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Cover design by Elena Siemens  
Magazine design by Adriana Onita

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#### **Editors of *The Polyglot***

Adriana Onita  
Alycia Pirmohamed  
Christopher Schafenacker  
Burl Horniachek  
Elena Siemens  
Mariel Day  
Stephen Cruikshank



# THE POLYGLOT

Issue #2

Subjective Fashion

Guest Editor: Elena Siemens

# Letter from the Guest Editor



*Subjective Fashion* was a component of the Fashion Lounge Pop-Up show staged at the IRS Studio at the University of Alberta (Fall 2016). It featured contributions by the U of A students and staff, as well as a group of invited artists from Canada and beyond. The show's subtitle "Fashion is a day at the beach" was derived from the MET's publication *Fashion Is....* We had a cut-out palm tree with a bright orange trunk decorating the front wall. From the palm tree hung a cut-out pineapple princess.

The MET's *Fashion Is...* incorporates nearly 200 laconic definitions of fashion paired with the reproductions of art and artefacts from the museum's extensive collection. Inspired by this innovative publication, our exhibit had an oversized postcard on which contributors and guests entered their own take on fashion. Some definitions were serious, while other ones more playful: "Fashion is rebellion," "Fashion is France," "Fashion is navy blue," "Fashion is the click-clack your heels make," "Fashion is a wink and a smile."

The show included such sections as "Shop Windows," "Superhero Fashion," and "My Dream Fashion Magazine Cover." For the popular "Subjective Fashion," the assignment was to profile a special item of clothes, a sentimental favourite. At the top of the list were shoes and coats, followed closely by t-shirts and sweatshirts. There were also entries on a charm bracelet, a Croatian dance costume, and a safety vest by a Spanish artist concerned about giving her first conference talk in English. Two participants addressed their respective items of clothes that they cherish but never wear.

My contribution was a collage mixing images from Miu Miu's 2015 fashion campaign *Subjective Reality* (photographed by Stephen Meisel) and my own photography. Miu Miu's provocative campaign depicting elegant models against NYC's gritty urban environment served as my starting point. In addition, my collage alludes to the remarkable William Klein, who uses bold primary colours to paint over his images - a radical strategy transforming his work into a truly subjective endeavour. My other sources of inspiration included crowded metro cars, congested roads, street signs, billboards, graffiti, Picasso, Centre Pompidou, MOMA (a giant rose sculpture in its courtyard), runways, jetlag, and the sunrise from my Novotel Novoslobodskaya window.



Photos by Elena Siemens

In addition to a selection of pieces from the show, this special issue on *Subjective Fashion* incorporates a number of new contributions including a piece on the perils of dressing gyaru-esque at a Canadian university, a tribute to the *khadi* shoulder bag from the author's childhood in India, a poem on fashion preferences of aging Alice from *Alice in Wonderland*, a narrative on a persistent fascination with the vintage Florsheim Imperial shoes, and more. As characteristic of *The Polyglot* magazine, *Subjective Fashion* features poetry and art, as well as poetic and documentary prose. This volume is also multilingual, consistent with *The Polyglot* mandate. It includes entries written partially or entirely in Arabic, Bengali, Croatian, Dutch, English, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, and Ukrainian.

Subjective fashion, by definition, is a personal matter, it is private, and sometimes secretive. What better way to address this subject than to write in a less well-known language of your childhood? Or, perhaps, to steal a phrase or two from a language you are learning or aspire to learn? For example, Icelandic, which provides a formidable shield.

Elena Siemens, Guest Editor

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معطف

# Justin Bilinski



## Beyoncé Jumper

German fashion designer Wolfgang Joop once said, "Stil ist, was bleibt, wenn die Mode geht", which essentially means that style is what remains when the fashion goes. This quote is particularly important when discussing my most-prized article of clothing: my Beyoncé jumper.

I would not describe this piece as "todschick," or "drop-dead gorgeous" in German but this should not exclude it from being considered fashion. While lacking in critically-acclaimed elements of fashion, it makes up for this by reflecting my personal style.

Simply a Topman navy blue jumper (bought 30% off) became my one piece of clothing that I will never part with because of the stories behind it and the hours that went into detailing it. Each Beyoncé polka dot was printed 6 at a time then hand cut and ironed on one-by-one. There are 36 Beyoncé dots in total and I don't want to discuss how much printer ink and iron-on transfer sheets cost.

I made this sweatshirt in preparation for Beyoncé's return to Edmonton with *The Formation World Tour*. The sweatshirt was such a hit amongst my friends that I ended up having to make 2 more. Occasionally, when they wear them out in public, a barista will give them a free drink for their "awesome" sweater.

However, they can't be worn too often because the more they are washed, the more the ink fades. This became quite the issue when we wore them to the *outdoor* concert and were subsequently rained on for hours. Although some of the Beyoncé dots have warped from water damage and no longer resemble her *Dangerously In Love* album cover, it still means the world to me because I'm reminded of my craftsmanship, my friends, and of course the incomparable talent of Beyoncé.





Photos by Justin Bilinski

# Tsugumi Okabe

First impressions matter っていうけどさあ～  
超SBSのセンコーっていなくない

ぶっちゃけGGIばっかに囲まれてキツイ  
自分の稼いだ金で好きなものを  
買って  
着て  
楽しむのが何よりも大事じゃない

え? なに? Private & public image を別にしろだとか  
You should know better than to dress like that だとか  
That's why you were stalked だとか  
超イミブー  
超ウザい  
Does my dress make you feel like a predator?

ファッションが好き  
Fashion is ME  
憧れのモデルのインスタをみて  
#Inspiration  
でも、because I'm a girl...  
ぶっちゃけなめられることが多い。。。

でも、やっぱりそう考えてると超メンディーだから  
My dress speaks louder than words.

Favourite store: Liz Lisa in Shibuya 109  
Item purchased: 2011 Spring Collection





Photo by Tsugumi Okabe

### Poet | Artist Statement

"Hey, China doll!," "Harajuku Girl!,"... "What?! Who, me?" What does the way I dress tell you about who I am? This piece is motivated by my own personal experiences as doubly marginalized subject—as a Japanese-Canadian woman—who upholds Japanese standards of femininity, at least through my dress. Channeling my inner *gyaru*, I use *gyaru-go*, a subcultural lingo created by *gyaru*, to speak against how you judge me based on the clothes I wear. Stereotypically perceived as frivolous, young girls who sold sex for cash, *gyaru* are often misunderstood. First and foremost, the term *Gyaru* (or "gal" in English) refers to the subculture that emerged in 1990s Japan during the so-called Lost Decade, which was triggered by the nation's stock market crash. Also, within this umbrella term *gyaru*, there are other variations of *gyaru*, which is beyond the scope of this brief explanation. Although they are less prominent now, *gyaru* were major contributors to the Japanese street fashion industry, which has since then, been recuperated into mainstream fashion. As a subcultural group, *gyaru* have their own way of speaking by means of inventing new words and/or abbreviating existing ones. And, because *gyaru* don't use formal speech, they are often perceived as being not well mannered, cultured or educated. This is false. At a time when femininity was defined by "modesty," "purity," and having "white" skin, *gyaru* got fake tans, died their hair blonde and wore long, fake lashes. Through their language and provocative ways of dress, *gyaru* simultaneously resist and appropriate patriarchal constructs of feminine identity and etiquette, representing ideas of sexual liberation, female agency and financial autonomy. Dressing *gyaru*-esque is my political statement and personal way of adding a splash of color to the monochromatic scenery of Academia.

# Janine Muster

## Ode to the Old Leather Jacket

"Das Ding kann weg, oder?" Ich war gerade zu Besuch bei meinen Eltern und beschäftigte mich mit irgendwelchen Belanglosigkeiten in meinem ehemaligen Zimmer als meine Mutter herein kam und sich über meinen Kleiderschrank hermachte. Sie muss in eine Art Putzfimmel geraten sein. Beängstigend! Sie hielt mir ein Stück Klamotte vors Gesicht: „Das ziehst du doch nicht mehr an?“ Ich blickte auf. Es war meine alte Lederjacke, die nun trostlos über dem Kleiderbügel hing und in der Hand meiner Mutter hin und her pendelte, der Altkleidersammlung ein Stück näher. Ich lachte. Ich habe das gute Stück schon seit Jahren nicht mehr getragen. Werde es auch nicht mehr tragen. Vergessen aber habe ich es nicht und wegwerfen konnte ich es bisher auch nicht. Schließlich weckt es Erinnerungen an alte Tage.

