

## **Chapter 1**

### **1850-1890: The Dawn of Modern Clothing**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to study the development of fashion during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly the establishment of those aspects of the fashion system that are still in place today. Fashion in this period reflected the latest developments in engineering, chemistry, and communication and witnessed development of the role of the “fashion designer.”

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

##### *Social and Economic Background*

- Britain
  - reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901); stress on propriety and etiquette
  - rapid industrialization
  - expanding overseas empire
- United States
  - impact of Civil War (1861-1865) on global trade
  - emergence as industrial power
- France
  - reestablishment of court during Second Empire (begins 1852, ends with Franco-Prussian war 1870)
  - transformation of Paris into fashionable modern city
- Japan
  - opens borders (1853-1854)
  - goods enter the Western market and impact Western tastes

##### *The Arts*

- Orientalism and Academic historicism continue as major factors in art and design
- Impressionist artists, such as Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Berthe Morisot, capture aspects of modern life, including fashion, in their works
- Ballet and opera important art forms, often contributing to the orientalist vogue
- Rise of photography
  - as artistic medium but also used for chronicling daily life
  - portrait photography becomes affordable to middle classes

### *Fashion and Society*

- Establishment of department stores and mail order catalogs
- Fashion (and its attendant activities such as promenading and shopping) increasingly important to modern urban living
- Celebrity influence on fashion
  - royal and political elite, such as Empress Eugénie and American First Ladies
  - Jenny Lind (Sweden) and other performers
  - Lilly Langtry (Britain), Countess di Castiglione (Italy), and “professional beauties”

### *Fashion Media*

- Fashion press disseminating style
  - important publications include *Harper's Bazar*, *La Mode Illustrée*, *The Queen*, and *Godey's Lady's Book*
  - paper patterns distributed via magazines

### *Fashion Fabrics and Textile Technology*

- Changes in the production of clothing
  - development of sewing machine; commercial models in use during the 1850s and first Singer model offered for home in 1858
  - jacquard loom in widespread use; bobbinet machines produce tulle and machine-made lace
  - development of synthesized aniline dyes that are colorfast and produce vivid, saturated colors
  - standardized sizing of clothing
  - fabric printing improvements
  - textile finishes include “mercerizing” to strengthen and add luster to cotton fibers
- Improvements in transportation
- Revival of Lyonnais silk industry
- Increasing international (especially Transatlantic) trade in fashion
- Seasonal textile variations important to fashion
  - taffeta and velvets popular for both daywear and eveningwear; plaids and stripes perennial fashion staples
  - cotton important to fashion despite periodic disruptions due to global cotton supply
  - women's fashion fabrics concentrate on decorative effects such as border prints, ribbon, and fringing

### *Historic and Exotic Influences*

- 18<sup>th</sup>-century revival styles important to women's fashion during this period
  - open-front skirts with underskirts
  - bows on center front of bodices and sleeve ruffles evident
  - “Dolly Varden” look revives shepherdess style of Marie Antoinette
- Classical ideals seen especially in jewelry and trimmings in Greco-Roman mode

- Japonisme popular
  - both sexes adopt loosely draped kimono-inspired dressing gowns
  - motifs such as cherry blossoms and irises popular in textile design
- European regional dress also provides inspiration
  - folk costumes from Central Europe
  - lace mantillas and “Figaro/senorita” jackets from Spain popular
  - full cut blouses called Garibaldis become fashionable

#### *Dress Reform and Aesthetic Dress*

- Ideas of dress reform develop
  - focuses on health, hygiene, women’s rights, and aesthetics
  - “Bloomer Costume” popularizes alternative to artificial silhouette imposed by fashion
- “Rational Dress” develops in Britain; Jaeger company opens first store in London in 1884
- Aesthetic dress, another alternative to mainstream fashion, originates in England with artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1850s
  - advocates medieval-style dresses for women and return to knee breeches and blouson shirts for men

#### *The Elements of Women’s Fashion*

- Changes in fashion occur more rapidly than in past centuries
- White worn by ladies making debut at court and for weddings; black worn for mourning, progressing later to gray and purple
- Silhouette: day
  - at start of 1850s bell-shaped skirt attached to fitted bodice
    - “jacket bodice” popular
    - variety of sleeves from straight to full flared “pagoda sleeves”; *engageantes* (sleeve ruffles) and “Marie” sleeves popular
    - *canezons* (soft garments for the upper body) used to augment day and evening bodices
  - skirts become fuller as 1850s progresses; leads to development of hooped understructure to maintain silhouette
    - cage crinoline introduced around 1855
    - crinoline not universally worn; high fashion and for formal events
  - princess style dresses emerge by late 1850s – cut uses continuous panels from shoulder to hem with no waistlines
  - in 1860s day and evening styles reflect strong influence of 18<sup>th</sup> century
    - polonaise skirt styles are popular
    - “dress improvers” provide extra padding on buttocks
  - by 1870s waist and torso more defined and bustle becomes the mode
    - first bustle period continues to 1877 characterized by polonaise-style overskirts and more vibrant colors

- bustle decreases in size and the cuirasse style solidifies in 1878, featuring vertical seam construction in the princess style; darker colors and plaids popular
    - bustle returns from 1883 in more exaggerated form; goes out of fashion by 1890 when a softer look begins
  - jacket and skirt combination, referred to as tailor-made, becomes popular with jacket style derived from menswear and equestrian styles
- Silhouette: evening
  - as 1850s progress, sleeves typically small puffs
  - bodice cut to shoulder points or off the shoulder
  - neckline becomes wide, usually shallow V and cleavage sometimes exposed
  - largest crinolines worn for balls and other formal events
- Foundations and lingerie
  - in 1850s and 1860s corset worn over a chemise provides defined waist, well-supported bust, and curved hipline
  - drawers or “pantalettes” essential under crinoline
  - introduction of the combination, combining pantalettes and chemise
  - tea gown commonly worn in afternoon hours to provide break from wearing corset
- Outerwear
  - in 1850s and 1860s fitted and semi-fitted jackets and coats in variety of lengths – *paleto*, *pardessus*, and *pelisse* – are worn
  - loosely fitted mantles with wide bodies and sleeves and circular “talma cloaks” also worn
  - *sortie de bal* for formal evening dress
  - styles remain largely unchanged in 1870s and 1880s, but significantly more fitted jackets and coats develop
    - dolman jacket to accommodate bustle shape
    - “waterproofs” and more tailored coats offer practical options
    - Ulster coat popular during the lean cuirasse silhouette period
- Millinery and accessories
  - wide variety of bonnet shapes; often worn further back to show more of face and hair
  - masculine inspiration applies to hats later in period, although still often decorated with flowers and frills
  - gloves essential for leaving the house; lace or net used for evening gloves
  - parasol essential accessory when outdoors in sunshine
  - matched sets of evening jewelry completes highly embellished look for formal dressing
  - popular Louis heel becomes slightly higher in later decades and boots more sleekly fitted through ankle
- Sports clothing
  - development of “tailored” costumes for riding and other outdoor activities
  - use of jersey fabric in sports clothing
  - shorter, practical skirt length around 1860

- “dress elevator” used to loop up underskirt
- Hair and beauty
  - side curls popular early on; chignons in snoods continue into 1860s
  - ribbon bows and bouquets of flowers used for hair decoration
  - later in period curls of hair worn cascading down to mirror ornate drapery of skirts

### *Menswear*

- Menswear styles show less change than women’s fashion but lay the groundwork for 20<sup>th</sup>-century men’s wardrobe
  - clothing simplifies into columnar shape
  - uniformity, elegance, and adherence to standards important
  - standard daytime “suit” of coat, trousers, and waistcoat; of different fabrics in 1850s but one fabric in succeeding decades
  - in contrast to women’s clothes, menswear favors darker colors, including black, dark blue, and shades of brown
- Drawers (underpants) and vest (undershirt) worn as first layer
  - “combinations” introduced in 1860s
- Shirts are white cotton or linen with detachable collars
  - neckwear includes four-in-hand ties, stocks, ascots, string ties, bow ties, and wide cravats
- Waistcoat in variety of fabrics essential to suit ensemble
- Trousers narrow to a stovepipe silhouette from 1860s to 1890
- Jackets include popular frock coat and tailcoat for formal evening wear
  - sack jacket (or lounge jacket) provides less formal alternative to frock coat and moves into everyday apparel by 1890
- Top hat worn in town; other hats include derbys, straw hats, and unstructured caps
- Individuality expressed through great variety of styles for hair and whiskers
- Increase in ready-to-wear garments including unfitted overcoats, shirts, and trousers
- Levi Strauss develops denim workwear in 1870s
- Emergence of specialized sports apparel for men and women

### *Children’s Fashion*

- Children’s clothing is subject to change and reflects adult fashions
  - historic inspiration and folk and national styles popular
- Toddlers of both sexes wear waistless dresses and smocks
- Young boys move from skirts into pants or “knickerbockers” between three and eight
  - sailor suits popular by mid-century
- Girls from six wear dresses reaching below the knee
  - skirts are bell-shaped from 1850 to 1870
  - ruffles and trim are popular
  - teenage girls wear structured, fitted bodices
- Corsets for children common to provide support for growing muscles and improve posture

- Children wear knee-length wool or cotton stockings; flat-soled ankle boots common for all ages

### **Key Designers and Their Influence**

- Development of the fashion designer as a profession
- Importance of the designer as a source of design influence

*Charles Frederick Worth:* One of the most important Paris designers, highly influential in the development of the couture system and notable for his work for Empress Eugénie and wealthy Americans.

