social contexts, including that of the exhibition. This is supported in Chapter Two by my findings from the *Dress Sense* exhibition experiment I staged at the Royal College of Art in 2011 (full findings from this are detailed in the Appendix).

Figure 2. 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' by Jungen Lee, with white line box on floor, *Dress Sense* experiment, Royal College of Art (25.3.11). Image © Lucy Gundry

In this experiment the dress exhibits borrowed architecturally from a variety of domestic, retail and museological settings. For example, in Figure 2, Jungen Lee's 'Hanging Trio of Pieces' was staged as if in a gallery or museum, indicated by being hung from the ceiling and delineated by the white line on the floor. Findings revealed that although some viewers touched the exhibits and others did not, this did not affect the majority of viewers, who experienced a *touch tension*. Further findings revealed that the context in which dress exhibits were displayed affected not only whether the viewer touched an exhibit but to what extent the museological or the social / moral code of conduct was the reason for this.

This drew the viewer's social, moral and museological codes of conduct consciously towards their 'horizon' and allowed the viewer to translate social and moral touch barriers associated with belonging as a museological touch barrier. I observed this in Chapter Two with reference to 'Pretentious', 'Armoured' and 'Measured' in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London (2010). These exhibits are staged both without a visible touch barrier and within the larger museological context of Blythe House. Analysis of these exhibits helped to understand how the experience of 'not-worn' dress transgressed horizons and trespassed touch barriers consciously rather than cutaneously. This was in order to resolve a *touch tension* by emplacing the feeling of belonging between dress, body and self into an 'imagined inhabiting'.

Connection Three: *The viewer, kinaesthetic empathy and the dress exhibit*

In Chapter Three the connection between the viewer, kinaesthetic empathy and the dress exhibit continued an understanding of how the wearing consciousness communicates through the way a wearer moves when wearing dress in different contexts and across different viewing spaces. Building on the *invisible spatial structure* I mapped in Chapter Two, I examined these touchlines in terms of an 'imagined' *wearing schema*. An 'imagined' *wearing schema* is one which connects the cutaneous with the conscious, and fostering a kinaesthetic dimension within the haptic aesthetic communication of dress.

In this chapter, McNeill's concept of inner mimicry is pertinent to the exploration of a kinaesthetic empathy in order to develop an understanding of the kinaesthetics embodied in a *wearing empathy* for the viewer. This is supported by Caroline Evans' suggestion that the viewer can mimic the mannequin and illustrated by the viewer photographed in Figure 3 and 4, who mimicked the feeling of what it would be like to wear the pair of stays in the V&A vitrine (Figure 4) through a haptic gesture towards another viewer.

3

4

Figure 3. An anonymous viewer, Room 40, 27.2.13, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Figure 4. 'A pair of Stays, 1780 – 90'. *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800,* Room 40, 14.10.17, V&A. Image © Lucy Gundry, courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As analysed in Chapters One and Two, the viewer on the left is mimicking the way the stays (pictured on the right in Figure 4) would have felt if she were wearing them on her body by pressing her fingertips into her stomach in order to communicate this to another viewer. In this, the potential

kinaesthetics of a gesture (which communicated a wearing empathy to me as a haptic aesthetic researcher) is implied. This confirms the importance of Merleau-Ponty's assertion that imagined movements can take the place of actual movements towards the concept of an *invisible wearing schema* in Chapter Three.

I continued the kinaesthetic analysis through observations of viewers' gestures in Room 40 (V&A) during which I identified ten different movements: the 'Backward Tilt', the 'Up-close Encounter', the 'Lurch Forwards', the 'Lurch Backwards', the 'Palm Point', the 'Point', The 'Half Point', the 'Contact Point', the 'Hand on Mouth' and the 'One-metre Stance'. These fed into the analysis of the kinaesthetics of living mannequins in a video of Alexander McQueen's *Fashion in Motion* show staged at the V&A in 1999. My intention here is not to focus on the digital context, for reasons I outline in my Introduction, but to explore how viewing living mannequins in motion allowed the viewer (extending their kinaesthetic empathy) to experience a *wearing empathy* felt through kinaesthetics embodied in their *wearing consciousness*.

Connection Four: *The viewer, the dress voice and grasping dress in an exhibit*

In Chapter Four I explored the connection between the viewer, the dress voice and 'grasping' dress. I make this connection through the concept that a dress carries, in Clark's words, 'aspirations'. This is linked with Robins' concept that dress forms 'a story of some sort' when on the body through a 'narrative of feeling' (Robins 2015). This is corroborated by the concept that dress itself (when not worn on a body) also carries the intentions or aspirations of a *wearing consciousness* voiced through haptic aesthetics.

I make a link here to the concept of 'curating the self', which I introduce in my Introduction and exemplify in Chapter Four with reference to Robins' theory. She described this process as follows: '[…] I like that thing of being able to put things on my body. Like my charms and badges […] you then carry them around all day […] you are like a museum of objects.' (Robins 2015). The concept of curating the self underpins not only the wearer's ability to 'curate' an aesthetic for their 'self' through dress choices, but also the ability to view this by assessing another wearer's dress choices. In Chapter Four I observe this in the everyday with reference to my interview with Robins and analysis of 'Comfortable', a dress exhibit curated by Judith Clark in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* (2010) (see Figure 5). In conversation, Clark offered this curatorial insight:

> '[…] if you are re-imagining it as a presence rather than an absence […], who is this person? […] is it the wearer, is it the designer, is it the reference? […] what are the aspirations of the dress? […] so if it's had lives, it's had lives in which narratives?'. (Clark 2016)