When I was still in high school, I was a part of the local punk community in our little town. Being punk meant many things: attitude, music, revolution. But above all, it meant wearing the 'right' clothes, clothes that would set us apart from the rest. I am not quite sure why, possibly because of 'The Ramones, or some other punk musicians, but having one's own leather jacket was a big deal, pretty much mandatory. Without a unique leather jacket, one did not quite belong. Ich kaufte meine Lederjacke, wie die meisten von uns, billig, in einem Secondhandladen. Die richtige Jacke zu finden war bereits ein gehöriger Aufwand, denn sie musste wie angegossen passen und natürlich stilecht sein.

Als ich schließlich ein passendes Objekt fand, konnte ich mein Glück kaum fassen. Nun musste mich nur noch die Muse küssen. The modification process of one's leather jacket was an important task, a task that needed time. It could take several days, weeks, or even month until the process of beautification was completed, until one's leather jacket was presentable to the public. As far as I remember, I never stopped working on it. Every single object I added was of severe importance, had the utmost significance. Zum Glück hatte ich eine Heißleimpistole. Damit verzierte ich den Kragen meiner Lederjacke mit unzähligen Kronkorken der Biermarke Sternburg Export. Sternburg Export, süffig und würzig. Das war das bevorzugte Bier unserer Jugend, das Bier, dass alle Punks aus unserer Region tranken. Ich brachte auch einige Antifa-buttons und Nieten an, buttons and studs that I found during punk shows. An der linken Seite, im vorderen Bereich meiner Lederjacke, befestigte ich ein Bild von 'The Clash' mit Sicherheitsnadeln. Oberhalb der Brusttasche brachte ich einen Aufnäher der deutschen Punkband 'Normahl' an. Die linke Brusttasche verzierte ich mit einem abgebrochenen Mercedesstern. Unter dem Mercedesstern klebte eine abgestumpfte Rasierklinge. Die wurde mir allerdings von einem Securitymenschen abgerissen als ich versuchte in ein Punkkonzert herein zu kommen. Schon irgendwie ironisch.

Everyone's leather jacket was a unique creation. It spoke to both our individual and communal selves. Verziert mit Kronkorken, Aufnähern, Nieten und anderen zwielichtigen Objekten, die Lederjacke war unser Symbol. Eine Representation unserer Geschmäcker, Einstellungen und Vorlieben. Although I don't wear it any longer, I never really took it off, wearing it now symbolically. This attitude, this music still somehow belongs to me. I am ready for the next revolution.



Photo by Janine Muster

## Artist Statement

I assume that quite a few people have this one piece of clothing in their wardrobe. This one piece that one does not wear anymore but simply cannot throw away. It is a piece that may have been in fashion once but its days are long gone. One grows up, evolves, and changes passions. This piece in one's wardrobe, however, leaves a door open to one's past, one's former self. Somewhere in between identity, fashion, and nostalgia, one is still connected to this past, remembers the individual one was, and carries this memory into the future. Such a piece of clothing is powerful, and for me, a part of what defines subjective fashion. as it speaks to one's own individual taste.

In my written text, I describe an old leather jacket I wore during my punk times. Not everybody would have thought that wearing such a jacket was very fashionable. But it was to us as punks. My image depicts the last photo I took of my leather jacket before my mother threw it away. By that time it was worn out and had lost most of its added objects. The three different sized heads, a recent image of me, demonstrate that I had to grow into the jacket before I could wear it comfortably, and before I could outgrow it. With this image, I do not depict a physical fit but rather a symbolical fit so to speak. In my text I conclude that despite not wearing the old leather jacket in public anymore, a piece of this fashion, this identity, stuck with me. I still carry its past meaning. Consequently, it informs who I've become and who I am now.



# Sourayan Mookerjea



Photo by Sourayan Mookerjea

## Haiku Sutra

Flying off his shoulder always a woven bag from some tribal handicraft state loom my uncle running for the street car, sandals clapping for monsoon river cobblestone, always in *khadi*, to get to the next demonstration, march, *michhil*, in time

Overflowing with letters, poems, essays, books, *boddhisattvas*, *satyagrahi*, hammers and sickles, *kachhe ja be chhelo pashe*, *holo na jawa holo na jawa*, *chole jabe galo tha der laglo hawa*, *holo na jawa holo na jawa* fireflies that take up arms against the moneylender's goons and nothing to eat and feel under the warp and weave of the harvest moon.

## Poet | Artist Statement

"Fashion" or "la mode", making or time's imperative, two dimensions of becoming an active subject of history – this is how I respond to the call of Subjective Fashion, remembering a way of being against that waits –in those once smart handwoven shoulder bags I used to get and give as presents– to come back somehow new and different.

# Christine Wiesenthal



Photo by Christine Wiesenthal

## darn

\därn\ [derivation unknown; fr F dial. darner?] (1600) vb, n, adj or adv: *darn darning darned*  
As verb, to mend a hole rent or run in woven fabrics worn to smithereens (e.g. stockings or socks); to stitch by patient stitch interlace ragged strands fretted through by worried/hurried feet fingers elbows knees hearts and mouths; also (obs.) to hide, conceal, or secret: 1614 J. Melville *Autobio & Diary: The enemies fled and darned*. As noun (obs.), a place that has been darned: 1720 Isabel Bird *A Lady's Life: Her stockings so full of darn hardly a trace of original wool remained*. In the imperative mood (*Darn it all*), command issued to female domestics tasked with darning basket; also exclamatory, as rejoinder muttered *tsk* under breath by domestics so tasked. As adj, adv or noun (1781), a mild sudsy epithet or polite perversion of *damn*, expressing sense of surprise discovery chagrin or consternation, as in, *well, I'll be -----*. As intensifier (*Darn shame. Darn right!*). Used as form of asseveration, e.g. *Nobody gives a ----*. By and large lost, the darner's art. Drawing to a close, or *fled and darned*. Either way, a mode of prudent repair now old-fashioned, *passé*, near extinct (obs.).

## Poet | Artist Statement

What is more subjective than the old, familiar things we change into and wear at home? The things that bring us instant comfort, that we'd never dream of wearing anywhere but in the intimacy - or *heimlichkeit* - of our home? The opposite of pricey *haute couture*: priceless low fashion. Treasured trash, stretched, strained and marked by the shape and weight of the (home)body.

# Johannes Birringer



## Sisyphus of the Ear

crackling of inner wind  
tossed up  
stones against my feet  
and a distant edge

father's old coat  
holds me upward, stiff  
against gravity's pull

'Höre die Steine' -  
my sweat tells me  
as I listen to reach  
what will be lost

dripping, my steps slide  
downward again  
my old heavy coat  
flapping around my bones

they listen to  
the sticks that pound  
the rhythms of my heartbeat  
in my ear.





Images courtesy of the author

## Artist | Poet Statement

### Sisyphus of the Ear

This creation is a concert film (film with live electronics and percussion) featuring Johannes Birringer in inherited costume, his father's coat from the 1950s. The coat protects the performer in the ascent and tumbling slide down from a steep gravel hill in an abandoned quarry. The performer seeks to climb the hill repeatedly but fails.

The coat's dimension of "subjective fashion" is a psychological and acoustic one - it shields the performer from the rocks and high winds. The garment becomes a proof against the imaginative journey of inner concussions and tremors.

### Sisyphus des Ohres

Diese Schöpfung ist ein Konzertfilm (Film mit Live - Elektronik und Schlagzeug) mit Johannes Birringer als Protagonist mit ererbtem Kostüm, dem Mantel seines Vaters aus den 1950er Jahren. Der Mantel schützt den Darsteller im Aufstieg und Taumeln, an einem steilen Kieshügel in einem verlassenen Steinbruch. Der Darsteller versucht, den Hügel wiederholt zu erklettern, scheitert aber daran.

Die Manteldimension der "subjektiven Mode" ist hier eine psychologische und akustische - sie schützt den Darsteller vor den Steinabschürfungen und hohen Winden. Das Kleidungsstück wird Klangschutz gegen eine phantasmatische Reise von inneren Erschütterungen und Erzittern.

# Craig Campbell

## ШИНЕЛЬ

This шинель (greatcoat) was part of the official winter uniform for the Russian militia. It is made of broadcloth, a heavy and dense felted wool. It is well-tailored with brass buttons featuring the soviet crest of the hammer and sickle. This coat is known in Russian as a шинель. It was given to me as a gift many years ago by friends in subarctic village of Oleneok (Оленёк) in Республика Саха, Якутия (the Republic of Sakha, Yakutia)

Я так же гордился моей шинелью, как Акакий Акакиевич Башмачкин в знаменитом рассказе Гоголя. У меня также было столько же невежества и наивности, хотя моя история не заканчивается (пока) на мрачной трагедии.