*Emile Pingat:* Important creator of exclusive fashions based in Paris. Noted for high quality workmanship and the incorporation of elements of historic and orientalist inspiration.

*Maison Doucet:* Multi-generational apparel business specializing in many areas of clothing, particularly lingerie and accessories. Opens a couture division during the 1870s under the direction of Jacques Doucet.

Other prominent Parisian houses include Maison Félix, a favorite with well-dressed women of the stage, and Madeleine Laferrière, who is recognized for her fine workmanship.

*John Redferr:* Begins business in Cowes on the Isle of Wight, England, specializing initially in sports clothing and then expands into couture dressmaking. Establishments in London, Paris, and New York by 1884.

*Elizabeth Keckly:* Important as a prominent American dressmaker whose most famous client is First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln.

### **Essay and Discussion Questions**

1. Explore the designer/client relationship that developed from the 1850s to 1890s. Give examples of key designers/dressmakers and the aristocratic and wealthy people they designed for. What influence did such relationships have on the designers' businesses and on fashion generally?
2. Discuss the relationship between celebrities and fashion that was established during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Give examples of celebrities who influenced fashion then and consider how this relationship still continues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
3. Outline the developments in technology that had an effect on the design, manufacture, and distribution of clothing during this period. Consider inventions such as aniline dye and the sewing machine, as well as new methods of production and transportation.

4. Explore the development of the female silhouette from 1850 to 1890, emphasizing the various transitions and the means by which the silhouettes were achieved.

### Further Reading

“Costume and Textiles.” Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History.

<http://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/costume-and-textiles/>

Daniel, Malcolm. “The Countess da Castiglione.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/coca/hd\\_coca.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/coca/hd_coca.htm) (July 2007)

Glasscock, Jessica. “Nineteenth-Century Silhouette and Support.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/19sil/hd\\_19sil.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/19sil/hd_19sil.htm) (October 2004)

*Harper’s Bazar*. New York: Hearst Corp.

<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu/h/hearth/browse/title/4732809.html>

Ives, Colta. “Japonisme.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jpon/hd\\_jpon.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jpon/hd_jpon.htm) (October 2004)

Johnstone, Lucy. “Corsets & Crinolines in Victorian Fashion.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/c/corsets-and-crinolines-in-victorian-fashion/>

Koda, Harold, and Richard Martin. “Haute Couture.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/haut/hd\\_haut.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/haut/hd_haut.htm) (October 2004)

Koda, Harold, and Richard Martin. “Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/orie/hd\\_orie.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/orie/hd_orie.htm) (October 2004)

Krick, Jessa. “Charles Frederick Worth (1825–1895) and The House of Worth.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd\\_wrth.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd_wrth.htm) (October 2004)

“Notman Photographic Archives.” Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History.

<http://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/notman-photographic-archives/>

Samu, Margaret. “Impressionism: Art and Modernity.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/imml/hd\\_imml.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/imml/hd_imml.htm) (October 2004)

“Victorian Dress at the V&A.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/victorian-dress-at-v-and-a/>

Watt, Melinda. "Nineteenth-Century European Textile Production." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/txtn/hd\\_txtn.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/txtn/hd_txtn.htm) (October 2004)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.



## **Chapter 2**

### **The 1890s: Extremes of the Gilded Age**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to examine fashion in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with particular attention to the contrasts characteristic of this period, including the difference between haute couture and ready-made clothing, conventions in dressing for day versus evening, and a new focus on tailoring for women influenced by sport and menswear that contrasted with highly decorative apparel.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

##### *Social and Economic Background*

- Britain
  - continued reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901)
  - Victoria's son Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, and his wife Alexandra prominent society figures
- United States
  - population growth due to immigration
  - immigrant labor a factor in establishing New York as center of American fashion industry
- France
  - continues colonial expansion under Third Republic
  - despite lack of court structure and royal patronage, Paris retains leadership in design and the arts
- Other areas
  - Canada and Australia also experience waves of immigration and industrial development

##### *The Arts*

- Post-impressionism prevailing experimental movement characterized by bolder colors, abstraction, unconventional perspective; dominated by French painters such as Georges Seurat, Paul Gauguin, and Paul Cézanne
- Symbolism offers mysterious, otherworldly imagery; key artists include Gustave Moreau and Edvard Munch
- Art nouveau provides a prominent influence on decorative arts, graphic arts, and fashion, especially jewelry and accessories
- Vienna emerges as a center of avant-garde fine and decorative arts

- Neo-Russian movement celebrates Russian folk tales and history
- Opera, ballet, and orchestral music continue as important art forms
- Opera singers, stage actresses, and other performers often influential on fashion
  - Sarah Bernhardt (France)
  - Lillian Russell (United States)
  - Nellie Melba (Australia)

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- At elite level, women expected to change clothing for each time of day and/or activity
- Silhouette: day
  - at start of 1890s silhouette consists of deflated version of 1880s second bustle period
  - tight corsetry results in pronounced “hourglass” shape
  - princess dress still prevalent early in decade and contributes to revival of gored skirt
  - sleeves gain volume to become an important element of silhouette
    - leg-of-mutton sleeve back in vogue by 1893
  - daytime dresses called “carriage dresses,” “walking costumes,” “afternoon toilettes”
  - tailor-made suit or shirtwaist blouse and separate skirt a popular daily outfit for many women
    - “promenade” suit features prominently for formal daytime town wear
    - “The Gibson Girl” crystallizes image of new woman who embodies changes in society and dresses in new, practical separates
  - silhouette transforms by 1897 with smaller sleeves and more elegant shaped skirt created by extra flare at bottom of the gores (“trumpet line skirt”)
- Silhouette: evening
  - lavish eveningwear with emphasized shoulders and ornate decoration
  - square neckline popular but rounded and V shapes also seen
- Outerwear
  - wide variety typical of previous decades continues; more masculine styles worn in recreational and country contexts
  - capes popular and short capelets worn for sport, town, and evening
  - evening styles heavily decorated
- Millinery and accessories
  - larger saucer-shaped hats replace perched styles popular in 1880s
  - hats increase in size by mid-decade; trimmings, particularly feathers, essential
  - hairstyles also become larger reviving look of 1780s
- Sports clothing
  - women's sports costumes become more precisely delineated and readily available

- bathing costumes continue along lines developed earlier in century
  - shooting and hiking outfits that include a short skirt above the ankles become more acceptable
  - women dress for bicycling in novel ways that challenge existing ideas of modesty
    - tailored jackets and above-the-ankle skirts
    - bifurcated, bloomer-like costumes
- Aesthetic dress becomes more acceptable and its influence more widespread, including couture
  - dresses with Empire, or raised, waist briefly fashionable in early 1890s
  - growing popularity of the tea gown

### *Menswear*

- Exhibits much less stylistic variety than womenswear
- Well-dressed men obtain their clothing in Britain or from British tailors in other countries
- Sack suit increasingly replaces frock coat and tuxedo challenges tailcoat for evening events
- Trousers worn with a center crease and cuffs become common
- Capes and overcoats worn, some known as Ulsters and reefers
- Influence of sports clothing on men's town wear
  - waterproof coats (Mackintoshes)
    - Burberry's Tielocken in 1895
  - Norfolk jacket
  - knickerbockers
  - off-white wool flannel pants teamed with single-breasted blazers
  - straw boater hat
- Prince of Wales provides important fashion influence
  - adopts Homborg hat
- Male image also evolves to include focus on athleticism, personified by Eugen Sandow

### *Children's Fashion*

- Children's clothing continues to reflect adult fashion including sports influence
- Smocks and dresses for young boys and girls feature large, gathered sleeves
- School-age girls wear gathered, triangular skirts and flat hats
- Boys wear Norfolk jackets and knickerbockers
- Sailor suits become standard for boys and girls
- Historic and global influences continue, especially for special occasion clothing
  - Empire-waisted Kate Greenaway dresses popular

## **Key Designers and Their Influence**

- Couture designation differentiates clothing of affluent from ready-made merchandise

- Couture garments distinguished by custom fit, hand work, and distinctive decorative detail

*Worth:* The famed Parisian couture house now run by the sons of the founder, with Jean-Philippe as designer and Gaston as business manager. Stylistic innovations include influences from Aesthetic dress, Japonisme, and art nouveau.

*Emile Pingat:* Continues as an important name in couture, with an international clientele; work noted for strong art nouveau influence.

*Jacques Doucet:* Rises in importance, especially favored by actresses and other performers.

*House of Paquin:* Establishes in Paris in 1891 by husband and wife team. London branch opens in 1897.

Continuation of Parisian houses Maison Félix and Laferrière. New couture businesses include Gustave Beer and Callot Soeurs.

*Redfern and Sons:* Continues under the direction of founder's sons Ernst and Stanley, along with partners Charles Poynter and Frederick Mims, providing both sport clothes and dressmaking. International presence continues.

*Lucile:* Lucy Wallace, a dressmaker, opens Maison Lucile in London's West End in 1894, promoting a romantic aesthetic in her custom made clothes for society women.