Figure 5. ‘Comfortable’, *The Concise Dictionary of Dress*, Blythe House, London, 2010. Image © 2010 Norbert Schoerner

In summary, throughout the chapters in this thesis, the dress exhibits I select tell a story through an unfolding of the haptic aesthetic sense, similar to that of Pygmalion’s statue. This unfolding allows the viewer to feel as if dress in the exhibition is one that is worn, rather than not worn. This unfolding importantly begins in the everyday, not just in the domestic mirror through the ‘aesthetic double’, but across the ‘viewing spaces’ on the street in the mind’s eye and the public eye on the street, on a bus and in the dress shop (the changing-room). This analysis in the everyday was crucial to understanding ‘The personal knowledge of wearing clothing [which] makes museum visitors connoisseurs even before entering a dress exhibition’ (Palmer 2008:32).

Contextualising the haptic aesthetics of dress in the everyday into ‘some sort of story’ not only allowed the wearer and the researcher to connect with the reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and situated felt experiences they bring as a conscious wearer into viewing experiences, but further, the haptic aesthetics of dress allowed the viewer to communicate with dress through the feeling of dress belonging to a body and self when not being worn. The exhibits cited in this thesis can therefore be thought of as a body of exemplars through which the concept of a *wearing consciousness* was explored, developed and analysed in order to understand how the haptic aesthetics of dress communicate in the dress exhibition despite the ‘Do not touch’ barriers.

Closing thoughts

My closing thoughts concern the significance of belonging to the haptic aesthetics of dress in the contemporary exhibition space. The haptic aesthetics of dress in the exhibition are ‘grasped’ by the viewer as fragments of feeling, some of which belong to the dress, some of which belong to the context and some of which belong to the viewer as a conscious wearer themselves. However, these

are all grasped through our own conscious experiences of wearing dress in, on and through our relationship between dress, body and self when dress is worn on the body and when dress is not worn (off the body), as it is experienced across viewing spaces. Interestingly, the way that dress, body and self belong to each other is disrupted in the dress exhibition. This is where dress is viewed as pulled apart from the living body and self (Entwistle 2000). In this thesis I suggest that the significance of belonging is in the connection between dress, body and self, which is 'disrupted' yet connected through the 'aesthetic double' in the mirror as I examine in Chapter One. This allows the viewer to trespass across the touch barrier and thresholds in the dress exhibition without breaching the 'Do not touch' code of conduct in order to connect the feeling of a belonging.

An important finding in my *Dress Sense* experiment supported this. This was when viewers experienced a *touch tension* because they wanted to touch dress but felt that they could not, due to invisible touch barriers (all exhibits were positioned within immediate access). Two reasons emerged for some viewers not touching: for some it was a reference to the museological 'Do not touch' code of conduct, and for others it was a reference to the social and moral codes of conduct relating to touch in the everyday. Both are related to feelings of belonging or the lack of belonging. The implications of social or moral touch barriers proved essential to the development of thinking around the theory of ownership, including the significance of belonging. This was because if it is felt that a dress is 'owned', and is the property or work of a wearer or designer, or that it belongs to a larger body (such as an institution) then the viewer feels the social or moral touch barrier more strongly. If it is not felt that the dress is owned or belongs to a wearer (whether present or absent), this barrier is weaker, and therefore the desire to touch is more likely to be fulfilled.

The significance of belonging in this thesis is further discussed in Chapter Three in relation to the issue of liveliness, specifically in terms of the body, which is typically embodied in a mannequin (living or non-living). My findings overall were that whatever the material, or immaterial, degree of motion or method of display, or even whether they were living (as in the case of the *Fashion in Motion* events) or non-living, mannequins remained representations of a wearer's body, but were never identified as the wearer of the dress. Chapter Two revealed the mannequin equally as an empty vessel, which a viewer can disregard, replace or inhabit inside the seams of dress itself, as it is understood as not being worn in the absence of a wearer. Chapter Three revealed that the moving mannequin is informative but is not able to take the place of actual movements in the same way that a wearer's imagination can through a *wearing empathy*. Chapter Four renders the mannequin as a prop which can help in the challenge to 'evoke a person' through the dress. The point that I make here is that the paradox of the non-living mannequin is that their presence can on the one hand reinforce the problem of the body (in terms of the uncanny or a certain morbidity), and therefore the notion that dress does not belong in the exhibition. However, at the same time, as I argue in this thesis, this can

be one of the reasons why a viewer transgresses a touch barrier and imaginatively inhabits a dress exhibit. This creates a *new* sense of belonging between dress, body and self.

I conclude that a viewer's 'own assumption' is formed through the *wearing consciousness* and experienced in a one-way 'anonymous relationship' (Goffman 1972) with a dress exhibit. In this relationship the viewer is able to set up a belonging between their dress, body and self which for the moment of viewing allows the dress exhibit to belong to the viewer's own *wearing consciousness*.

This exploration has led to a new understanding of how dress, body and self belong to one another even across the viewing space. It is a relationship which is identified in dress when the wearer is absent. It is a relationship which has the elasticity to transgress touch barriers, to inhabit a dress in which the wearer is absent, yet it is also one which allows the viewer to remain situated within their own *wearing consciousness* during the moment of viewing. In Clark's words, this relationship is '[...] a projection, isn't it…the visitor projecting their own assumption onto the dress because the actual wearer […] the physical wearer is not there […]' (Clark 2016).