I lived for four months in Oleneok, working as a teacher at a local school. In December of 1995 I stopped in Yakutsk on my return to Canada. Against the bitter cold of the Siberian winter I was wearing a white rabbit fur hat and reindeer skin boots in addition to this greatcoat (шинель). I had removed the more obvious signs of formal insignia (patches, pins, crests, etc.), though the coat was still conspicuous as an official uniform with its unique cut and shiny brass buttons.

As a naïve and somewhat indifferent traveler, I saw the шинель as a piece of fashion outside of the frames of reference, which would be interpreted by Russians and especially by Russian police. Though it was an unreflected philosophy it was a philosophy grounded in privilege. That is in the privilege of rarely having to ask, how are others feeling about this or how are they going to react to it.

A day or two before leaving Якутск (Yakutsk) I was arrested by a young policeman. When I was questioned about where it came from, I concocted a tale about living in the taiga and trading it with a reindeer herder passing through our camp (which wasn't far from the truth). When I took the coat off my tattooed arms alarmed the police. It should be said that this was notably also a moment of significant public turmoil, only a few years after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Norms and expectations of public presentation were going through considerable flux and the presence of foreigners freely walking around Siberian cities was still a rather new. Eventually I was released and to my surprise I was allowed to keep the overcoat.

Now it has become a material artifact in my personal archive. It was an object lesson in the difference between fashion and uniform and in the active construction of the body in society. This coat is a robe of power; it is a garment whose image requires careful maintenance of expressive boundaries. Bodies in society are policed on many levels. Uniforms, more than other forms of clothing are subject to prohibitions due in part to their direct semantic message. That is, they clearly and publicly declare affiliation with state power.

Акакий Акиевич был жертвой моды. В гиперболическом абсурде Гоголя мы узнаем, что ничего хорошего не происходит от социального давления. В гоголевском мире нет места для субъективной моды - вместо этого общество изображается как строгий и жестокий набор правил.



Photo by Craig Campbell

María León



Images courtesy of the artist





### Artist Statement

Chaleco para participar en una conferencia internacional por primera vez, de la serie *Armario de seguridad en uno mismo*, 2011. Banda y textil de alta visibilidad, pieza única.

El proyecto *Armario de seguridad en uno mismo* consiste en la creación de un vestuario especial para enfrentarme con éxito a diferentes situaciones de emergencia de mi vida cotidiana.

(Vest to take part in an international conference for the first time, from the series *self-confidence wardrobe*, 2011. High-visibility band and fabric, unique piece.)

*Self-confidence wardrobe*, a project that explores the reliability of auto-security clothing; it successfully helped me to face various emergency situations in everyday life.)

# Cole Anderson



Photo by Cole Anderson

### ... a menos que usted sea un queso

I have had an on-and-off relationship with this oversized rust sweater-vest for the past five years since buying it secondhand at Value Village in Edmonton, Canada. The style is decidedly à la grandpa and I can't seem to get enough of it.

I like to layer it playfully in a drapey fashion over a fitted tee shirt, usually black or else an electric green or orange. I wear it exclusively with tee shirts, feeling a bit more put together and dressed-up in it though I know this is just a projection of my imagination, as it hangs off my body in an almost sloppy manner.

In my head I'm channeling some sort of irreverent grandpa-style that it feels like I can grow into, in size but also in the passage of time if I keep it with me into old age, at which point it will be surely tattered, patched, and pinned. The vest arms me with the mystery of the past life it has outgrown and its shaping on mine as I keep it with me.

To my brother's joking about my oversized-vest-and-loose-trouser-style, asking if I have bought my clothes from an estate sale, I retort: What better way to stay ahead of the curve than by starting with the end? As aptly stated by Luis Buñuel: "La edad es algo que no importa, a menos que usted sea un queso." (Age is something that does not matter, unless you are a cheese.)

### Artist Statement - Cole Anedron

Cole Anderson is a fashion enthusiast and avid cinephile. Other cherished items include his vintage paisley fringe scarf and thrifted fur-trapper toque that keeps him cozy in the Canadian winter. He most recently created an ethnographic short film *Cinema, Occupied* with Laura Porter about privatized and shuttered historic cinemas in Belgrade's post-socialist cultural landscape.

# Elena Siemens



Photo by Elena Siemens



## Wearevers Danke

Wearevers Danke by John Fluevog felt home at once  
A perfect fit and, equally important, unique design -  
A blend of combat boots and Cinderella  
Although in Disney's Cinderella the final destination was a ballroom dress, a prince,  
And wedding bells

Wearevers Danke articulate a set of tougher propositions  
More in common with the grittier finale of the Ever After film  
In which French celebrated actress Jeanne Moreau delivers this advice:  
It's true that Cinderella and the Prince lived happily for ever more,  
The point, gentlemen, is that they *lived!*

My Fluevogs have endured Tunisia's sudden sand storms,  
Walked cobbled stone of Paris, Brussels, and Milan  
And London's Covent Garden with surface utterly unfriendly  
To all designer heels  
Except for the resilient Wearevers Danke

They have sustained the rocky shores of Portugal  
And Moscow's suburbs bumpy sidewalks -  
**Мои родные Вешняки** (my dearly beloved Veshnyaki)  
Whose name derives from cherry trees of yesteryear  
Today the cherries are replaced with rows of high-rises and ubiquitous dandelions

To this end, a line from the ugly-beautiful Akhmatova:  
"Когда б вы знали из какого сора/ Растут стихи, не ведая стыда"  
("If you only knew from what stray matter/ My verses grow, unashamed")  
John Fluevog first conceived Wearevers Danke in Berlin -  
A city equally renowned for pragmatism and wayward dreams

## Poet | Artist Statement

I tend to chase a mix of inspirations: Times Square and Red Square, Warhol and Shakespeare, Prada and H&M. My attire is frequently a classic suit jacket and denim shorts. And a Fluevog pin inscribed with: "Embrace Peculiarity." I'm now on my fourth (?) pair of Wearevers Danke.

# Nathaniel Weiner



Lee Marvin sporting (not Florsheim) made-in-USA longwing brogues in tan pebble grain. Screen grab from the film *Point Blank* (1967). Courtesy of Author



From left to right: vintage Florsheim Imperial, made-in-USA longwing brogues in tan pebble grain leather featuring original oak soles and v-cleat soles heels, vintage Dexter made-in-USA longwing brogues, Loake Royal longwing brogues, Allen Emonds waxy longwing brogues, Hoggs of Fife brogue boots.

## My Vintage Florsheim Imperial

Sous les pavés, la plage!

I could have written about these shoes for any number of reasons. In keeping with the spirit of subjective fashion, I could have chosen them because I love them and think they're beautiful. I could have written about how they are an artefact of an era that I consider - subjectively, that is - to have produced the very best in clothing, architecture, urban guerrilla groups, novels, graphic design, automobiles, trains, films, film stars, pop stars, furniture, interior decoration, colour palettes, political uprisings, popular music, haircuts and Marxism.

I could have also use these shoes to pontificate on my personal relationship to clothing, as they are the seventh pair of longwing brogues that I have owned and are part of a personal journey that began with a cheap, commando-soled Punk-style longwing brogue purchased in London's Camden Market thirteen years ago. Those shoes fell apart and were replaced with another pair of longwings - Loake 'Royals' purchased from an old-fashion shoe shop near London's Victoria station, a model named after the now-defunct shoe manufacturer favoured by Skinheads in the 1960s.

The longwing, a type of brogue where the brogueing carries around all the way to the heel, originated in Britain but was considered an American shoe, and was much sought-after by British subculturalists for this reason. Thus, these Florsheim Imperials are a semiotically-charged item, the original version of a shoe that was copied in a transatlantic translation from 1960s American collegiate style to British street style. But is not for any of these reasons I felt compelled to write about them.

The reason these shoes jump out at me and demand reflection is that I would not know anything about them, nor for that matter own them, if not for the very online forums that are the subject of my doctoral research. While I have steered clear of the autoethnographic in my research, I am very much a product of the culture that is its object of study. In sociological parlance, I am an 'informed insider'. The 'collective intelligence' of the online forums taught me the history of the shoes, showed me pictures of the shoes, allowed me to date the shoes, instructed me on how to determine the condition of the shoes and disambiguated the desirable American-made shoes from the more recent, made-in-India iteration.