## Essay and Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the influence of art nouveau on fashion. How is the style reflected in silhouette, surface decoration, accessories, and jewelry? In addition, what other aspects of the world of fashion (such as merchandising) were affected by this important style?
2. Discuss the image of the "Gibson Girl." What were the characteristics of Gibson Girl style? What was her relationship with fashion? What did she represent?
3. Contrast the two versions of fashionable masculinity presented by Edward, Prince of Wales and Eugen Sandow. How do they establish models for the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

## Further Reading

"Costume and Textiles." Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History.  
<http://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/costume-and-textiles/>

Glasscock, Jessica. "Nineteenth-Century Silhouette and Support." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/19sil/hd\\_19sil.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/19sil/hd_19sil.htm) (October 2004)

Gontar, Cybele. "Art Nouveau." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/artn/hd\\_artn.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/artn/hd_artn.htm) (October 2006)

*Harper's Bazar*. New York: Hearst Corp.

<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu/h/hearth/browse/title/4732809.html>

Julian, Philippe, and Diana Vreeland, *La Belle Epoque*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/research/metpublications/La\\_Belle\\_Epoque?Tag=&title=la%20belle%20epoque&author=&pt=0&tc=0&dept=0&fmt=0](http://www.metmuseum.org/research/metpublications/La_Belle_Epoque?Tag=&title=la%20belle%20epoque&author=&pt=0&tc=0&dept=0&fmt=0)

Koda, Harold, and Richard Martin. "Haute Couture." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/haut/hd\\_haut.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/haut/hd_haut.htm) (October 2004)

Krick, Jessa. "Charles Frederick Worth (1825–1895) and The House of Worth." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd\\_wrth.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd_wrth.htm) (October 2004)

"Notman Photographic Archives." Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History.

<http://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/notman-photographic-archives/>

Watt, Melinda. "Nineteenth-Century European Textile Production." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/txtn/hd\\_txtn.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/txtn/hd_txtn.htm) (October 2004)

## **Chapter 3**

### **The 1900s: A New Century**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to survey the development of fashion during the first decade of the 20th century, with emphasis on the impact technological innovation played in the advancement of more modern, practical, and recreational styles for both women and men.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - decade of growing international tensions following the assassinations of Elizabeth of Austria (1898), King Umberto of Italy (1900), and King Aleksander and Queen Draga of Serbia (1903)
  - Japan continues westernization, growing in influence and military strength
  - colonial conflicts arise amongst European nations over areas in Africa and Southeast Asia
- Britain
  - death of Queen Victoria (1901) followed by country-wide state mourning period
  - coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra (1902)
  - country enjoys solid alliance with France and Russia, while relations with Germany remain strained
  - efforts for women's rights grow more assertive
- United States
  - Theodore Roosevelt becomes President (1901-1909) and emerges as embodiment of American capability and new symbol of masculinity
  - continued population growth due to immigration
  - thriving industrial and cultural centers in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Boston
  - organization of workers' unions including the International Ladies' Garments Workers' Union (1900)
- France
  - continued colonial expansion under Third Republic
  - tensions with Germany as a result of the Franco-Prussian War continue

- growing mobilization of wage workers including tailors and dressmakers of couture houses, who stage a strike for better wages and reduced working hours (1901)

### *Technological Innovation*

- Use of telephone and telegraph more widespread
- Electric sewing machines increase garment production
- Electricity in many homes by 1900; changes way clothes are maintained
  - electric irons
  - washing machines
- The Exposition Universelle in Paris (1900) features high fashion among its displays of design and technology
- First powered flight (1903)
- Expansion of automobile manufacture and Ford's Model T (1908) leads to demand for special clothing

### *The Arts*

- Emergence of Fauvism characterized by use of unexpected color and brush strokes in vivid depictions of people and places; key practitioners include Henri Matisse and André Derain
- Art nouveau, *Jugendstil*, and Arts and Crafts styles continue to appeal to artistic elite
- Popularity of art nouveau in Europe creates a market for luxury decorative items, and companies such as Cartier, Fabergé, and Lalique emerge as its champions
- Mission style is marked by simplicity and “honest” lack of decoration; Frank Lloyd Wright's innovative “Prairie” style informed by ideals of Mission
- Works of fiction sharply contrast with those of the 19th century, as novelists and playwrights tackle themes of a more realistic and gritty nature
- In Vienna, Sigmund Freud's developments in psychoanalysis and the Wiener Werkstätte's advanced design stimulate the cultural scene
- Opera continues to flourish, with famed works including Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* (1904) and Richard Strauss's *Salome* (1905)
- In the United States, ragtime, an early form of jazz, combines an African American influenced, syncopated beat with romantic-style melodies, and influence from European polka
- Film, a novelty in the 1890s, is now a popular form of entertainment and an international industry emerges
- Neo-Russian style under the reign of Nicholas II continues to develop, with Léon Bakst designing spectacular costumes and sets for the Ballets Russes

### *Fashion and Society*

- Newly crowned King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra continue to be style setters, with Alexandra's mourning wardrobe of black, purple, lavender, and white toilettes, setting a mature style standard
- Queen Maude of Norway (daughter of Edward VII and Alexandra) becomes a style setter in her own right

- Popularity of Gibson Girl image continues with her characteristic separates ensemble being adopted by the mainstream
- Spirit of the Belle Epoque continues with wealth outshining titles in the social scheme
- Wealthy American heiresses marry into prominent but insolvent European families and become international fashion leaders whose patronage is essential to couturiers
- As American buying power grows, couture houses begin to adapt designs to suit American tastes
- Opera singers, actresses, and other public figures influential in fashion
  - Lina Cavalieri (Italy)
  - Ethel Barrymore (United States)
  - Alice Roosevelt (United States)

#### *Fashion Media*

- Periodicals cover both high society and developments in fashion
  - debut of fashion supplement section of the *New York Herald* (1900)
  - *Harper's Bazar* continues as important fashion publication
  - *Ladies' Home Journal* covers fashion along with household topics
  - *Les Parisiennes* published in New York offers Americans “the very latest in Paris modes”
- Condé Nast purchases *Vogue* and repositions the society publication as a fashion magazine
- Photography begins to be incorporated into fashion publications, particularly important to French publication *Les Modes*, whose covers feature evocatively colorized photographs of the latest couture creations

#### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Refined and delicate color palette enjoys popularity alongside already established vivid color trends
- Simplicity and modernity dictate a more refined taste for embellishment in a move away from the high-contrast extremes of the previous decade
- Nautical theme emerges for both day and eveningwear
- Silhouette: day
  - pouter pigeon style with emphasis on fuller, lower breasts, often achieved through the use of “bust improvers”
  - trumpet shape skirts, reflecting art nouveau
  - bishop sleeve
  - high neckline and stiffened collars for daytime
  - experimentation and varying of waistline position
  - popularity of S-curve continues due to changes in corsetry
  - tailor-made costume is established as mainstream component of wardrobe due to practicality
  - popularity of shirtwaist blouse continues
  - “Lingerie dresses” made of cotton, linen, and sometimes plain silk are worn in the spring and summer and for daytime formal events
- Silhouette: evening



- square, rounded, and V-necklines for evening; bateau style also popular
- evening bodices often sleeveless and worn with long gloves or with elbow-length puffed sleeves
- Foundations and lingerie
  - fully S-curve shape achieved with additional foundation pieces
    - “bust improvers” enhance size of breasts and low placement of bust point
  - gored petticoats often have elaborate ruffles to create extra flare
  - “brassiere” or “bust bodices” introduced
- Outerwear
  - coats and jackets available in full, three-quarter, mid, and waist length options
  - loose-fitting “kimono coat” emerges
  - fur gains greater popularity both for outerwear and trim
- Millinery
  - hats grow larger and are trimmed more ornately than in previous decades
  - heavy veils worn over driving hats
- Sports clothing
  - development of driving clothing (especially duster coat) and accessories in response to the introduction of affordable automobiles
  - advancements in women’s bathing costumes inspired by the one-piece swimsuit worn by Australian competitive swimmer Annette Kellerman

### *Menswear*

- Shows continued progression toward informality
- Sack suit continues to replace frock coat, especially in metropolitan areas
- Ready-made suits increasingly available through department stores and men’s clothiers
- British tailoring continues to enjoy highest esteem, while advancements in mass-produced American suits allow working-class men to look fashionable
- Collars are cut high, reflecting high necklines in women’s fashions
  - Arrow Collar Man is introduced by illustrator Joseph Christian Leyendecker (1907) and embodies an emerging masculine ideal
- Popularity of the “blazer” worn with trousers of different color
- Chesterfield coat is typical overcoat for business wear
- Hats provide indication of stylistic change during decade
  - top hat, signifier of elegance in the 19th century, virtually disappears and is worn mainly by older gentlemen
  - casual black felt bowler hat (“derby” in the United States) becomes daytime standard
  - straw boaters and Panama hats are ubiquitous during warmer seasons
- Sports clothing
  - duster coats and long rubber “auto shirts” worn for driving together with gloves, goggles, and masks
  - jodhpurs offer an alternative to breeches for riding gear
  - navy blue blazers are worn for tennis and yachting

- swimwear includes one-or two-piece bathing suits made of dark knitted suits or trunks

### *Children's Fashion*

- Emphasis on comfort reflects new attitudes toward health, hygiene, and exercise
- Toddlers of both sexes wear low-waisted dresses
- As they mature, girls adopt styles reflective of adult women, which include loose bodices, high collars, and profuse trimmings
- Maturing boys adopt styles of adult sporting clothes for schoolwear including knee-length trousers or knickerbockers, practical boxy jackets, and matching caps
- Girls wear pinafores or aprons over dresses to school to keep their clothes clean
- Special occasion clothing
  - “Little Lord Fauntleroy” for boys
  - “Van Dyck” outfits for both boys and girls

### **Key Designers and Their Influence**

- Exposition Universelle indicates French fashion industry is well-organized and creative
- Most French couture houses have well-appointed, electrified salons, frequently decorated in Louis XVI style
- Salespeople and models (mannequins) present at front of house

*House of Worth:* Established client base grows older and designs remain more in line with the styles of the previous century. Noted in the press for old-fashioned conservatism.