The new understanding further reveals how haptic aesthetics help to elicit Jacques Lacan's concept of 'images of the fragmented body' (Lacan 1999:55) for the viewer, as discussed in Chapter One. When presented with the image of a fragmented body the viewer imaginatively fills in the gaps where not just limbs, but also the concept of belonging, may be lacking. The viewer demonstrates this through the act of 'imaginative inhabiting' or extending a *wearing empathy* (exemplified through the mimicking viewer in Figure 3), as discussed in Chapter One.

Examples of 'imaginative inhabiting' are discussed in Chapter Two with reference to the notion of mimicking by an anonymous viewer in Room 40 at the V&A who, I argue, further to extending a *wearing empathy*, imaginatively inhabits the pair of stays in a vitrine in the V&A's *Court and Country, 1750 – 1800* display. In the example of 'Armoured' in *The Concise Dictionary of Dress* at Blythe House, London (2010) *I* explored an imaginative inhabiting as a 'sample viewer'. The analysis concluded that the viewer recreates the feeling of belonging with a dress exhibit by imagining dress as worn (by a wearer such as themselves or another imagined wearer, whether present or absent), therefore the viewer feels that dress, body and self are not consciously pulled apart but consciously pulled together when dress is not-worn, as in the dress exhibition.

Ending

My original contribution to knowledge is the application of haptic aesthetics to the study of '*how* dress touches us' through worn and not-worn dress in the context of an exhibition. My research into the haptic aesthetics of dress has revealed how viewers can engage with their feelings about what it

means to be a wearer in the world, and further, how dress in an exhibition can allow a viewer to commune with these feelings.

Theoretical insights from the philosophy of the senses, supported by qualitative analysis from pertinent dress exhibitions and exhibits, reveals the role of haptic aesthetics in enabling the viewer to empathetically wear dress, just by viewing it in an exhibition. I reveal how the viewer who, as a conscious wearer, curates their own dress choices to 'tell a story of some sort' (Robins 2015) on their body in the everyday, and is able to extend this understanding to viewing dress in the exhibition space. It is this knowledge that I suggest the viewer brings into the dress exhibition, which allows them to not only 'meet' but also to 'grasp' and engage with dress exhibits through their own *wearing consciousness* with an understanding of how this can effect a change in other viewers (wearers).

The concept of 'curating the self' allows the concept of telling 'a story of some sort' (Robins 2015) to be graspable for the viewer. This is because the viewer not only brings but applies '[…] the personal knowledge of wearing clothing […]' as a wearer in order to '[…] measure meaning and value in terms of their own life […]' (Palmer 2008:32) when viewing dress in the exhibition. This is the concept I 'grasped' as a haptic aesthetic researcher and applied in order to critically examine dress exhibits through a reflexive, empathetic, imagined and situated application of my *wearing consciousness*.

Dress does not necessarily go to the museum to die. On the contrary, dress, because of its profoundly intimate relationship with body and self, has an almost unique ability to touch and move viewers through the conscious experience of wearing dress, which becomes embodied in the materiality of its folds to be able to tell 'a story of some sort' (Robins 2015). Even the 'Do not touch' code is not a barrier, but rather a contextual narrative, which is paralleled by social and moral codes of conduct divided by the threshold between private and public dress space. The barriers to touch are not barriers but thresholds across which the viewer in the exhibition is able to feel touched by dress in a context where touch is not permitted.

This thesis draws attention to the way dress communicates through haptic aesthetics, and how this particular mode of communication allows a dress exhibit to communicate the profound and universal relationship between dress, body and self as it is shared by all living wearers in the world regardless of gender, age, status and culture. The haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode of communication in the contemporary exhibition space (as explored in this thesis) may be useful to researchers, academics, theorists, designers, curators, artists and students working in the fields of dress studies (including textiles, fashion, costume and the body), sensory ethnography and museology.

Prior to starting this PhD, I conducted a pedagogic research project for the University for the Creative Arts on the use of 'haptics' versus 'haptic' practices for students on textile and fashion degree courses

within the UK. Findings revealed that developing a *haptic literacy* was a key way for students to balance haptics with haptic practice in order to navigate through the digital revolution. Through this doctoral research I have gained deeper insight and knowledge of the haptic aesthetics of dress as a mode of communication in the everyday and in the contemporary exhibition spaces. It is this new knowledge that I will be taking into my teaching practice and will develop further through continued research.

Appendices

Haptic Aesthetic Checklist

In order to carry out haptic aesthetic methodological steps I have created a 'checklist'. This is a list of questions I ask myself when I am standing in front of a dress exhibit (physically, digitally, imaginatively or metaphorically). This list includes adaptations from questions in Mida and Kim's 'Personal Reactions' (in *The dress detective*, 2015) checklist alongside questions developed through my observation of dress exhibits, to inform haptic aesthetic analysis.

- **Observation** – documenting the internal and external look and feel of a dress in terms of the three sets of 'material characteristics' I use in relation to haptic space, haptic kinaesthetics and the *wearing voice***.**
- **Identification** – the viewer's sensory experience, degree of empathetic identification, and 'imaginatively inhabiting'.
- **Analysis** – application of the 'textural' criteria by which to analyse the haptic aesthetics in the dress exhibit as it relates to my own haptic aesthetics as a viewer to test hypothesis.

Observation

Function

1. What is the title, date and origin of the dress exhibit?
2. Is it one or more pieces, which make up the 'dress' in the exhibit?
3. What sort of 'dress' is it e.g. party, summer, wedding?
4. Who was intended to wear this dress e.g. an English, white, middle aged, middle class mother?
5. Where would this dress have been worn e.g. at a party, on the street, in a story, as a spatial metaphor or in a virtual reality?
6. Has the function been altered in any way through customization or changed attitudes/fashions over time e.g. unpicking, structural altering, difference in colour?