These shoes was the subject of years' worth of intermittent desiring, reading and searching that finally paid off when I found an unworn pair on eBay in my size, allowing me to enter the community of anonymous men whose shoes I had admired photos of on the internet. When I sat down to interview users of internet forums and they described being consumed by similar desires for whatever their own version of the of vintage Florsheim Imperial, made-in-USA longwing brogues in tan pebble grain leather featuring oak soles and original v-cleat heels, whether it was a particular type of sneaker, trench coat, shirt or jacket, I knew that no matter how much critical distance I tried to put between myself and the culture I was researching, I was one of them.

### Artist statement

I am interested in clothes, youth subcultures, counter-culture politics, post-war modernist architecture, classic science-fiction, railways, comic books and record collecting. I am also the vocalist in a semi-defunct post-punk band.

# Anton Iorga



Photos by Elena Siemens

## Un Día/One Day/Un Jour...

One day, when boots and shoes slowly erode into the mold and dust of forgotten memories, después de una última odisea en la calor y el frío de las ciudades o montañas,  
perhaps bare skin will bond with the Earth once more as it did in ancient times,  
et la corne noire et endurcie de mes pieds redeviendra l'armure ultime de mon corps.

## Artist Statement

Fashion should be subjective only to the extent that this subjectivity does not imply a blatant ignorance of the undeniably objective reality of the slave labor that constitutes the vast majority of its commercially produced constituents born from the colonial commodification and subjugation of Nature and Her denizens



# John Eason



Photos by John Eason

## Beyond Retro

De här är mina favoritkängor. Beatles-kängor (Beatle-boots) heter de och jag köpte dem för sex eller sju år sedan i Stockholm i butiken Beyond Retro, en London-baserad secondhand affär. Jag vet inte precis hur gamla de är men tror att de kunde vara emellan 40-50 år gamla. Så att de inte blir utslitna tar jag bra hand om dem och polerar dem ofta. De är ganska bekväma och tidlösa tycker jag.

These are my favourite boots. They are called Beatle-boots and I bought them six or seven years ago in Stockholm at a store called Beyond Retro, a London-based secondhand shop. I don't know exactly how old they are but believe they could be between 40-50 years old. So that they don't wear out, I take good care of them and polish them often. I find them both comfortable and timeless.

# Sofia Ruetalo-King



"Sofi Fifi Fashion" by Sofia Ruetalo-King (Age 6). Chalk Pastel on Paper.

## Artist Statement

Sofia likes to paint people and animals; her favourite colour is blue. She also likes to dance and play piano. Her latest hobby is constructing electric doll houses equipped with elevators. Fashion preferences: runners, and dresses "with nature on them: leaves, bugs, and flowers."

# Katrina Sark

## Alice, I Have Once Been, Indeed

Yes, *that* Alice.  
But no one has called me that in years.

I've been going by Mrs. Liddell-Bryce,  
Though my husband passed away years ago,  
And I've established a *Literatursalon* in our house.

You ask what I've learned on my journeys  
Through *Wunderland* and the Looking Glass.  
You're not the first person to ask me that -  
I can appreciate your curiosity.

You may think that seeing the world from  
The other side makes everything look distorted and *unheimlich*.  
But, in fact, it shows things just as they are.  
It's we who become different -  
And eventually learn to see through things.

I can tell you're craving your own adventures.  
What Wonderlands will you find?  
What creatures will accompany you on your way?  
Who will remain in your life afterwards?  
What will you take away from it all,  
And make use of later?

I can sense your apprehension, too.  
What dragons await you?  
Of course, I was terrified of slaying the Jabberwocky -  
But so many people depended on me to do it.  
I went towards it, sword first, and didn't cease until it was over.  
With the persistence of a warrior,  
And the courage of a woman.

We all have our quests cut out for us, I know that now.  
Yours is about to begin, I can tell.  
Just know that every paradox is there to guide you,  
Even when it seems like utter nonsense.  
Just follow the white rabbit!  
Do not fear the thorns of today,  
Nor the lack of jam of tomorrow.  
And always, always, try to have some jam today.

Go bravely down each rabbit hole,  
And be kind to all the creatures you find there.  
Live your dreams even when you are afraid.  
And don't let the Cheshire cats confuse you  
And make you feel like it's your fault,  
Or like you're not good enough.  
They are not real!  
Tell others of your quest and inspire them to embark on their own.  
And whatever you do, don't be late!



I must bid you *Auf Wiedersehen* now, dear.  
I'm expecting the Hatter for tea.  
Yes, we still keep in touch.  
Though he is quite old now, poor dear.  
But he still makes all my clothes himself,  
And keeps me very stylish,  
Despite time and all.  
He promised to take my measurements for a new gown.  
Friendship is a delightful paradox.  
Especially when it lasts a life-time.

Inspired by Tim Burton's film *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem "Ulysses" (1842), and Melanie Benjamin's novel *Alice I Have Been* (2010)



Photo by Katrina Sark, Pink gown, Royal Ontario Museum, 2013

### Poet | Artist Statement

I have always been fascinated by the character of Alice in Wonderland and the various representations and imaginations of her in pop culture. I was first inspired to write a blog post entitled "Alice Does" about the various versions of Alice, and then a poem about an aging Alice that is included in this issue on Subjective Fashion. I imagine Alice as an eternally stylish and wise multilingual world-traveler, who has life-long friendships and loves, and many, many dresses.

# Jeffrey Brassard

## Esenia's fashion, or a slow slide into madness and coming to the end of a Ph.D

Near the end of my Ph.D on Russian Television, I was told my work raised new questions and that I needed to add a chapter. I was forced to watch a few more programs to fill this gap. One of the programs I selected was a series called **Метод** that aired on the country's largest television channel **Первый Канал**. It was the first series I have seen that used fashion to reflect someone's psychological state. The series follows a young graduate from a Russian police academy who watches her friend being murdered by a serial killer on the night of her graduation. She then commits herself to learning the method of the man who solved her friend's murder, a major in the police force named Rodion Meglin. His signature piece of clothing is a brown overcoat which he always wears.

Esenia goes through a fashion transformation that parallels the decline in her moral certainty and her sanity. She starts as a fashionable young woman, first seen wearing a stylish jacket and slacks. As she enters deeper into learning Meglin's **метод** she gradually adopts tan cargo pants and a leather jacket with a t-shirt under it. By the time the story ends we find her wearing a black hooded sweatshirt with the hood up, chain smoking from Meglin's cigarette case and drinking from his flask. She says: "**Не было никакого метода. Он был метод.**" Mais durant les dernières minutes de la série, après qu'elle reçoit un appel téléphonique d'un meurtrier qu'elle avait cru mort, elle met le manteau tâché par le sang de Meglin. Son image disparaît et est remplacée par l'image de Meglin. C'est la première fois que je me suis rendu compte de l'importance de l'habit d'un personnage dans une série, et comment ça peut illustrer un état psychologique. Je suis content que c'est cette série que j'ai regardée pour finir ma dissertation.

## Artist statement

I am interested in fiction television, particularly programming that average people really enjoy. I love Russian sitcoms particularly when they involve love triangle and post-Soviet crime series. I also enjoy folk and contemporary classical music, especially Nobuo Uematsu or Taylor Davis.



Figure 1 : Esenia's fashion transformation. Screen grabs.



Figure 2. Esenia's fashion transformation continued. Screen grabs.

# Mitch Sorensen



## My Varsity Sweater

Наука о спорте является истинным манипулированием другого человека. - Ray Lewis

I was always the “smart kid” in elementary school. I never had to work in classes, but I was only ever a few rungs up from the least athletic kids in my grade. Come Grade 7 and junior high, I decided to try out for volleyball. I got cut from the junior team, and didn't know what to do with myself. I had always succeeded easily in class, and never put myself in the position to try something at which I might fail.

Don't ask me why, but volleyball was different. I practiced with the team all through seventh grade, and made the junior team the next fall. I haven't stopped playing since then. Though I've been cut more times than I care to remember, learned new positions, and worked harder at times than I've worked on anything else ever. Eventually, I played my three years in high school, and have been more than happy to watch former teammates carry on to university teams while I play in rec leagues. I'm by no means a great player, but I still love the game. I think the stuff I've learned playing sports shaped me as much as my time in the classroom, and I'm proud of myself for sticking with it.

The physical embodiment of all that is my varsity sweater. These are given out to people who play sports for three years at my high school. It's a classic grey crew sweater, it's warm, it goes with anything, and it's extremely comfortable. Combine that with the three years of work and time that went in to me getting it, and it's one of my favorite things in my closet.

## Artist Statement

As you might have guessed, my tastes are eclectic; I think that's reflected in my fashion sense. If I had to sum it up, it would be something like “mountain man in the city.” This sweater is comfort, familiarity, quality, and it was free. Most of all, it tells a story, as all great clothes should for those who put them on. For me, all fashion is subjective, and context is everything.