*House of Doucet:* Decade represents zenith for the house. Under design direction of José Peña de Guzman, the house's output includes diaphanous creations and elements of Japonisme.

*Redfern Ltd.:* Charles Poynter Redfern becomes head of all Redfern Ltd., and house reaches height of its success and stylistic influence. Focus moves away from London store, which specializes in women's tailor-made and sports clothes, to Paris, which specializes in couture.

*Laferrière:* House continues under directorship of Arsène Bonnaire who is active in the administration of the Chambre Syndicale. Known for subtle, elegant, and detailed clothes. Key supplier to European royals including Queen Alexandra and Queen Maud.

*Gustave Beer:* Enjoys great success and critical acclaim during the decade. Noted supplier to well-dressed noble clients. Opens salons in other areas popular with elite clientele including Monte Carlo.

*House of Paquin:* Grows consistently during the decade and achieves success in both London and Paris. Emphasizes Directoire-style toilettes in soft supple fabrics, often using layers of delicate materials.

*Callot Soeurs*: Known for highly refined, frequently decorated, and delicately embroidered designs. Marie Callot Gerber emerges as the lead designer and is noted for her technical expertise and experimental aesthetic.

*Drecoll*: Vienna-based house opens a branch in Paris under a licensing agreement with husband wife team, Monsieur and Madame de Wagner, serving as manager and designer.

*Lucile Ltd.*: Also known as Lady Duff Gordon, Lucile adds many women of royalty and nobility to client roster. Lucile experiments with themes of exoticism and romanticism, a tactic that attracts many successful actresses to the house.

*Liberty of London*: British retailer is still an influential purveyor of Aesthetic styles and the impact of the Aesthetic ideals becomes more widely accepted within the mainstream.

*Paul Poiret*: Poiret establishes his own house in 1903 and offers something new and refreshing to an adventurous customer. Issues limited edition folio featuring graphically abstracted illustrations of his designs in 1908 that depict looser, columnar, Directoire-inspired silhouettes.

*Mariano Fortuny y Madrazo*: Establishes a fashion and textile business in Venice in 1906. Inspired by a number of sources including historic and global influences. The pleated Delphos dress emerges as his signature design.

*Jeanne Lanvin*: Begins her career as a milliner but moves into couture. Admitted into the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture in 1909, her work is extremely forward thinking and features loose T-shaped dresses with ancient or medieval themes.

## Essay and Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the emerging influence of the United States in the first decade of the 20th century. How did America shape the direction of fashion abroad as well as domestically?
2. Discuss the role of technology affecting the fashion system during the decade. How did the mainstream adoption of technology impact the dissemination of fashion, the look of fashion, as well as overall access to fashion?
3. Examine the relationship between fashion and the cultivation of gender ideals. How did fashion perpetuate stereotypes about femininity and masculinity, and how did it invalidate these stereotypes? How did outside social factors influence fashion's role in this perpetuation and invalidation?

## Further Reading

Daniel, Malcolm. "Edward J. Steichen (1829-1973): The Photo Secession Years." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/stei/hd\\_stei.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/stei/hd_stei.htm) (November 2010)

Gontar, Cybele. "Art Nouveau." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/artn/hd\\_artn.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/artn/hd_artn.htm) (October 2006)

Goss, Jare. "Design, 1900-25." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn1/hd\\_dsgn1.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn1/hd_dsgn1.htm) (October 2004)

"Interactive: Pink Velvet Evening Gown, by Worth, 1900." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/p/pink-velvet-evening-gown-by-worth-1900/>

Johnston, Lucy. "Corsets in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/c/corsets-early-20th-century/>

Koda, Harold and Andrew Bolton. "Paul Poiret (1879-1944)."

In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd\\_poir.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd_poir.htm) (September 2008)

Krick, Jessa. "Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) and The House of Worth."

In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd\\_wrth.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd_wrth.htm) (October 2004)

Rewald, Sabine. "Fauvism." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/fauv/hd\\_fauv.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/fauv/hd_fauv.htm) (October 2004)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The 1910s: Exotic Fantasy, Wartime Reality**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to analyze the fashion climate of the 1910s as both a transitional period and a catalyst for the more radical style changes of the 1920s. Marked by the contradictory social forces of the continuing pleasure-focused Edwardian era and the onset of World War I, the fashions of the decade expressed both an exotic romanticism and a staid simplicity, and paved the way for a transition from rigid social conventions to a democratic modernism.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand leads to the onset of World War I (1914)
  - alliance forms between Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire (Central Powers), who oppose an alliance between the United Kingdom, France, and Russia (Allied Powers)
  - World War I brings unprecedented casualties, and new weapons and lethal chemical agents transform modern warfare
  - aftermath of World War I alters class relations throughout Europe and brings end to monarchies in Germany and Austria
  - Australia and Canada participate in global conflict and emerge as mature nations with greater significance in the international community
  - Russian Revolution (1917) brings an end to the country's longstanding monarchy and causes many wealthy Russians to migrate to Western Europe
- Britain
  - King Edward VII dies (1910) and the British Empire enters a period of national mourning
  - sinking of the RMS *Titanic* and the loss of more than 1,500 lives (1912)
- United States
  - joins the Allied Powers and further solidifies its role as a world power (1917)

#### *The Arts*

- Continuation of Fauvism
- Emergence of Cubism with its champions Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque

- Evolution of American modernism, exemplified in the work of Marsden Hartley and Georgia O'Keeffe
- Dada emerges out of Zurich during the war years; rejects traditional art forms
- Italian Futurists, such as Giacomo Balla, incorporate ideas about fashion into their art
- Ragtime music begins its evolution into jazz
- Ballets Russes emerges as an influential conduit of fashion and design and is celebrated in French society
- Hollywood becomes world's largest center for film production and popularity of movies spawns related industries

### *Fashion and Society*

- National mourning period over death of King Edward VII leads to promotion of fashionable mourning styles by couture houses and fashion press
- New European royals, such as Alexandra of Russia and Marie of Romania, emerge as international style leaders
- Wealthy and independent-minded American women, including Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney and Rita de Acosta Lydig, exert influence on international fashion scene
- Cause of women's suffrage intensifies and various fashions are adopted to symbolize solidarity within different movements
- Dominance of Paris couture leads to continued growth of domestic garment industries, especially in the United States, which look to Paris for design direction
- Growth of domestic industries leads to a questioning and redefining of industry practices, particularly in the areas of worker safety and designer copies
- Efforts to promote American design emerge, such as the "Designed in America" competition initiated by *Women's Wear* (1916)
- Continued proliferation of the department store within major cities across the world provides consumers with more choice than ever before
- Actresses, dancers, and other public figures influential in fashion
  - Marchesa Casati (Italy)
  - Mary Pickford (United States/Canada)
  - Lillian and Dorothy Gish (United States)
  - Theda Bara (United States)
  - Isadora Duncan (United States)
  - Irene Castle (United States)

### *Fashion Media*

- Expansion of the medium into more specialized publications targeted at different regions, interests, and incomes
- Photography increasingly used in fashion periodicals
- Illustration becomes extremely sophisticated and often features witty narrative content
- Key French fashion illustrators of the decade are Paul Iribe, Georges Lepape, George Barbier, and Etienne Drian
- France

- *La Gazette du Bon Ton* is founded (1912) and emerges as the most luxurious publication of the day, forsaking photography for fully rendered fashion illustrations
  - *Les Modes* continues as elegant and conservative Parisian option
  - *Femina* is founded and is geared towards middle class readership
- Britain
  - *The Queen* continues as country's most important ladies' magazine
- United States
  - *Ladies' Home Journal* and *McCall's* continue as mainstream fashion and household publications
  - *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazar* grow in importance and contribute to the growth of both American fashion illustration as well as photography; cultivate the careers of Edward Steichen and Adolph de Meyer

#### *Bohemians and "Couture Bohemians"*

- Flourish in San Francisco, Paris, London, and New York's Greenwich Village
- Revisit aesthetic dress ideals of previous decade
- Promote unconventional lifestyles defined by intellectual and artistic pursuits
- Clothing choices are loosely fitting, shapeless, and often ethnic inspired, accessorized with beads, sandals, and free-flowing, unkempt hair
- Key figures include American Dorothy "Dorelia" McNeil and British Lady Diana Manners

#### *The War and Fashion*

- The war's impact on fashion is widespread and takes many forms
  - civilians urged to conserve fabric
  - color palette changes to reflect somber realities of wartime but also lack of synthetic dyes
  - military uniforms influence civilian fashion; women dress in more masculine styles as they take on wartime jobs
  - innovations used in military include "separable fastener" and trench coat
  - elaborate dressing rituals become obsolete
  - mourning as an institution is abandoned

#### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Shows endless variation throughout the decade
- Movement towards modernization coupled with a vogue for orientalism, 18<sup>th</sup>-century revival, and ancient and medieval influences
  - orientalism: influences are Turkish, North African, Egyptian, Persian, and Far Eastern; clothing items include draped shawls, brocaded fabrics, beads, and fringes
  - 18<sup>th</sup>-century revival: revival of Louis XVI styles and continued prevalence of Directoire influence
  - ancient and medieval influences: manifest in Greco-Roman looks for evening and simple "tunic" gowns