Fit

- Is the dress styled, fashioned, or utlity?
- What sort of style is it e.g. smart, casual, dressy, sporty?
- What size is the dress (08 – 18 or S, M, L, XL or Petite, Regular?)
- Is the dress tight or loose fitting? High, mid or low waist?
- What sort of fashion/dress language would be used to describe it e.g. skinny jeans or boxy top?
- What parts of the body are emphasized, exposed or concealed?
- Are there any details e.g. pockets, belt loops, collars, cuffs, embroidery, stitching (seams)
- Is the garment reinforced in any way e.g. padding (shoulder pads or padding to add warmth), boning, under wiring?
- How is the garment fastened e.g. using zips, buttons?
- How has the garment been constructed (if we can tell this) e.g. by hand from a paper pattern, by machine from a computer aided pattern, on a body (mannequin or model) by a
- What sort of body is it exhibited on e.g. a ghost mannequin (virtual or plastic), shop mannequin, museum mannequin, digital mannequin, a coat hanger or a non-body prop (chair or wardrobe) or even a living mannequin?
- Are there any signs of wear and tear e.g. bobbling, stains, frays, holes, darns?
- Are there signs of how the garment was worn e.g. creases where the cuffs were rolled up, a stretched waist band from being worn too tight?

Fabric

- What is the main sort of fabric used? Are there any other fabrics e.g. lining fabric or piping, lace, plastic?
- What sort of texture(s) are the fabrics?
- What is the fabric made from e.g. cotton, wool, nylon, plastic?
- What colour / patterns are there on the fabric?

Fabrication (context)

- What context is the dress exhibited in e.g. white cube, mise-en-scene, conceptual, styled?
- What type of props /mannequins are used (if any) e.g. photographs, film, chairs, mirrors?
- What is the exhibition location e.g. V&A museum gallery, an archive, office building, part of a quay, city-scape, theatre?

Identification

1. Does the dress have stylistic, religious, artistic, social or iconic references?
2. What time period, place and social environment does the dress belong to?
3. Where do these references come from e.g. the material or the styling of the dress (or both)?
4. 'Who' (if anyone) was the wearer of this dress?
5. Which 'voices' are identifiable in the dress?
6. What is the 'voice' of the dress in the context of the exhibition?
7. What is the period, place and social environment of the exhibition (if different to the dress exhibit)?
8. How does the context of the dress exhibit affect or change the 'voices' in the dress?

Subjective analysis

1. 'Who' wore the dress or what type of 'wearer' wore the dress?
2. Is the wearer 'real' or 'ideal' or 'imagined' 'wearer'?
3. Am I (the viewer) a similar age, size e.tc. as the 'wearer' who would have worn the dress?
4. How am I similar?
5. How am I different?
6. Would I (the viewer) fit into the dress?
7. Would I like to fit into the dress?
8. How would it make me feel to wear the dress e.g. frivolous, serious, stylish, sophisticated, fashionable, stereotyped, repressed, depressed?
9. How would it feel on my (the viewer) body e.g. tight, loose, light, heavy, comfortable or uncomfortable?
10. What sort of wearing experiences do I associate with the dress exhibit without being able to touch it or try it on?
11. How do I feel about the dress (what is my emotional reaction)?
12. How have my subjectivities shaped the way I feel about this dress e.g. how the characteristics of being worn feel to me as a female wearer?

*** Adaptations of these questions are applied in order to observe dress in relation to body and self in Chapter One, dress in space (Chapter Two), moving dress (Chapter Three) and the concept of a wearing voice in dress (Chapter Four).**

END

Brighton Museum & Art Gallery Questionnaire Findings – January 2013

Sex (please circle): Male Female ***21*** Occupation:_____

Age: 18 – 30 ***4*** 31 – 40 ***1*** 41 – 50 ***1*** 51 – 60
61 plus ***13***

1. Why are you visiting the BIBA and Beyond exhibition?

Because I am interested in Fashion ***10***

Because I want to know more about BIBA ***13***

Because I am interested in what people used to wear and how ***6***

To widen my historical and social knowledge ***6***

Other: Nostalgia 11
Other: Because I used to wear BIBA in 1960's/70's
Other: and used to buy BIBA clothes
Other: working (in the gallery)

2. Do you think it is most effective to view garments:

Behind glass ☐

Not behind glass ***18*** ☐

From a front view ***1*** ☐

From all around the garment (360 degrees) ***16***

Close-up ***12*** ☐

With a bit of distance ***4*** ☐

Please explain why below:

Looks real: not as exhibit
It is more natural
Because I have always been interested in fashion
Personal preference to see detail!
Because you can identify the fabrics and techniques used to make the garments
You can really see the design details and fabric
Fabric and design clearer, able to see detail
Glare from camera on glass
Better able to really appreciate if not behind glass + can go all around them. Ideally close up and able to stand back to get full effect!
To be able to see the texture of the material and the way it falls. The quality of workmanship.
Important to see all angles – just think of a catwalk
Detail
It's good to be able to see all angles of the garments
So you can see everything
The construction of the clothes is what interests me

3. Would you like to have 'touched' any of the garments in the exhibition? **Y *13*** **N *7***
(If yes, please say which one(s)!)