# Alex Barr



## atriði í skápnum mínum

My dad travels a lot for his work, and as a kid there were sometimes periods of up to six months where I didn't see him. One time he brought me back this shirt, which was (at the time) way too big for me. I remember wishing it would fit me, and being excited to grow so that I could wear it. It wasn't until a few months ago, as I was cleaning my stuff, that I found it. It's too small for me now, and I totally forgot I had it during the period in my life where it would have actually fit me properly.

Ég býst við að það sé eitthvað skáldlegt við það.

(Special thank you to Natalie Van Deusen for helping with Icelandic translations)

## Artist Statement

My creative interests include writing fiction and channelling my stress into sketches. I also enjoy listening to Queen because their album "Greatest Hits" was the first CD I ever owned as a kid. I'm pretty sure I still have the CD somewhere even though I don't have a way to play it anymore.



# Stefano Muneroni

## The shoes I don't wear

The concept of "fare una bella figura" (cutting a nice figure) was paramount in my family. It was never about wearing expensive things, but rather about being clean and tidy. The cleanliness of one's shoes was as much a sign of self-worth as it was an external indication of respectability and dignity. Growing up during WWII and the difficult years of post-war reconstruction, my mother knew privations and hardships that her children never had to experience, and when she had a family of her own she made sure we would be sheltered from the difficulties that shaped her and that, I suspect, embittered her. She sewed our clothes and her own, and bought the shoes to match them.

As I grew up, shoes continued to hold a special place in my wardrobe, but their meanings and functions expanded, as did my own vision of the world. They became a metaphor of the idea of movement, action, and the very possibility of change. Unlike any other piece of clothing, shoes inherently suggest a move or a journey that takes you from one place to another. They contain the promise of an incipient future, demanding that you take them, or perchance follow them, elsewhere. Only slippers indicate "here," all other shoes intimate a sense of "there" or "away."

There is however only one pair of shoes that stayed with me the entire time, from when I left Italy as young man with a degree in Theatre History: those are the shoes my sister bought for me when I left Italy to move to London eighteen years ago. A pair of stylish leather half boots, beige with brownish variegations and a metal latch to ensure comfortable wearability, that she bought from a store in our hometown, Civitavecchia, that is not there anymore. Too expensive for her means, but I guess appropriate for the significance of the occasion. Perhaps she understood what I didn't know yet; that I wasn't just going to London to learn English for two months.

Those are also the shoes I never wore, even though not wearing them was never a conscious choice. I didn't decide to preserve them for any particular reason or special occasion. They were not so pricey to justify wearing them sparsely, nor were they uncomfortable that I shouldn't want to put them on. It simply happened that I never felt I could. Shoes came and went, but my sister's simply shifted place and position as I moved houses and countries; pristine and shiny as the day I received them.

The shoes from my sister stand for the space I traversed so far and the one I will cross to go back to Italy. The parting gift from my sister that marked my departure from Italy turned, over time, into the hope of a homecoming, a return to the familiarity of language and culture. Whether this move back will happen or not is less important than my need to believe that it might. In this sense, the shoes are a wishful promise of the restoration of all the ties that are severed by migration and a tangible reminder that moving backward is still movement.



### Artist Statement

The theme of displacement has always fascinated me. Since I can remember I have been drawn to stories that deal with characters who leave their familiar surroundings, sometimes against their wishes: how do they make sense of their longing for home as they settle in their new reality? What do they choose to take with them as a reminder of the past? How do they find the words to articulate the void of the past? Even now, the books I like reading and the plays I enjoy translating often represent people struggling to make sense of some form of physical or psychological displacement. My short piece for this issue of Subjective Fashion wants to reflect on how the memory of the past might become tied to an article of clothing that is endowed with transformative qualities. The boots of my story carry an almost thaumaturgical value in that they fill the distance between 'there' and 'here,' and 'then' and 'now.' As they are not worn, but merely preserved as a mnemonic site, the boots show subjective fashion to be more than public self-expression. They embody instead resistance, self-reliance, and the possibility of homecoming.

# Francesca D'Angelo



## Poet | Artist Statement

The stiletto is a thing that elicits a number of powerful physical and psychological reactions tied to the overall sense of elevation called forth by its shape, function, and feel. A true phenomenological endeavour. While a special thing in my eyes, it, like other things, arouses in each of us a reaction, real or fantasized, and so as a conglomerate of all our disparate subjective reactions it becomes a collective phenomenon, a cultural and historical archive; and, as a repository, it enfolds within itself our very desires, fears about life, love, female etc. So every time I don, see, or fantasize stilettos I "invest\*" myself in this cultural, historical garb. Therefore, as a thing in itself, it is never fully perceived, understood, or fully realized until all its various perceptions and permutations are gathered and revealed - what this poem attempts to show.

## A Stiletto's Diary

They call me Stiletto, but do not fear,  
I have no villainous cross blade to yield.  
I'm neither wicked nor dangerous, but have been noted to be,  
By friends, foes, fawners and all those in between.  
I've been granted this name expressive of neither function nor value  
But some women whisper to me "I love you, I love you!"

Cloaks and sleeves no longer cover me up  
Instead feet are now my only stirrup  
Now I roam widely leaving echoes in closed alleys my dust,  
pounding the pavement at night I call out in lust

Serrated edges are fashionable no more  
Some seem to suggest they made me look like a whore.  
Now I much prefer scalloped trims, pretty bows  
With a hint of pale rose  
While some say nothing beats me in red  
I confess, that's what drives me straight to bed

Lined with soft nylon fibres that feel so smooth to my touch  
Women love to show me off because I make them look all grown up  
Yet, I walk slowly about trying to avoid the cracks  
As I've been known to break a couple of backs

I walk with stealth  
While exuding wealth  
But you still might want to complain  
That I cause women unnecessary pain

For those who scream you'll damage your toes  
Give it up and admit you are all dirty hoes

Mi faccio sentire  
Mi faccio volere  
Mi faccio prendere dalla passione  
E coinvolgere in strani giochi

Avvolto su le gambe le rendo affascinante  
Ci tengo all'eleganza  
Perche sono nata Italiana  
E tacco a spillo sono battezzata

What am I, you ask? I am nothing more nothing less than a stiletto, I guess.  
A shoe, a design, a man's dream I remain.

# Iman Mersal

مُعْطَف  
إيمانَ مرسال

أنتِ وحييدٌ  
مثل مصممة أزياء تخيلت تلك الياقة الحديثة  
بينما تطلّ من النافذة على شوارع منهارات،  
مثل أرملة صينية حاكت آلاف المعاطف  
دون أن تعرف من سيلبسها،  
مثل بائعة الملابس  
التي فرحها أن صبرها عليك في المتجر البرليني  
كله النجاح.  
من أجل أصابع الوحيدات  
التي مرّت على أزرار معطفك السبعة  
سأحلها لك واحدة واحدة.

## Poet Statement

an erotic poem, about a man's coat that was touched by so many hands but I am the one who opens the buttons.



# Anne Malena

## Le mode confort

La mode la passionne, moi pas. Débordée de travail, je commence par repousser l'idée... Un, deux, trois jours passent... Je m'acharne au travail, je ne mange presque plus, je ne m'habille même pas. Mais il faut aller donner mes cours, promener le chien, vivre, quoi. Je me retrouve alors devant mon armoire, incapable de choisir et le projet me remonte à l'esprit. Et soudain, une idée! Les vêtements les plus confortables possibles, comme une consolation, que je dispose sur mon lit pour simuler la façon dont j'aimerais étendre mon corps en ce moment, plus que tout... et je suis presque joyeuse, je m'amuse, j'attrape mon téléphone et le cliché est fait. La légende me vient facilement :

Si fatiguée...

... Le confort l'emporte sur la mode



## Poet | Artist Statement

This piece, as often happens to occasional artists, was inspired by a friend's suggestion to submit something to "Subjective Fashion". In subverting the very idea of fashion I ended up being very subjective and privileging comfort over fashion.

# Kaja Matovinovic



Photo by Kaja Matovinovic

## Nošnja

I danced from when I was three to twelve years old and the dances that I was a part of were mostly drmš. My dancing costume nošnja that is pictured was my favorite of the three that I owned. It was completely hand sewn and embroidered by one of my grandmother's aunts in Croatia. Fashion brands that are known for their bohemian designs, like Free People, have pieces with near identical embroidery and silhouettes to the pieces that comprise a nošnja. Traditional dress of Eastern Europe has inspired one of the dominant trends in women's fashion, or tradicionalna haljina iz istočne Europe potaknuo jedan od dominantnih trendova u ženskoj moda.