- Prevalence of neutrals (somber colors particularly during the war years), as well as vivid colors with strong contrasts
- Silhouette: day
  - S-curve virtually disappears by 1911
  - narrower, straighter silhouette at beginning of decade; waistline moves up and bodices are less fitted through the sides, losing their fullness in the front
  - emergence of the hobble skirt
  - replacement of rigid collar by smaller turned-down collars with simple jewel and V-necklines
  - mid-decade: silhouettes become more unusual and varied, such as in Paul Poiret's "Minaret" dress
  - by war years, hems rise to highest level since the 1830s, skirts begin to flare once again, and bodices become tighter
  - as war draws to close, waistlines move up, torso resumes a looser fit and skirts remain at mid-calf length, retaining fullness around the waist but narrowed at the hem
  - tailor-made suits and cotton lingerie dresses grow in popularity
- Silhouette: evening
  - evening gowns show more fluidity
  - diaphanous harem pants sometimes worn
- Foundations and lingerie
  - new silhouette of women's dresses requires support for breasts and smoothing effect over waist and hips
  - specific vocabulary for this period includes
    - "hobble garter"
    - "corset belts"
    - "cami-knickers"
    - "bandeaux"
    - "war crinoline"
    - "tea gown"
- Outerwear
  - emergence of cocoon coats for both day and night; continued prevalence of kimono-style coats
  - popularity of Spencer jackets during spring and summer
  - exotic furs replaced by more economic options such as "Manchurian dog"
- Millinery and accessories
  - hats are heavily trimmed and decoration frequently takes architectural form; brims are not as wide and new shapes begin to dominate by 1913
    - turbans
    - bonnets
    - high pillbox
    - brimless toques
  - shoes more decorated because of shorter hems; straps across top of foot become popular influenced by new trends in dancing
  - fans and parasols still widely used
  - long necklaces to accentuate elongation of body



- Sports clothing
  - women compete in a number of categories in the Olympic Games thus elevating general interest in sports
  - *toilettes de sport* emerge for activities ranging from badminton to shooting
  - London is leading producer of innovative sports clothing
  - developments in knit bathing suits important for swimwear
- Hair and beauty
  - hair becomes tighter to head by mid-decade; “bobs” common by end of decade
  - make-up becomes more popular; fashionable face has darkened arched eyebrows, smudged eyes, pink cheeks, and rosebud mouth
  - Helena Rubenstein, Elizabeth Arden, and Madam C. J. Walker establish thriving cosmetic and haircare businesses

### *Menswear*

- Remnants of 19<sup>th</sup>-century aesthetic disappear
- Silhouette of lounge suit continues to streamline as frock coat and morning suit decline in popularity
- War interrupts major style evolution, but elements of uniforms influence fashion details
  - vogue for khaki suits reflects influence from uniforms and an acceptance of more casual standards
- Prominence of bow-tie; four-in-hand style remains dominant style
- Hats (for all but formal occasions) include fedoras and Stetson-style

### *Children's Fashion*

- Influence of military styling, augmented by growth of the Scouting movement for boys and girls
- Sailor looks more popular than ever
- Historic looks for special celebrations

## **Key Designers and Their Influence**

*House of Worth:* Jean-Charles Worth succeeds as house's designer and enjoys success due to participation in *La Gazette du Bon Ton*.

*House of Doucet:* Still under design direction of José Peña de Guzman. Exposure in *La Gazette du Bon Ton* enhances image of the house.

*Redfern Ltd.:* Paris and London branches thrive and other branches continue to emerge. Participates in *La Gazette du Bon Ton* where collections are featured.

*Lucile Ltd.:* Opens branch in New York in 1910 and in Paris in 1911. Receives significant coverage in French fashion press. Continues to promote highly romantic image for herself and her clientele, developing theatrically-styled fashion shows and elevating the role of the

fashion model. Diversifies business into lower-priced lines for Sears, and writes columns for *Harper's Bazar* and *Ladies' Home Journal*.

*Paul Poiret:* Reaches zenith of career and output, presenting himself and his work as part of a world where taste, luxury, fine art, and culture are linked together. Collaborates with illustrators, artists, and textile designers, producing signature designs, such as *le minaret* and *la robe sultane*. Throws elaborate parties that double as fashion shows where society's most avant-garde artists and thinkers converge. Diversifies into perfume, makeup, and decorative objects.

*House of Paquin:* After the death of her husband, Jeanne Paquin emerges as "the queen of fashion," showing at numerous international exhibitions, dressing European royalty, and penetrating the American market. The house stages elaborate fashion shows and is lauded for its variety in output, including a "day into evening" dress.

*Jeanne Lanvin:* Moves away from mother-daughter coordinating designs and produces a variety of women's looks for a variety of tastes. Often incorporates soft colors in diaphanous fabrics inspired by Impressionist painters.

*Callot Soeurs:* House expands operations to Biarritz, London, and Nice and its creations are considered among the finest available. Experiments with sleek, streamlined, modern looks and continues use of fine laces, lamé, and brocades, as well as incorporation of orientalist themes.

*Georges Doeuillet:* Having trained with Callot in previous decades, becomes known for his "delicacy of design and exquisiteness of finish." Credited with the popularity of the "barrel" silhouette.

*Chéruit:* House established in 1906 and by the 1910s is a force in Paris couture. An elegant and beautiful woman, Louise Chéruit (sometimes misidentified as Madeleine) serves as her own best model, showcasing her designs along with the lifestyle they embody.

*Gustave Beer:* Maintains operation with stores throughout Europe and continues to be prominently featured in European press. Opens decade with elegant neoclassic styles and closes the decade with a move toward a sleek modern aesthetic.

*Drecoll:* Continues under leadership of Monsieur and Madame de Wagner. Its consistently elegant designs are frequently featured in *Les Modes*.

*Mariano Fortuny:* Maintains stores in Paris, London, and New York. The Delphos gown is now being worn for eveningwear, with American women trailblazing the phenomenon.

*Eduard Josef Wimmer-Wisgrill:* Lead fashion designer of the Wiener Werkstätte who is adept at realizing the latest Parisian silhouettes in fabric designs from the workshop. Earns nickname "The Poiret of Vienna."

*Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel:* A former milliner who opens her first boutique in the resort town of Deauville, Chanel begins her career by building a small clientele for her sportswear designs

among the wealthy vacationers. Opens first couture house in Biarritz in 1915, promoting designs that show influence from sportswear and menswear. Elevates knitwear and reveals a penchant for neutral colors.

### Essay and Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the impact of World War I on the development of fashion during the decade. In what ways did the war transform fashion? In what ways did it hinder its progress?
2. Examine the interaction between emerging art movements and fashion. Identify examples of collaboration between fashion and these art movements. How was fashion impacted by them and how were the art movements impacted by fashion?
3. Discuss, with examples, the continuing influence of orientalism and historicism in fashion. How did different designers utilize these inspirations?

### Further Reading

Daniel, Malcolm. "Edward J. Steichen (1829-1973): The Photo Secession Years." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/stei/hd\\_stei.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/stei/hd_stei.htm) (November 2010)

"Designing Stage Costumes." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/d/designing-stage-costumes/>

"Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century" London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

Goss, Jare. "Design, 1900-25." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn1/hd\\_dsgn1.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn1/hd_dsgn1.htm) (October 2004)

Johnstone, Lucy. "Corsets in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/c/corsets-early-20th-century/>

Julian, Phillippe and Diana Vreeland. *La Belle Epoque*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/research/metpublications/La\\_Belle\\_Epoque?Tag=&title=la%20belle%20epoque&author=&pt=0&tc=0&dept=0&fmt=0](http://www.metmuseum.org/research/metpublications/La_Belle_Epoque?Tag=&title=la%20belle%20epoque&author=&pt=0&tc=0&dept=0&fmt=0)

Krick, Jessa. "Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) and The House of Worth." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd\\_wrth.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd_wrth.htm) (October 2004)

Krick, Jessa. "Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel (1883-1971) and The House of Chanel."  
In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chnl/hd\\_chnl.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chnl/hd_chnl.htm) (October 2004)

Koda, Harold and Andrew Bolton. "Paul Poiret (1879-1944)."  
In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd\\_poir.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd_poir.htm) (September 2008)

Koda, Harold and Richard Martin. "Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress."  
In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/orie/hd\\_orie.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/orie/hd_orie.htm) (October 2004)

Messinger, Lisa. "Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986). In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/geok/hd\\_geok.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/geok/hd_geok.htm) (October 2004)

Rewald, Sabine. "Cubism." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd\\_cube.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd_cube.htm) (October 2004)

Rewald, Sabine. "Fauvism." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/fauv/hd\\_fauv.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/fauv/hd_fauv.htm) (October 2004)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The 1920s: *Les Années Folles***

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to survey the distinctive fashion climate of the 1920s as one defined by a new sense of freedom and possibility. With the Great War behind them, relief and even euphoria replaced fear and caution, as young men and women embraced new forms of frivolity and fun, flocking to dance halls, enjoying nightlife, and publicly expressing sexuality.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

##### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - Treaty of Versailles changes power structure in Europe
  - League of Nations is established as international overseer
  - Germany is required to pay reparations resulting from the Great War and the liberal “Weimar Republic” is established as new government
  - Russian Revolution is followed by several years of civil war that ends with Soviet control in 1923
  - Republic of Turkey is officially declared (1923) following the Turkish War of Independence, and president Mustafa Kemal establishes a reform agenda calling for the Westernization of clothing
  - Reza Pahlavi of the Kingdom of Iran establishes clothing reform laws (1928) which mandate the adoption of many Western styles and restrict female head coverings
- Britain
  - women win the right to vote (1928)
- United States
  - women win the right to vote (1920)
  - Eighteenth Amendment prohibits the production and sale of liquor (1919) – Speakeasies illicitly serve alcoholic drinks and contribute to celebratory spirit of decade
  - New York Stock Exchange crashes (1929)

##### *The Arts*

- Emergence of Surrealism, exemplified by influential practitioners such as Salvador Dalí and René Magritte

- Orphism develops from Cubism and uses color to celebrate the dynamism of modern life; key practitioners include Robert and Sonia Delaunay
- Russian revolution leads to development of a specifically Russian style of painting and architecture known as Constructivism; leading figure Lyubov Popova also designs fabrics, theatrical costumes, and clothing
- Neue Sachlichkeit (“New Objectivity”) develops from German Expressionism
- Emergence of the Bauhaus design school in Germany which promotes a simple, streamlined aesthetic in applied arts
- Literature reflects pleasures and anxieties of life (F. Scott Fitzgerald and Virginia Woolf) and experimentation with new literary forms emerges (T. S. Eliot and James Joyce)
- Jazz dominates popular music and is featured in numerous nightclubs across America and Europe
  - jazz performers, such as Louis Armstrong, Ma Rainey, and Bessie Smith, forge a fashionable image of African Americans
- “Harlem Renaissance” in New York City brings burst of creativity in the arts
- Josephine Baker popularizes energetic dance moves and becomes a style icon
- Film industry continues to grow as talkies emerge and the first Academy Awards is held (1929), inaugurating tradition of best actress winner as style setter
- Emergence of “matinee idols” – movie actors, such as Douglas Fairbanks and Rudolph Valentino, whose style is emulated by men throughout the Western world
- Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes is held in Paris (1925) and features innovative displays from international artists and designers; art deco has profound influence on fashion including jewelry and textiles
- Taste for chinoiserie continues across numerous art forms and fashion reflects the style with embroidery and beaded motifs on eveningwear and pajamas
- British archeologist Howard Carter discovers entrance to tomb of King Tutankhamun (1922) and Egyptian motifs influence architecture, interior design, decorative arts, and fashion

#### *Fashion Media*

- France
  - *La Gazette du Bon Ton* continues to publish until 1925
  - *L'Officiel de la Couture et de la Mode* begins publication in 1921, covers Paris couturiers
  - launch of menswear publications *L'Homme Elegant* and *Monsieur* (1920)
- Germany
  - *Styl* and *Die Dame* among key fashion press
- Russia
  - *Iskustva Odevastia* showcases Russian avant-garde
- Canada
  - *Chatelaine* debuts in 1928
- United States
  - *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazar* (becomes *Harper's Bazaar* in 1929) flourish and attain dominant roles on both sides of the Atlantic

- Emerging fashion illustrators include Eduardo Garcia Benito (Spain) and Ernst Dryden (Austria)
- Emerging fashion photographers include Man Ray (United States) and George Hoyningen-Huene (Russia)

### *La Garçonne and the Flapper*

- Fashionable young women set new standards for female freedom, style, and sexual liberation; often called *garçonnnes* or *flappers*
- Some emerge from bohemian circles and embrace the avant-garde, liberal politics or hedonistic lifestyles
  - *garçonne* denotes a style that is lean and androgynous; becomes popular on both sides of the Atlantic with fashions ranging from sporty to near cross-dressing
  - flapper denotes a woman whose casual and carefree attitude is often conveyed in her dress

### *Costume Design and Fashion*

- Costume design for both stage and film exert strong influence on fashion
- Several designers transition between worlds of fashion and entertainment, with actresses looking to them to design their stage clothes
- As movies and Hollywood rise in popularity, retailers promote styles similar to those worn by starlets on film

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Simplified wardrobe, sleeker shapes, and more body exposure becomes norm
- Fabrics
  - more surface decoration and printed motifs (often geometric) on fabric to offset simplicity of silhouettes
  - promotion and use of rayon, first manufactured textile, as a cheaper alternative to silk
  - emphasis on supple, lightweight fabrics with intricate geometric designs such as zigzags and stripes
  - floral prints are flattened and stylized and other prints show scenes from everyday life such as tennis, automobiles, and cityscapes
  - textiles incorporate metallic threads for shimmery effect, combining lamé with other embellishments such as beading and sequins
- Silhouette: day
  - shows minor and gradual changes throughout decade
  - beginning of decade: “chemise styles” – tubular, T-shaped sheaths with loose belts, ambiguous waistlines, and typically calf length hems; uncomplicated construction
  - *robe de style*: a style worn mostly for evening or dressy daywear represents a continuation of romantic full skirt of middle war years, now with looser bodice and lower waist

- tailored ensembles and knit separates are very popular for daytime, at times inspired by uniforms or men's sportswear; a knit ensemble in the style of Chanel or Patou is essential to a woman's wardrobe
  - blouse and skirt ensembles are very popular, with blouse often featuring dropped waistline that is characteristic of the period
  - day dresses are simple and with simple bodices and modest necklines; coordinating coat/day dress ensembles are popular option for town wear
- Silhouette: evening
  - arms are often exposed without gloves and necklines are simple in shape though more revealing than ever before
  - fringe, tassels, feathers, and other dangling shapes become popular for evening and dancing ensembles
- The hemline
  - hemlines fluctuate and are the subject of significant social and media attention
  - by 1922: hemline drops to its lowest level since before World War I
  - by 1926: hemline rises to just below knee
  - by later years of decade, a variety of lengths are seen
  - shorter hemlines prevail and long dresses virtually disappear for the theater, bridal wear, garden parties, horse races, and even state affairs, balls, and opera
  - daytime dresses show a variety of hemlines ranging from handkerchief hems to knee length in front with longer, cascading panels in the back
- Foundations and lingerie
  - body smoothing is essential and curvaceous women try to minimize proportions using boned corsetry
  - new terms for underwear
    - "step-ins"
    - "teddies"
    - "panties"
  - pajamas continue to be popular for both sleepwear and loungewear
  - nude becomes popular color for stockings with rayon being widely used
  - stockings are held up by suspender garters but adventurous young women roll them to just above the knee or even below the knee
- Outerwear
  - unbelted, shapeless styles are popular at the beginning of the decade with more defined shapes emerging in later years
  - coats often feature long lapels, self scarves, and fasten with low buttons or belts at hip level
  - "clutch coats" emerge as popular style
  - furs are still key to fashionable wardrobe
  - evening outerwear, including shawls, capes, and wraps, often feature luxurious fabrics, such as panne velvet and brocades, and embroidery
- Millinery and accessories
  - hats show less volume and decoration than in the previous decade and popular styles include
    - cloche hats



- turbans
  - berets
  - headbands and tortoiseshell combos
- shoes
  - T-straps and instep straps for day and evening
  - sandals, pumps, and Oxfords for day
  - “Russian boots” for après ski attire
  - galoshes as fashion statements
  - shoe heel is popular surface for decoration, often displaying art deco motifs
- popularity of small handbags, such as pochettes, which are often decorated with geometric motifs and typically beaded for evening
- cigarette cases become important accessory
- gloves are absent for evening and remain short in the day time
- jewelry shows more movement and reflects Cubist and art deco aesthetics
- Sports clothing
  - growing popularity of sporting activities necessitates specialized clothes which in turn influences regular street wear
  - celebrity athletes, such as tennis player Suzanne Lenglen and champion swimmer Gertrude Ederle, influence designers including Lucien Lelong, Jean Patou, and Gabrielle Chanel
  - emergence of swimwear companies, such as Jantzen (1920), the West Coast Knitting Mills (1923), and Speedo (1928), which promote more revealing swimwear
  - pants become more acceptable for women engaged in outdoor activities such as gardening, beach strolling, skiing, hiking, and camping
- Hair and beauty
  - hair is cut close to head and various styles known as “bobs,” “shingles,” and “crops” emerge
  - emergence of the Marcel wave
  - women imitate make-up of favorite film stars such as Mae Murray’s “bee-stung” lips and Clara Bow’s smoky eyes

### *Menswear*

- Decade marked by experimentation and informality as fine tailoring continues to be important but individual touches are welcome
- More rugged styles emerge as fashionable men imitate sports heroes such as baseball player Babe Ruth and tennis star René Lacoste
- Sweaters in a variety of shapes and styles are popular including V-necks, crew necks, and turtlenecks; argyle and Fair Isle patterns are popularized by Edward, Prince of Wales
- Emergence of plus-fours, which are typically paired with patterned socks and a knit pullover or vest
- Blazers and sports coats replace suits for resort attire and informal wear
- Collegiate look emerges mid-decade, reflecting a beauty ideal characterized by youth, and Oxford bags become a popular style of pants

- Swimwear becomes more revealing, designed to display an athletic physique

#### *Children's Fashion*

- Becomes a distinct sector of the fashion industry during this decade, with women's fashion magazines advising mothers on seasonal offerings for children
- French influence is important in childrenswear and many couture houses develop children's lines
- Girl's clothing reflects simple, waist-less silhouettes of the time and features simple surface decoration
- Boys wear shorts and sweaters that reflect athletic influence in menswear
- Silhouettes in general are simple with choice of fabric delineating the difference between daywear and special occasion clothes
- Button boots are replaced by flat shoes and dark stockings are replaced by bare legs and knitted knee or crew socks
- Both boys and girls wear popular bobbed haircut

### **Key Designers and Their Influence**

#### **France**

*House of Worth:* Jean-Charles Worth continues to create impressive designs for the house and appears on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1928.