To feel the type and quality of fabric
But appreciate that if we all did that, they wouldn't be in such great condition!
The more floaty fabrics
Several!
The first exhibit – coloutte suit – I used to have one I would have liked to touch it + use the zips.
Yes – I did - sneakily
Yes, but understand the reason why not, maybe we are conditioned not to touch.
At least to touch a piece of material / fabric used
Fabric
97 (A lilac halterneck dress)
The Topshop purple dress. I love it. Also her older items. I just like to be able to touch things it gives you another aspect.

4. Did you try on a garment in this exhibition? **Y *1*** **N *17***

5. If so, why? (Please say!)

I am cold and shivery today!
The clothes were a bit crazy
None appealed
Didn't realise that I could
Cold
Didn't fit
Because I am interested in how the garment feels

6. If you did *not* try on a garment, please indicate why:

Because it would have made me feel too self conscious ***8*** ☐
Because there were not enough garments or a changing room ***3*** ☐
Because I am not interested in how the garment feels ***1*** ☐
Because my interest is intellectual rather than emotional ☐
Because it would only be for 'fun' rather than for 'study' ***2*** ☐
Because it is not the real thing in the real context ***1*** ☐
Because I do not think it would help my understanding of who that person was ***1*** ☐

Other (Please describe!)

Not an option
Didn't know I could!
I am too big
Please see earlier comment – just a bit cold.
Probably wouldn't have fitted
I am too big to fit into any of them these days
I am larger now than I was then

7. Would you have liked to be able to try on the 'real' garments in the exhibition?
Y 7 N 12

8. If you circled 'Yes' please indicate why:

To feel a bit of the BIBA 'vibe' for myself ***3*** ☐

To feel closer to what it would be like be a 'real' BIBA lady ***2*** ☐

To understand how the garments were made and how they might fit on me **4** ☐

To gain a tactile understanding of the garment (texture, softness, hardness etc) ***3*** ☐

Other (please say!)

To remind myself what I used to wear
No because would make me feel even older and fatter!
The experience for me is visual not physical

9. Did you feel 'touched by' any of the garments in particular? Y *11* N *6*

If yes, please say how below

Nostalgia
The beautiful tailoring and the memories
Big bold patterns – nostalgia.
Dresses that reminded me of those I wore as a student in late 60's / early 70's e.g. high necks, leg of mutton sleeves etc.
Kate Moss
By the stories that went along with them.
The one I used to have, and the ones I recognise that my friends used to wear.
The stripped dress at the beginning – I had one!
Youth – just part of my past.
Reminds me of my youth!
Memories of my youth!

10. Do you think NOT being able to touch any of the garments limited your understanding?
Y *2* N *17*

11. If you answered 'Y' for 'yes' please indicate why below:

Not for the most part, but sometimes the feel of the fabric is all important – even today, online clothes shopping not quite as good as the high street.

12. Do you think the garments in this exhibition are:

Pieces of art ***12*** ☐

Artefacts ***4*** ☐

Examples of past fashion ***16*** ☐

Pieces of social history	***16***	☐
Examples of everyday garments	***6***	☐

Other (please say!)

Nostalgic for my age group – I'm 63

13. Would you say your experience of the exhibition has mostly been:

Emotional	***10***	☐
Educational	***10***	☐
Entertaining	***9***	☐
Evocative	***12***	☐

Other (please specify)

14. Would you have liked your experience to have been more:

Emotional		☐
Educational	***1***	☐
Entertaining		☐
Evocative	***1***	☐

Other (please specify)

Not really *It was fine!* *Perfect. My mum's birthday – a great way to celebrate.* *Loved the exhibition* *No – it was great.* *Maybe more dresses / clothes* *Bit more about the making and design* *Amazed at the collection and info available* *Lovely exhibition* *I thought it was really good* *It was perfect for me* *Think it is fair balance between all these things*

END

Dress Sense Questionnaire Analysis Figures

***Dress Sense* Exhibition Experiment, Stevens Building RCA Kensington, March 2011**

46 Questionnaires

Sex (please circle): Male: ***14 (30%)*** Female: ***31 (67%)*** Not indicated: ***1***

Occupation: Student: ***35 (76%)*** Tutor/Lecturer: ***3*** Not indicated: ***1***

Others: Interior Designer/Illustrator/Architect (x3)/Medical Doctor/Designer: ***7 (15%)***

Age: 18 – 30: ***26 (56%)*** 31 – 40: ***14 (30%)*** 41 – 50: ***2*** 51 – 60: ***3*** 61 plus: ***1 (other 13%)***

The majority of my 'research participants' were female (67%), students (76%) and over half were between the ages of 18-30 (56%) with the other largest age group being 31-40 at 30%.

Therefore, I can say that the following analysis is mostly reflective of female students between the ages of 18-30.

1. Were you tempted to touch any of the exhibits? **Y: *43 (93%)*** **N: *3***

An overwhelming 93% of the 'research participants' wanted to touch the exhibits.