## Artist statement

Although I am pursuing a degree in psychology, I have always been interested in the way in which the world shapes fashion and conversely how fashion shapes the world. Sometimes it is hard to imagine how seemingly isolated designs found in pieces like a nošnja can permeate the fashion world so extensively. Our world is now more interconnected than ever; what may seem like a culture-specific, subjective expression of fashion can be a global expression regardless of culture, location or age.

# Adriana Onita



"Mamaie." Acrylic painting on paper by Adriana Onita

## Totul

versuri, veste croșetate de tine  
scrisori, inele păstrate, rugăciuni  
proverbe, pisici, certuri cu poștaşul

socoteli, cheltuieli, câini, pastile  
zeci de avioane spre tine, cartofi prăjiți  
poze, păpuși mai mari decât mine

prima dragoste, plimbări la Bușteni  
lacrimi, zambile, nucul din grădiniță  
serialul din fiecare seară, canicula

glume, capoate cu flori, minciuni  
înghețată la vafă ieftină, lumânări aprinse  
pepeni roșii, ceasuri, struguri, gutui

ultimele clipe, brânză fără sare, coliere  
*grabește-te încet, speranța moare ultima*  
ma îmbrac în cuvintele tale, limba noastră



## Poet | Artist statement

In July 2017, I presented Mamaie (my grandmother) with the first issue of *The Polyglot*, a project that my team and I had been working on for a year. She flipped through the pages and was surprised to find a photograph of herself at a windowsill, beaming at our cats Lola and Zmoala through a screen. She could not fully understand "Perdele," the poem I paired with the photo, as it was written in five languages, but I explained that the poem was about my relationship to Romanian. I told her that one day I wish to write and publish poetry in my mother tongue.

Between issue one and two of *The Polyglot*, Mamaie passed to the other side of the screen of life.

"Totul" is the first poem I have written in my mother tongue and it is inspired by Ana Blandiana's poem of the same name. It is an ode to everything (totul) that reminds me of my grandmother, especially the clothing that she wore or made me (crocheted vests, housecoats, rings, necklaces). My fashion style is entirely influenced by Mamaie, who wore bright, colourful patterns and her own home-made vests. I chose to display this poem in Romanian, with a painting as a translation, because I believe our mother tongues are best translated through art.

ma îmbrac în cuvintele tale, limba noastră  
(I wear your words, our language)



# Laura Beard

## Wearing my life on my arm: Charm bracelet as life narrative

What could be simpler to understand than the act of people representing what they know best, their own lives?  
- Sidonie Smith & Julia Watson

When I was fifteen-years-old, my parents gave me a charm bracelet for Christmas, a bracelet of interlocked silver links already loaded with the first charm, a round Merry Christmas charm with holly leaves and berries. Like many of the girls and women who had purchased or received charm bracelets in their heyday in the 1950s and 1960s, I would go on to add charms over the years, making the bracelet into a form of “portable autobiography” (Markowitz and Ferris). The charms function as landmarks in my life story—from an early Sweet 16 charm to a U.S. Capitol building marking my high school Congressional internship in Washington, DC to a much-later chair charm given in honor of my first position as a department chair in university—as well as mementos from sites visited in my world travels. Na minha pulseira de berloques tenho um de Pão de Açúcar, em Rio de Janeiro, mais não tenho berloques de todos os lugares queridos do Brasil. De hecho, muchos de los recuerdos de mis viajes en América Latina que llevo en la pulsera son monedas del año en que hice el viaje, monedas que representan el país y cuyas imágenes y palabras me hacen reflexionar sobre la idea de una identidad nacional: los 20 centavos de lempira, de Honduras, con la cabeza del héroe indígena o los 5 centavos de Guatemala, con el árbol y el lema “libre crezca fecundo.” Canada is represented by a coin as well. A 10 cent coin with a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II on one side and a Canadian schooner called the *Bluenose* on the other. Is that what Canada is? The British queen and a sailboat? I don’t know, but the dime worked for my life narrative that year, as I had taken a sailing course on Cadboro Bay in Victoria, BC.

Charm bracelets have a narrative quality. The charms mark out important moments in the wearer’s life – often marking traditional moments like the graduation from school, marriage, birth of a child, or anniversaries—but also mark her values, interests and personality. I can trace my life path through my charms, from the state where I was born, to states where I lived growing up, through travels, life milestones, personal interests, and family connections. Many are animals that charmed me in childhood and continue to fascinate me now, an Alaskan brown bear, the dolphin and the pelican which we spot when we go to beaches on the Eastern shore of the United States (a brown pelican can have a wingspan of nine feet!), the roadrunner we regularly saw running alongside us in New Mexico and Texas, among others. The mixture of animals, coins, landmarks, personal mementos, gifts from friends and family dangling from silver links that yoke together onto a sturdy chain I wear on my wrist serves as a tangible reminder of our interconnections and of my responsibilities to all. These charms and links connect me to family, to community near and far, to animals human and non-human, to the earth. My life story is linked to generations of family in a chain that goes forward and backward, through stories that get told and retold to bind us together in a chain of life narratives, dangling and jangling from my wrist.

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Photo by Laura Beard

### Artist Statement

I chose to write about my charm bracelet both because it is a piece of fashion I have had for a long time and because it resonates with my work as an autobiography scholar. In English we have an expression about wearing your heart on your sleeve. When you wear a charm bracelet, you wear your life on your wrist. It is one construction of your life in a work of jewelry, a piece of subjective fashion.

# Andriko Lozowy



Photos by Andriko Lozowy

## Любий,

etymologically, fashion is form. The wallet pictured to the left is a form that performs a utilitarian task: keeping the plastic, paper, and a picture together as part of my edc ("every day carry" for the uninitiated). Some would argue that fashion relates only to 'the latest'. To quote Eugenia Sheppard, "No new [новий] fashion worth its salt is wearable." This wallet is perhaps the antithetical response to newnew [новий новий] fashion that imposes its unwearability or accessorisability. Instead, two pieces of leather folded and stitched represents something that is oldold [старий старий]. So, between the chasm of the way language evolves, from old [старий] ways of making sense, to newly evolved resignifications of words like "fashion," I find a greater depth of meaning. The wallet, as it was referred to in the 14th century, was later in the 19th century differentiated from a purse. It was designed to carry coins, as an object -- likely not of fashion, but of functional form -- to carry paper money, or in 2017 parlance, plastic credit and identification cards. Perhaps in a few years, when wallets become outmoded because of digital currencies and tap to pay mobile device features, that which is oldold [старий старий], folded, and stitched leather will become something that is unnecessary and largely unbearable by its redundancy and lack of relevance. For now, I'm going to keep carrying this wallet, its folded minimal utility close at hand, because it was a most thoughtful gift for this age.

Дякую, любий.

## Artist statement

Long ago, I choose to study sociology instead of fine art, but I have used an arts-based practice in order to represent and help make sense of the world, for myself at least. Usually I start with a camera, or an audio recorder and then I move to theory. When I get stuck, I get up, I walk, ride a bicycle, draw something, do a headstand, whatever it takes to remember that I don't need to go far to find what I am looking for. In my ears at the moment are sounds created by Khruangbin, GoGoPenguin, Matthew Halsall, podcasts like, The Daily, and S-Town, and books like, Feed by M.T. Anderson, and Brave Parenting by Krissy Pozatek.



# Natalie Boterman



Photo courtesy of Natalie Boterman



## Tailleur Boterman: Hommes et Dames

This is an image of my Bonnemaman and my Bonpapa in front of their shop Tailleur Boterman: Hommes et Dames in Belgium before they moved to Canada. I come from a long line of tailors, at least 4 generations and am proud to share this image as I believe fashion has a strong root in my bloodline. Even after my family moved from Belgium to Canada and my Bonpapa traded his sewing machine for a mop, my Bonpapa would still draft a pattern and sew a skirt suit for my Bonnemaman every Easter for the Sunday church service.

### Artist Statement

Over the past 4 years my work has been largely focused on nature, the environment, the metaphysical, the cosmos, and personal history. Oral history plays a key role in the development of my ideas and process as I reconnect with my early childhood memories spent outdoors exploring the natural world up close. When other children were being cared for by their television sets, I was encouraged to develop an imagination. As a result, I developed an appreciation for technology rather than taking its existence in my life for granted. It is these fundamental moments developing the power of my mind to create that have shaped the artist I have become, and the trajectory of work I am currently invested in making. My time in the studio is an extension of this discovery, one that transports me to the childlike wonderment where everything was new, exciting and fulfilling; where boundaries are tested.