*Redfern Ltd.:* Amidst closing and fragmenting store branches, Charles Poynter Redfern hires a young French designer, Robert Piguet, who injects fresh and modern ideas into the aging house.

*House of Doucet:* House continues to thrive in the 1920s with the patronage of its now aging clients. With the death of Jacques Doucet in 1929, the house is absorbed by Georges Dœuillet.

*Drecol:* Continues operation until 1929 when it merges with the Maisin Beer.

*House of Paquin:* Jeanne Paquin retires in 1920, leaving the house under the directorship of Madeleine Wallis. House does not maintain its prominence under Wallis.

*Lucile Ltd.:* House is sold and restructured. Lady Duff Gordon stops designing for the company but continues to design for private clients and ready-to-wear labels.

*Paul Poiret:* House resumes operations after the war and Poiret continues participation in *La Gazette du Bon Ton*. Rosine and Martine companies continue operation, eventually going bankrupt as a result of Poiret's extravagant presentation at the 1925 Exposition. As financial woes plague the couturier, Poiret's relevance to fashion decreases by the decade's end.

*Callot Soeurs:* Under the leadership of Marie Callot Gerber, house takes advantage of the decade's simple silhouettes to display a wide variety of exotic textiles and embroidery ranging

from Chinese silk brocades to ancient Near East inspired decorations including beading and embroidery. Mme. Gerber dies in 1927 and the house continues under the direction of her sons, Pierre and Jacques.

*Jeanne Lanvin:* Expands her business considerably and is particularly known for her versions of the popular *robe de style*, though her output also includes sleeker and more modern silhouettes. In 1920, she forms a décor division, Lanvin-Décoration, and in 1923 opens additional boutiques in Cannes and internationally. Opens her own dye house in 1923, along with a menswear department, and in 1925, opens Lanvin Parfums, a fragrance laboratory that leads to the creation of Arpège, the house's most successful perfume to date.

*Madeleine Vionnet:* Reopens her own house in 1918 after first attempt is thwarted by World War I, and by 1920, her point of view evolves to one marked by an original use of geometry and cut. By 1924, she opens a salon in New York and one in Biarritz in 1925. She becomes known for creative use of the bias and adept construction techniques. Concerned with design piracy, she begins stamping the label of her clothes with her own thumbprint.

*Gabrielle Chanel:* Solidifies reputation with two-piece ensembles in wool jersey, cardigan suits, simple black dresses, and costume jewelry. Launches Chanel No. 5 in 1921 which helps build her fortune. By 1923, Chanel's work is typified by straight silhouettes of simple self detail in black, beige, and neutrals, an aesthetic she promotes through her own lifestyle. Her jersey pieces help promote the *garçonne* look and are so in demand that she opens her own mill, Tricots Chanel.

*Jean Patou:* Opens house in 1919 and is known for simplicity of line and "pure" approach. Emerges a great innovator in knit separates and his "cubist knits" feature stripes and geometric designs. Collaborates with fabric houses to achieve unusual color effects and *bleu Patou* debuts in 1923. Sells an extensive line of sports clothes in his Paris sportswear shop, Le Coin des Sports. Diversifies into perfumes and even suntan oil.

*Lucien Lelong:* Becomes one of Paris' most prominent couturiers whose designs are at the forefront of fashion and geared toward an active modern woman. Embraces the Cubist aesthetic and considers motion an integral part of design thus developing the house's famed "kinetic" and "kinoptic" designs. Launches a perfume line in 1926 and marries exiled Russian princess Natalie Paley in 1927, solidifying his position in high society.

*Edward Molyneux:* Begins career as sketch artist for Lucile before serving in the British army during World War I. Asserts a sleek and understated aesthetic that is well suited to post-war age. Combines restraint and perfect taste while avoiding "trends" and attracts many aristocratic and royal women to his salon.

*Louiseboulanger:* Opens salon in 1927 and gains reputation for mixing romance with modernity. Her use of color is praised for its elegance and chic, while Mme. Boulanger herself is celebrated for her striking beauty and personal style.

*Sonia Delaunay:* Painter turned fabric and fashion designer who spends the early portion of her career experimenting with color theory. Begins designing for private clients in 1920 and is commissioned in 1923 to design textile patterns for a fabric manufacturer. Her bold

geometric designs prove extremely compatible with fashion's basic silhouettes, and at the 1925 Exposition, she shows both her textile and fashion designs.

## United States

*Jessie Franklin Turner:* Begins career designing for Bonwit Teller and opens her own store in 1922 in Manhattan. Becomes known for luxurious eveningwear and tea gowns. Often draws upon broad cultural sources in her work and is praised at the time as the most original of American fashion designers

*Madame Frances:* An important dressmaking company in Manhattan owned by Frances Spingold, also a noted fashion columnist and art collector.

*Hattie Carnegie:* Begins her career as a milliner and opens a dress shop in New York in 1923. Acts as creative director, orchestrating the talents of her design staff. Maintains a boutique that caters to a discerning clientele, selling her own label as well as French imports.

*Mariska Karasz:* Immigrant from Hungary who draws heavily upon Hungarian folk art to create unusual custom pieces. Eventually channels artistry into textile design.

*Valentina:* Russian immigrant who opens a store in 1928 on Madison Avenue espousing a theatrical style. Style is against the current of mainstream fashion and is soon discovered by a small clientele of individualistic women whose numbers grow in later decades.

## Essay and Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the interplay between new dance steps and fashionable evening clothes. How did the decade's newest dance styles affect fashion and how did fashion's latest silhouettes affect dance?
2. Examine the ideal image of femininity in the 1920s. How did this image differ from the ideal of previous decades and what impact did it have on popular fashion?
3. Choose three fashion designers and discuss their use of diversification. How did some designers use diversification to successfully grow their businesses and images and how did others fail to do so?

## Further Reading

"Designing Stage Costumes." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/d/designing-stage-costumes/>

"Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

“Four Haute Couture Dresses by Madeleine Vionnet.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/four-haute-couture-dresses-by-madeleine-vionnet/>

Gross, Jared. “Design, 1900-25.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn1/hd\\_dsgn1.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn1/hd_dsgn1.htm) (October 2004)

Gross, Jared. “French Art Deco.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/frdc/hd\\_frdc.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/frdc/hd_frdc.htm) (June 2010)

Koda, Harold and Andrew Bolton. “Paul Poiret (1879-1944).” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd\\_poir.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd_poir.htm) (September 2008)

Koda, Harold and Richard Martin. “Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/orie/hd\\_orie.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/orie/hd_orie.htm) (October 2004)

Krick, Jessa. “Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel (1883-1971) and The House of Chanel.”

In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chnl/hd\\_chnl.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chnl/hd_chnl.htm) (October 2004)

Rewald, Sabine. “Cubism.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd\\_cube.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd_cube.htm) (October 2004)

Winton, Alexandra Griffith. “The Bauhaus, 1919-1933.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd\\_bauh.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd_bauh.htm) (August 2007)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 6**

### **The 1930s: Aspirations of Glamour**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to examine the marked development of fashion, which occurred in spite of the economic depression that plagued much of the Western world as a result of the Stock Market Crash of 1929. Bolstered by Hollywood films, and the continuing influence of art deco and Surrealism, fashion not only persevered, but it also thrived with an aura of glamour and exoticism, providing a much needed escape from the harsh economic realities facing the world.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - economic hardship and unemployment plague numerous global powers prompting many governments to respond with relief programs
  - Australia and Canada face struggling economies and rising unemployment
  - rise of National Socialist Worker's Party in Germany which puts an end to the liberal Weimar Republic
  - Italian Prime Minister and National Fascist Party leader Benito Mussolini becomes increasingly militant and imperialistic
  - tensions in Asia increase as a result of Japanese imperialism in China
  - Prime Minister [Plack Phibunsongkhram](#) establishes Thailand as the official name of his country (formerly known as Siam) and enacts measures to enforce the Westernization of clothing (1939)
  - *Hindenburg* disaster destroys hopes for the development of the passenger airship as a mode of civilian transportation (1937)
- Britain
  - "Hunger Marches" bring attention to country's poverty and unemployment problem
- United States
  - Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected president (1932) and initiates the "New Deal"
  - drought in the Midwest displaces thousands of residents

#### *The Arts*

- Surrealism continues and is influential on decorative arts and fashion

- American Magic Realists create dreamlike landscapes and portraits; key practitioners include Paul Cadmus and Ivan Albright
- Art deco influence is widespread in architecture and the decorative arts; style evolves from luxurious and exotic beginnings to a cubic and volumetric phase described as Streamline
- Musical landmarks, such as Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935) and Cole Porter's *Gay Divorce* (1932), tackle social and cultural themes, while dance sees pioneering modern forms in the work of Martha Graham
- New technology of talking pictures renders film a popular and affordable form of mainstream entertainment
- Technicolor process for film is introduced (1935) and films break new grounds of glamour and realism