2. If you were tempted to touch any of the exhibits, please could you circle which one(s):
45 answered.

Listed in order of 'touchability':

7: 37 (82%) – Jungeun Lee's trio of pieces hanging with white line box on floor
8: 27 (60%) – Hye Eun Kim's 'Orange Bobble Dress' on the mannequin
9: 26 (57%) – Hye Eun Kim's 'Two Bikers and a Lady's Jacket' on the clothes rail
4: 24 (53%) – Julia Skliarova's duo of pieces on the screen
1: 23 (51%) – Hye Eun Kim's 'Blue & Pink Coat' on coat rack
3: 22 (48%) – Hye Eun Kim's 'Purple dress & Lilac Coat' on mannequin
5: 19 (42%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Lime Green Mongolian Jacket' on 'Lady' mannequin & plinth
2: 19 (42) – Hye Eun Kim's 'Pink Jumpsuit & Green Heels' in commode
6: 14 (31%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Yellow & Pink Coat' on chair
10: 12 (26%) – Hye Eun Kim's 'Lime Green Coat' on mannequin outside gallery

Out of the 93% of those who were tempted to touch the exhibits it was overwhelmingly exhibit number 7 which 82% of 'research participants' wanted to touch, followed by exhibit number 8 at 60% and then exhibit number 9 at 57%. All three of these exhibits were

3. If you *did* touch an exhibit, please could you circle which one(s):
36 answered (78%) ***10 out of 46 didn't touch (22%)***

7: 24 (67%) - Jungeun Lee's trio of pieces hanging with white line box on floor
9: 20 (55%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Two Bikers and a Lady's Jacket' on the clothes rail
4: 19 (52%) - Julia Skliarova's duo of pieces on the screen
1: 17 (47%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Blue & Pink Coat' on coat rack
3: 16 (44%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Purple dress & Lilac Coat' on mannequin
8: 16 (44%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Orange Bobble Dress' on the mannequin
2: 13 (36%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Pink Jumpsuit & Green Heels' in commode
5: 12 (33%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Lime Green Mongolian Jacket' on 'Lady' mannequin & plinth

6: 9 (25%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Yellow & Pink Coat' on chair
10: 9 (25%) - Hye Eun Kim's 'Lime Green Coat' on mannequin outside gallery

Out of the 78% who said they did touch an exhibit, the first three were exhibit number 7 (Jungeun Lee's trio of pieces hanging with white line box on floor) with 67%, followed by exhibit number 9 (Hye Eun Kim's 'Two Bikers and a Lady's Jacket' on the clothes rail) at 55%, followed by exhibit number 4 (Julia Skliarova's duo of pieces on the screen) with 52%. Concluding that there is a difference between those the 'research participants' wanted to touch and those they actually touched. The top three here are examples of each of the artist's work and all very tactilely different pieces. This suggests that 'research participants' perhaps touched for different reasons. Each of these three exhibits were displayed very differently too, number 7 more gallery like (hung in a trio, well lit and with a white line delineating a rectangular space on the floor which references a line beyond which you must not step), exhibit number 9 were garments hung on hangers on a coat rail, not clearly presented and a bit 'shop' or 'theatre' like with a black back drop and at both eye/hand level…easily accessible. Exhibit number 4, was displayed on a dressing screen again with coat hangers (as if slung and there to get dressed into), so this was inviting and accessible with both pieces at eye and hand level, the pieces were intriguingly constructed with confounding hard and soft details.

4. If you were tempted or *did* touch an exhibit, please say why (tick all that apply):
43 answered
Put in order:

To get a tactile understanding of the fabric	***39 (91%)***
To get a tactile understanding to verify my visual understanding	***29 (67%)***
To get a better sense of what this garment might feel like to wear	***22 (51%)***
To let my imagination wander	***19 (44%)***
To get a tactile understanding of how the garment moves	***16 (37%)***
To get a better sense of the lifestyle associated with this garment	***3 (7%)***

To summarise here, it seems the overwhelming majority of 91% touched 'To get a tactile understanding of the fabric' which would correlate with the finding that the most touched pieces were independently very different in style, material, construction and display. This is followed by 67% touching 'To get a tactile understanding to verify my visual understanding', followed by 51% 'To get a better sense of what this garment might feel like to wear' and as much as 44% said they touched 'To let my imagination wander'. This last point is interesting and I wonder what the ratio is between wanting to touch to gain a tactile understanding compared to the desire to touch for the purpose of letting the imagination wander?
Where does the imagination wander?
Does the imagination wander better with or without touching?

Other (please comment):

'They look soft!' 'Because they looked soft!' 'Because I anticipate pleasure'

'Hidden technical aspects (seams, finish, lining…)' 'Want to see how it's finished' 'The textures and contours are so beautiful and vibrant that at first I want to feel the way they were made and designed. Also because we were here were here with Lucy Gundry.'
'To understand a bit more about how it was made.' 'To see if the feel of the garment/fabric matched my preconception of what it would feel like.' 'To understand the honeycomb pattern on Kim's work.' 'Work out how it was made' '1. To confirm the material 2. To understand movements & understanding.' 'To understand different textures of different designs.'

'to sense the feel when wearing it & the weight/comfort to wear it. Also was with my tutor & felt it was allowed since she didn't say we couldn't.'

'As it is a 'shop'/'gallery' session, I want to touch as I would in a shop, but I don't as I think it is a gallery.'

'Fur = money'

5. Were there any exhibits you felt you could not touch? Please circle all that apply:

30 answered (65%)
(This indicates that 16 thought there were 'none' they could not touch (35%))

Placed in order of 'untouchability':

7: ***16 (53%)***
5: ***4 (13%)***
8: ***3 (10%)***
1: ***2 (7%)***
2: ***2 (7%)***
3: ***2 (7%)***
6: ***2 (7%)***
4: ***1 (3%)***
9: ***0***
10: ***0***

All: ***3*** No: ***2 (Total = 3%)***

Interestingly, number 7 which has been the most tempting to touch and the most touched was also considered the most 'untouchable'. This suggests that the 'research participant' experienced a dilemma when 'viewing' this exhibit: a desire to touch and feelings that they should not touch, which appear to be overridden by actually touching. This suggests a tactile tension between seeing and touching in the gallery space. The crossing of a boundary is a largely considered act which might change the relationship of the viewer in the gallery from 'Viewer' to 'Toucher' (the viewer only views but the 'toucher' views and touches) It seems that although there are understood 'do not touch' signifiers in the display of an exhibit, the desire to touch some of the exhibits was stronger than the boundaries needed to be crossed to 'touch' the exhibit in this case.