# Piet Defraeye

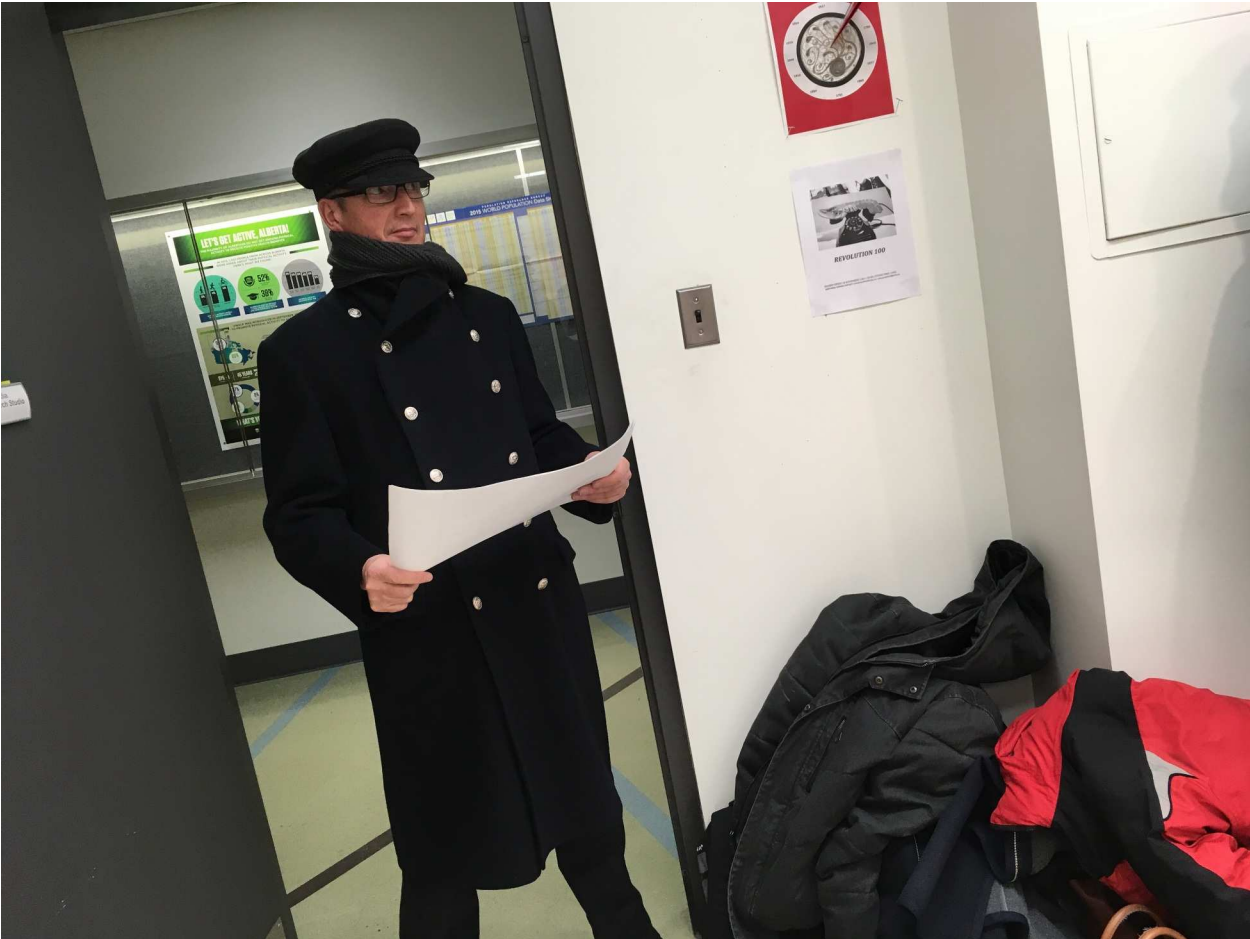


Photo by Elena Siemens

## Kapitein Haddock's mantel

*De jas die Kapitein Haddock nooit gedragen heeft.* I was in a second-hand clothing store in Antwerp, famous for its focus on fashion. Clearly, the heavy, full-length shaggy wool Navy coat had never been worn. And while I look anything but the haggard bearded Captain Haddock from *Tintin* (or Kuifje for the other half of the Belgians) –though some friends *have* pointed out a resemblance with the said Tintin –the coat was straightaway connected with the cartoon figure. I tried it on. The silver buttons in parallel row looked impeccable. A bargain. Two stitched military rank shoulder strips, brand new, still in the pocket. Three stripes. It was destined for a sergeant.

I like to wear it during the Canadian winter, often with a dark fedora. Though I also like it with my so-called Prinz-Heinrich-Mütze which a friend bought in Lübeck, yet another port city. Helmut Schmidt made that cap quite popular. In combination with the coat, it often generates associations with Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov. Not quite cartoon, not quite invented, but equally theatrical and mythical. A triangle between Antwerp, St. Petersburg –yet another port city –and land-locked Edmonton. At least there's a river, the North Saskatchewan River, which flows into the Saskatchewan River – *kisiskâciwanisîpiy* in Cree, which means *swift current*. Having canoed the river a couple of times, I agree that it *is* a fast current. I've never done it in my navy coat. *Een winterjas voor aan wal*. The mountain water flows all the way to Hudson Bay, and from there to Antwerp.

## Artist Statement

Piet is interested in Piet Mondrian that is. Modernist art is a continuous fascination. How it began, what it became. His performance practice reflects a contemporary aesthetic in which audience is often explicitly acknowledged. His latest production, Mia Van Leeuwen's *White Bread*, went on tour in Canada, Belgium, Austria, Germany, and Serbia (2014-15). Like Hergé, he likes smoked haddock, but never for breakfast.

# The Contributors

**Cole Anderson** is completing a film studies and human geography double major at the University of Alberta. He is contributing to a chapter about "Toxic Fashion" in Toxic Media Ecology's upcoming publication. In the future, he would like to pursue studies and a career in film archiving and restoration.

**Alex Barr** is in the final year of her English degree and upon graduating hopes to write for a living, but she's worried about never making any money. So hit her up if your walks need shovelling or your children need babysitting. She guarantees to do it for less than whatever your neighbourhood kids are asking.

**Laura Beard** is Professor and former Chair of the Department of Modern Languages & Cultural Studies at the University of Alberta, where she is also an affiliated faculty member in the Faculty of Native Studies. A two-time Fulbright Scholar, Beard's research and teaching interests include women writers of the Americas, Indigenous literatures and cultures, and autobiographical genres and theories. She has been known to be distracted by boxes of charms at flea markets and antique stores.

**Justin Bilinski** is a fourth-year student at the University of Alberta. When he's not studying biochemistry or German literature, he spends the majority of his time on Instagram and Twitter. You can follow all of his social media accounts for the latest updates @bbboibilinski. Most recently his work has been published by *Refreshing Standards*.

**Johannes Birringer** coordena o departamento de Dança e Tecnologia do Programa do departamento de Teatro da Brunel University (London) e é o diretor artístico da companhia AlienNation, uma companhia multimedia que desde 1993 criou inúmeros sites de performances específicas e de performances transculturais e instalações multimedia. Doutor em 1983 pela Universidade de Trier (Alemanha) depois de ter completado sua pesquisa de pós-graduação pelas universidades de Cambridge e Yale. Após ter conduzido pesquisas internacionais sobre dança e tecnologia na Inglaterra, Alemanha e Escandinávia, fundou o estúdio de arte digital em Houston, Centro de Artes Winter Street, aonde Birringer é artista residente e curador do programa de artes e performances. Birringer dirige trabalhos de multimedia, dança e tecnologia, ópera e vídeo nos Estados Unidos, Europa, Japão e América Latina.

**Johannes Birringer** is a choreographer and media artist; he directs the Design and Performance-Lab at Brunel University where he is a Professor of Performance Technologies in the School of Arts. He has created numerous dance-theatre works, video installations and digital projects in collaboration with artists in Europe, the Americas, China, and Japan, DAP-Lab's interactive dance-work 'Suna no Onna' was featured at festivals in London (2007-08), and the mixed-reality installation 'UKIYO' went on European tour in 2010. The dance opera, 'for the time being' (2014) was created as an homage to the futurist Russian opera Victory over the Sun. A new series of immersive dance installations, 'metakimospheres', began touring in Europe in 2015-16. His last monograph was 'Performance, Technology and Science' (2009), and he has spearheaded new transdisciplinary dance- research projects, including the books *Dance and Cognition* (2005), and *Dance and Choreomania* (2011).