6. If you did not touch any of the exhibits, please say why (tick all that apply):

36 answered (78%). Indicating that 9 (minus the one below for 'no') did touch the exhibits…but this does not correlate – I think this data can only suggest the reasons why people felt they could or should not touch an exhibit rather than whether they actually did.

No: ***1***

Because I was not sure if I was 'allowed' to touch the exhibits	24 (67%)
Because I thought it might damage the work	***22 (61%)***
Because it is not respectful to touch someone's work	***14 (39%)***
Because I feel I am a 'viewer' not a 'customer' in the gallery	***7 (19%)***
Because I knew what it would feel like to touch	***7 (19%)***
Because it would make the exhibit feel too 'real'	***3 (8%)***
Because it would feel like touching someone else's clothes	***1***
Because it would be like touching another body	***0***

To summarise, the majority at 67% did not touch 'Because I was not sure if I was 'allowed' to touch the exhibits', followed by 61% who did not touch 'Because I thought it might damage the work', followed by 39% who ticked 'Because it is not respectful to touch someone's work'. Interestingly, this shows that the primary reason for not touching a piece of work was because they thought they were not allowed to. Had they felt they were allowed to, they still might have considered that by touching they might damage or disrespect the work. Only 19% relied on their tacit haptic knowledge to satisfy their tactile curiosity, however were there ones, which were more tactile than others and were there ones which were more 'known' tacitly?

Other (please specify):

'They were similar to others and I had to make an 'effort' to touch/felt presented precariously.'
'After I touched one piece, I realised there was a white square delineating the area underneath the pieces.'
'Nothing to learn.'
'I would have touched them all! So I restrained to one.'
'Didn't think I could get more understanding from that experience.'
'I didn't touch or even want to touch number 5 or 10 – it didn't look appealing & did not seem 'available' as the other pieces.'
'Because of the display, fright I may have dropped the garment or the mannequin.'
'It was in a box and felt more "owned".'
'Because I was one of the exhibitors.'
'It looked too fragile but I did want to touch it.'
'There was a line on the floor around them.'
'The way it was presented, it look fragile and not inviting for touching.'

7. Did you want to touch some exhibits more than others? **Y: *43 (95%)*** **N: *2***

45 answered – an overwhelming 95% suggested that they wanted to some exhibits more than others.

8. If so, please could you indicate why (tick all that apply): ***43 answered***

Because some were more tactile than others	***34 (79%)***
Because some were made more inviting to touch through display	***19 (44%)***
Because some were confusing to the eye	***17 (39%)***
I felt less inclined to touch the garments on mannequins	***11 (25%)***
I felt more inclined to touch those outside the gallery	***3 (7%)***
I felt more inclined to touch those inside the gallery	***3 (7%)***

In conclusion, the majority by half indicated the reason they wanted to touch some exhibits more than others was tactile greater tactile curiosity for some over others indicated by two reasons solicited by the 'other' comments:

One: 'Research participants' wanted to touch the more unusual and ambiguously tactile pieces over the more obviously tactile pieces (which was indicated by one candidate as being embodied in exhibit number 7 – Jungeun Lee's work):

'Those I wanted to touch presented more complex ideas about the tactile and weren't as obvious.'
'More unusual or synthetic-looking materials sparked a greater level of tactile enquiry.'
'I was more curious about some garment and felt that touching it would make me understand it more.'
'New materials? Not sure if it was hard or soft – 7'

Two: 'Research participants' felt some methods of display made the exhibits more inviting to touch than others:

'The exhibits on the hangers seemed to be less fragile so I touched them – more shopping feeling.' (reference to exhibit 9)
'Because the way it displayed is more inviting to touch.''

Other (please specify):

'Those I wanted to touch presented more complex ideas about the tactile and weren't as obvious.'
'More unusual or synthetic-looking materials sparked a greater level of tactile enquiry.'
'I was more curious about some garment and felt that touching it would make me understand it more.'
'I always want to touch fun because it feels good.'
'The exhibits on the hangers seemed to be less fragile so I touched them – more shopping feeling.' (reference to exhibit 9)
'Because the way it displayed is more inviting to touch.''
'Wanted to see how it was made and what technique that they used.'
'Some were less perspicuous.'
'New materials? Not sure if it was hard or soft – 7'

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: If the garments were in a shop, I would have touched them***. 44 answered***

Agree: ***38 (86%)*** Disagree: Neither agree nor disagree***: 6 (14%)***

The majority of 'research participants' agreed (86%) that if these garments were in a shop they would have touched them, however further comments indicate that this too would depend on how they were displayed and they would also touch prior to trying a garment on for the purpose of buying a garment which would take me into a discussion around ownership and value (which are aspects outside the premise of this experiment):

'Depending on how the garment is displayed.'
'But I think I touch all garments in shops to find out their feel before trying them on or buying them.'

Other (please specify):

'But I think I touch all garments in shops to find out their feel before trying them on or buying them.'
'Depending on how the garment is displayed.'
'Depending on how they were displayed.'
'I always run my hand along garments – lift, turn, look to see how it is made & to feel the type of fabric it is.'

10. To what extent do you agree with this statement: Touching an exhibit would enhance my experience of an exhibition. ***44 answered***

Agree: ***40 (91%)*** Disagree: ***3 (7%)*** Neither Agree nor Disagree: ***1 (2%)***

In conclusion the overwhelming majority (91%) indicated that they thought touching an exhibit would enhance their experience of an exhibition. However again the further comments suggest that this could be strongly related to exhibits which are clothing designed to be worn and garments exploring technique, material manipulation and aesthetic style, which is the case in this experiment.

'In this case – yes – to understand the construction & the movement of the pieces also to test whether the conclusions drawn from the visuals was correct – eg the fabric used etc.'
'I think because it is clothes that are intended to be worn + touched, the tactility is a definite additional understanding of the way they are designed rather than depending on sight.'
'It depends on what is displayed.'

'Possibly you could sense it and feel it. Touching work should not make the viewers 'happy' but would understand the material further (thickness/textures).
Interestingly, one research participant contributed this comment, which stimulates the theory that touching might prevent a more imaginative response developing…

'Some things are better off from the far. A touch could conflict with the imagination and ruin the experience.'

This suggestion that things might be better from afar, in terms of evoking a more imaginative response is something I would like to investigate further through discussion around Heidegger's thoughts on nearness and farness. I would also like to explore this in relation to the aura of the object (the object space and the viewer's space and the point at which they meet – is this the point that when touch crosses the magic is broken or is the magic broken on actual touching?) and theory around subject-object – what does this mean in relation to the dressed body in the gallery and how much does aura come into the space around an object as well as a subject and what is the difference? Which one is the dressed body and what boundaries are we crossing when we touch a 'dressed-body' exhibit?

Other (Please specify)

'Tactile senses are sometimes the most important; but I have been to exhibitions where too much touching has ruined or altered the exhibit.'
'Sometimes, it depends on the nature of the exhibition.'
'Key to understanding'

Further Comments:

I have compiled all the comments in a list below:

'I really liked the pieces created by the application of heat. Very, very interesting!'

'Touch is the less respectful of the senses and difficult to educate. Had the dresses been more precious, fragile, unique…I don't think I would have done it.'

'When it concerns garments, it involves more thoughtful touching. Not going as far as trying on, but putting against oneself, looking in the mirror might change the relationship between the garment and the viewer/toucher. Do the people see the garment as something related to a person, or an object unrelated to a person's body…'

'The exhibition displays did feel like a shop in some parts & even someone's bedroom – with garment over a chair & hanging on a screen. These felt most inviting & as though they were not shown to their best in this state & so a better understanding could be gained by picking them up, moving them and even trying them on! The piece at the door and on the pedestal were the least enticing to me – I did not want to touch either – they felt more out of bounds to me.'

'The white line and work No 7 was 'very gallery like'. Limiting the viewer to get closer to the work. However, manages to look closely and nearly touch it without thinking the 'gallery' rule.'

'I loved Hye Eun Kim fur collection, the vibrant colour and combination are beautiful and very well designed, the shapes and structures are very interesting…Jungeun Lee – also a great work 3-dimensional garment without cutting or stitching are very interesting.'

'I was really tempted to touch all works, especially new materials such as Jungeun's work. Thank you!

'It's very difficult (especially in an art school) to get over this trained reflex not to touch things in a gallery, even though we want to. I would have felt more comfortable touching clothes, however, rather than other items, such as ceramics.'

'The colour/texture contrast on the exhibits here were very interesting.'
'I am not used to touch works in a gallery because it is generally not permitted. We have been educated that it is also the way to respect works and artists. This exhibition is interesting according to the experimental aim.'

'It might have been good if the viewer was allowed to try some of the garments on, to see if the garment felt how you imagined it. I didn't feel comfortable touching the one on the plinth. It felt like I shouldn't be.'

'The general set up of the exhibition is inviting; unlike a general gallery. Touching the garments was the highlight of the experience.'

'I really enjoyed the display with furniture. It gives me an idea how it would be if I buy the garment and have it in my own room.'

'The colour affected whether I touched the garments – bright pink was v. attractive to touch! Jungeun's were intriguing.'

'Despite desire to touch, the mental creation made through display is often enough & touch would render the tactile too real & close boundaries between the multi-sense and the single sense i.e. touch.'

'I like touching!'

'As a textile designer myself I think it is very difficult to allow touch or even to teach how to touch since it has to be done in a very respectful and delicate manner if you don't want the left marks from having a lot of people in a public space touching your work.'

'The visual appearance also influenced my decisions. Some colours or shapes were less attractive than others and didn't generate the necessity of touching them.'

'For whatever reason the green garment outside the exhibition I barely noticed until you mentioned it above. However, if it was inside I would have looked at it closely.'

'I wasn't going to touch the hanging very thin ones, but the maker told me I could (because the tape on the floor seemed to say "no".'

'Would be interesting to also have men's clothes, also 'repellent' clothes e.g. latex, hair, reptile leather, also miniature/children's clothes, recycled materials clothes & not just dresses and jackets but other types of clothing and cloths which make a sound when touched or one sticky or light up etc.'

'Touching the garment was a good way for me to understand it more. The garment's on the hanger was more inviting since not only can I touch but confirm my touch with a closer look. I really enjoy the exhibition since it's not often you are allowed to touch exhibition objects.'

'Fur might be old.'

'I suppose I am very conditioned by current gallery practice. Also I have worked on exhibits where participation is needed and therefore know how hard it is to encourage people to go beyond the visual!'

'The exhibition is really inspirational. The designs that look tactile don't need to be touched as the more complex designs, that by touching are better understood in terms of make + effect have to the different ways of displaying the garments and feel that this contributes to the sensuality of the gallery space.'

END

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