**Natalie Willow Boterman** is a full time dreamer mainly working in expanded cinema, experimental film, and media archaeology. Vancouver born and now a citizen of the world, Boterman is currently based across various European and Canadian cities. Her educational background includes an Interdisciplinary BFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia, an MFA from École Cantonale d'art du Valais, Sierre, Switzerland, a year in Paris on exchange at École Nationale Supérieure de Beaux-Arts, and a mentorship with Visual Arts Nova Scotia. Boterman has exhibited and screened her work across Canada and Europe and has to date been awarded several well established residencies in Canada, Finland, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. In the spring of 2014, Boterman co-founded GOOD WORK, an international project centered on self organization and the dissemination of art.

**Jeffrey Brassard** is an instructor at the University of Alberta. He is the author of articles in the *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, *Palabra Clave*, *VIEW: Journal of European Television History and Culture* and a forthcoming publication in *The Journal of Historical Fiction*.

**Craig Campbell** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin. His fascinations include photography, travel in Siberia, and his homeland on shores of Salish Sea in British Columbia. Since 2009 he has been curating and collaborating with the Ethnographic Terminalia curatorial collective.

**Francesca D'Angelo** is a Fashion Professor in the Business School teaching in the Fashion Management degree program at Humber College. She is interested in the sociology of fashion and has taught in this field for a number of years. More specifically, her work focuses on women's phenomenological relation to the stiletto heel.

**Piet Defraeye** is a drama prof at the University of Alberta, and, for various periods, a guest professor at Universiteit Antwerpen, Ludwig Maximilian Universität München, Innsbruck Universität, and Kath. Universiteit Leuven. He teaches performance theory and contemporary theatre.

**John Eason** is a contract professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Alberta since fall 2014. I am originally from the US, and before moving to Canada lived and worked in Stockholm, Sweden for seven years. My teaching duties include first and second year Swedish and Norwegian languages as well as Scandinavian content courses in the areas of literature, film and pop culture.

**Anton Iorga** aka Kalki/Antony of Egypt/Professor X, is a PhD candidate Roma slam poet, anticolonial activist, hip-hop/graffiti/French teacher, translator/editor, and youth mentor who manages the non-profit music label, Revolt Motion Records, as well as the worldwide youth artistic safe-space collective, Muta

**María León** is a Spanish visual artist that lives and works in Berlin. Recent exhibitions: EMBED\_IMG (TEA Tenerife Space for the Arts), Bete Noire (Musart- Berlin), Look at the past to built the future (XVIII International Art Biennial of Cerveira).

Hi, my name is **Andriko Lozowy**. I am an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Lethbridge, currently conducting a personal ethnography of precarious employment. I have conducted collaborative research in Fort McMurray where I have worked with young adults to become empowered to express their own narratives and analysis. I am photographer-researcher that uses cameras to frame and collect data in relation to gender, dis-ability, social spatialization, and the scaped-lands of everyday life.

**Anne Malena** is a translator, a Professor of French and Translation Studies, and an occasional artist in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of Alberta (Canada).

**Kaja Matovinovic** - I grew up in a very close-knit Croatian family. Sundays were spent at Church, the local European grocer and of course at Croatian dance practice. The nošnja was part of my weekly wardrobe. Looking back, the nošnja is more than just a costume, it is an expression of my culture and a medium through which I can share my culture with the rest of the world.

**Iman Mersal** is the author of numerous collections of poetry. Originally from Egypt, she currently lives in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, where she is Associate Professor of Arabic language and literature at the University of Alberta.

**Sourayan Mookerjea** is associate professor of theory and cultural studies and director of the Intermedia Research Studio at the Department of Sociology, University of Alberta where he specializes in decolonizing social theory, critical globalization studies, and intermedia research. His current projects and publications include SSHRC funded research on The Commons and the Convergence of Crises, an intermedia/ decolonizing theory of the commons, Toxic Media Ecologies: Critical Responses to the Cultural Politics of Planetary Crises and is co-director of Feminist Energy Futures and of iDoc@Speculative Energy Futures. He is a founding member of RePublicU, a critical university studies collaboration, of the Arts and the Anthropocene social justice research creation CoLab at the University of Alberta, and of The Corporate Mapping Project at the University of Victoria. He is co-editor of Canadian Cultural Studies: A Reader (Duke University Press, 2009).



**Stefano Muneroni** is Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of Alberta where he teaches theatre history and play analysis. His most recent dramaturgical credits include *Yerma*, *Angels in America*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and *The Toxic Bus Incident*. Recent staged translations include Sforza Pallavicino's *Ermenegildo*, *A Jesuit Tragedy*, Xavier Villaurrutia's *The Absent One*, and Osvaldo Dragún's *A Toothache, a Plague, and a Dog*. He has published articles on Latin American theatre, religion and drama, and translation. His book *Ermenegildo and the Jesuits: Staging Sainthood in the Early Modern Period* was published by Palgrave in 2017.

**Janine Muster** was born in Germany and studied cultural science (Kulturwissenschaften) and Musicology at Universität Leipzig where she completed her Bachelor of Arts degree. While she studied, she regularly contributed pieces on inspiring locals, concerts and theatre productions, reportages, and travelogues to the *Leipziger Volkszeitung (LVZ)*, a daily print newspaper in Germany. Once she finally discovered the internet, she produced online content for *Eisbär Media GmbH*, a web developer in Leipzig. Being passionate about humans' production of and interaction with their spaces, Janine moved to Edmonton and recently completed her Master of Arts degree in Sociology at the University of Alberta. In Edmonton, Janine discovered the art of zine making and occasionally plays with the copy machine. Despite her love for zines, Janine cares about language, gets excited when sentences flow smoothly into one another, and is passionate about the Oxford comma. Her biggest dream is to become an author Henry Miller would want to read.

**Adriana Onita** is the founder of *The Polyglot*. Born in Bucharest, Romania she currently resides in Edmonton, Alberta, where she teaches languages by day, and paints | writes poems by night.

**Katrina Sark**, PhD, is the founder of the Canadian Fashion Scholars Network, and currently teaches in the Department of History, as well as the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies at the University of Victoria. She is the co-founder of the Urban Chic book series, published by Intellect Press with co-authored publications including *Montréal Chic: A Locational History of Montreal Fashion* (2016), and *Berliner Chic: A Locational History of Berlin Fashion* (2011). Her research on cities, gender, fashion, film, theatre and culture can be followed on her blog: <http://suitesculturelles.wordpress.com/>.

**Elena Siemens** is Associate Professor in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Alberta. Her research interests include Visual Culture, Performance (spaces of performance), Fashion Studies, Creative Nonfiction and Critical Theory. Most recent publications include *Street Fashion Moscow* (2017), *Theatre in Passing 2: Searching for New Amsterdam* (2015), edited volumes *Stirred Memories* (2016) and *Translating Street Art* (2015). Most recent curated exhibits include *Fashion Lounge* (2016), *Bad Weather* (2017), and the forthcoming *Cafe Counterculture* (2018).

**Mitch Sorensen** - I'm a habitual mind-changer in my fifth year of English at the University of Alberta. For the last two years, I worked for *The Gateway* to somehow make a magazine and website that didn't suck, and even developed a few great volunteer writers along the way. In what can only be described as a happy accident, I've also been published in *Macleans*. You can see the issue proudly displayed on my mom's coffee table. Between those gigs, I've worked carrying furniture, cutting down trees, and selling woolen undergarments; like I said, I change my mind a lot. In keeping with that trend, you can find me at NAIT next year, pursuing a certificate in Forest Technology.

**Okabe Tsugumi** is a PhD candidate at the University of Alberta. Mimi is a *gyaru* at heart, who loves Japanese fashion. When she is in Japan, the first place she visits is Shibuya 109. Her fashion icon is currently none other than Rola! Aside from her personal investment and interests in the world of Japanese fashion, Mimi critically explores the intersection of feminism, subculture, and youth identity and has been invited as a guest speaker and panelist for campus talks. She has delivered presentations entitled: "Refashioning Japan: Youth Subcultures & their Fashion Intervention" and "Lolita & the City: Crossroads between Youth Culture & Fashion."

**Nathaniel Weiner** is a PhD candidate at York University (Toronto), and a lecturer at Central St. Martins (University of the Arts London) and at the University of Hertfordshire. He is currently finishing up a doctoral dissertation on the subject of online menswear forums.

**Christine Wiesenthal** lives in Edmonton, sadly without any seamstress skills.





**Contributions in** Arabic, Bengali, Croatian, Dutch, English, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, and Ukrainian.