#### *Art and Politics*

- Art and politics are strongly linked throughout the world
- United States
  - Works Progress Administration employs painters like Diego Rivera to create murals and public artworks, along with photographers including Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans to document life in America
- Germany
  - campaign of censorship declares certain works *Entartete Kunst* ("Degenerate Art") forcing numerous artists, designers, and composers to emigrate
  - officially approved German art emphasizes tradition and propagates wholesome "Aryan" imagery
- Soviet Union
  - creative burst of early 1920s is suppressed by reforms as modern art styles are declared "bourgeois" and artists are put into service creating propaganda for the new government
  - Socialist Realism emerges, emphasizing the heroism of the worker and everyday life

#### *Fashion and Society*

- Repeal of Prohibition leads to the emergence of glamorous and artistic nightlife establishments in New York
- London society revolves around evenings at the theater, dinners at the Savoy Grill, and screenings at the Curzon Cinema
- "Café society" emerges in Paris
- Cruise ships enable travel to exotic areas such as India, South America, and New Zealand
- Society becomes fascinated with debutantes such as Margaret Whigham, Barbara Hutton, and Brenda Frazier
- Flapper image is replaced by image of mature sophistication
- Wallis Simpson (Duchess of Windsor) epitomizes the new "disciplined" chic and becomes a valuable client to key designers including Mainbocher, Schiaparelli, and

Balenciaga; her Mainbocher-designed wedding dress becomes a sensation for its specially dyed color blue

- Key style icons from politics, the arts, high society, and Hollywood include
  - the Duke and Duchess of Windsor
  - Millicent Rogers
  - Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera
  - Katherine Hepburn
  - Marlene Dietrich
  - Greta Garbo
  - Lily Pons
  - Anna May Wong

### *Fashion Media*

- Fashion media offers fantasy and escape from hard economic times giving luxury products a hard sell and encouraging larger wardrobes to boost the fashion industry
- Both photography and illustration are strong visual components of major publications
- France
  - first color photographic cover of *Vogue* shot by Edward Steichen features swimsuit photo (1932)
- United States
  - Carmel Snow begins working at *Harper's Bazaar* (1933)
  - Diana Vreeland's whimsical "Why Don't You?" column for *Harper's Bazaar* is typical of fashion's emphasis on fantasy
  - launch of two men's magazines *Apparel Arts* (1931) and *Esquire* (1933)
- Key photographers of the decade include Edward Steichen, George Hoyningen-Huene, Louise Dahl Wolfe, and Cecil Beaton
- Key illustrators of the decade include Erté, Georges Lepape, and Eduardo Garcia Benito

### *Hollywood Costume Design*

- Hollywood films continue to surge in popularity and the influence of film costumes on fashion reaches new heights, with knock-off styles readily available
- Key costume designers
  - John Orry-Kelly (Warner Brothers)
  - Walter Plunkett (RKO)
  - Travis Banton (Paramount)
  - Edith Head (Paramount)
  - Gilbert Adrian (MGM)
    - most influential Hollywood costume designer of the period
    - dresses Jean Harlow, Joan Crawford, Greta Garbo, and Norma Shearer
    - "Letty Lynton" dress creates a sensation with knock-offs selling out in record numbers



### *Vernacular Fashion*

- Trickle-down system responds to economic hardships
  - authorized copies of Paris originals occupy niche at high end of retail
  - large stores and mail-order houses feature celebrity endorsements and references to name designers
  - mainstream clothes keep up with changes of silhouette and detail but in less luxurious fabrics
  - major designers work with paper pattern companies to make versions of their designs available to home sewer

### *Fashion Technologies*

- Term “zipper” is adopted in vernacular use; technology is used in
  - women’s foundation garments
  - children’s clothing
  - men’s trousers
- Synthetic fabrics, such as rayon and acetate, gain popularity; used as cheaper alternatives to silk and as novelty fabrics by high-end designers
- Emergence of new synthetic fabrics
  - cellophane
  - Lastex
  - artificial wools
  - nylon is invented in 1939 and revolutionizes hosiery

### *The Elements of Women’s Fashion*

- Color and print
  - white begins to replace black as dominant color for evening and daytime formal occasions, though black is still popular, often combined with pastels and saturated colors
  - sophisticated tertiary colors emerge
  - popular prints include florals, polka dots, and stripes and plaids cut on the bias to form diagonals
- Concept of transitional late day, cocktail, and dinner dresses continues to expand with the term “after five dressing” coming into common usage
- Court dress is all but obsolete, and bridal attire often follows historic-influenced modes of the day
- Regional inspirations are strong and varied, encouraged by exotic destinations and the Exposition Coloniale Internationale (1931); key inspiring cultures/countries include China, India, Southeast Asia, Mexico, American Southwest, European gypsies and folklore
- Silhouette: day
  - boyish look of the 1920s is replaced by a feminine line, emphasizing a lean but curvaceous figure
  - waists are defined with structure, darting, belts, and sashes; early in the decade many looks show multiple waistlines
  - hemlines drop for both day and evening

- bateau necklines are popular with a strong emphasis on the exposed back for both evening and formal daywear
- surface embellishment is reduced and is replaced by construction details including asymmetric piecings, tucks, self scarves, oversized bows, and peplums
- multiple sleeve variations, such as capelet, petal, dolman, and bishop, offset sleek silhouettes
- emergence of shoulder pads by end of decade
- two prevailing moods for daytime are tailored and smart, and soft and graceful
- by end of decade, military inspiration, both historic and contemporary, is prevalent
- Silhouette: evening
  - silhouette themes
    - neoclassic styles are prevailing mode early in the decade with fashion magazines comparing styles to Greek architecture, especially columns
    - as decade continues other modes appear and *Time* magazine notes three prevailing looks in 1934: medieval, crinoline, and Empire
  - glamour prevails for evening inspired by Hollywood actresses and films
  - fabrics include charmeuse, satin, matte crepe, panne velvet, and lame
  - prevalence of sequins, bugle beads, fur, and marabou hemlines reach instep or floor
  - necklines are “demurely high” or “wickedly low”
- Foundations and lingerie
  - aimed at achieving smooth, lean, yet curvaceous figure
  - availability of two-way stretch elastic and side closures vastly improves function of foundation garments
  - evocative trade names for foundation garments include “beautifiers,” “flexes,” and “foundettes”
  - brassieres are geared towards shaping the breasts to suit high-waisted styles
    - emergence of the Maidenform company
  - stockings are made from silk and rayon until the introduction of nylon in 1939
  - camisoles and tap pants emerge as popular undergarment choice
  - silky wide-legged pajamas continue to grow in popularity as loungewear
  - slips and nightwear employ bias cut, achieving an aesthetic that influences eveningwear
- Outerwear
  - sleek and fitted styles with full sleeves at beginning of decade evolving into styles with shorter lengths and padded shoulders by end of decade
  - textured fabrics such as tweed and bouclé are key
  - trench coat is popular due to availability of latest waterproof fabrics
  - mink and sealskin popular for fur coats and fox stole is a ubiquitous outerwear staple
- Millinery and accessories
  - unusually wide range of fashionable hat options
    - medium-and wide-brimmed style worn on the diagonal

- tight-fitting crown shape with projecting details
  - pillbox hat
  - fedora
  - “cossack” hat
  - phrygian cap
  - turban
  - beret
  - “slouch hat”
  - snood
  - picture hat
- wide variety of popular shoe styles
  - brogues
  - two-toned spectators
  - heeled sandals
  - huaraches
  - espadrilles
  - platform and chunky styles by end of decade
- handbag is considered ultimate finishing touch to a chic ensemble and popular styles include pochette, clutch, and minaudières
- scarves develop as luxury items
- self belts and sashes are prevalent but contrasting leather and fabric belts are also key accessories
- popularity of gauntlet style glove for day
- popularity of brooches influenced by art deco
- Sports clothing
  - term “sportswear” is used for casual daytime clothing with pants (“slacks”) increasing in popularity
  - skiwear increases in popularity encouraged by 1932 and 1936 Winter Olympic Games, and is often featured in the fashion press
  - emergence of the term “play clothes” signifying clothes that can transfer from beach to sport to gardening
  - tennis and golf clothing feature practical versions for serious athletes and impractical versions for the fashionable dilettante
  - swimwear develops technically and stylistically
- Hair and beauty
  - beauty and hair products emerge as popular method of economically updating one’s style and aspiring to glamour
  - acceptable make-up includes face powder, foundation, eyeshadow, eyebrow pencils, and mascara
  - facelifts become more prevalent with celebrity recipients popularizing the procedures
  - hair is worn close to the head in waves that range from softly brushed back to tight and lacquered
  - hair dying becomes less covert, and platinum blonde becomes a popular color choice, a look inspired by Jean Harlow
  - nail polish continues to grow in popularity with affordable options available on the market

### *Menswear*

- Becomes sleeker and more shaped, influenced by developing technologies as well as by celebrities
- Projects classic look with references to English sportswear
- Jackets have broad shoulders and slightly high waist, while trousers are high-waisted with pleats in the front
- Formal wear is dominated by the dark evening tuxedo
- Well-groomed look is fashionable, with hair sharply parted and slicked back
- Bathing suits are worn without tops
- Resort wear emerges as category
- Sportswear continues to grow in popularity with comfort, performance, and easy-care properties emphasized by manufacturers
- Duke of Windsor is key style setter, popularizing such styles as ink blue for evening formal wear, “English Drape” suits, trouser cuffs, and zippered flies
- Entertainers who exert significant and varied influence include Fred Astaire, Duke Ellington, Cary Grant, James Stewart, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable, and William Powell

### *Children's Fashion*

- Like women's and men's fashions, childrenswear is also influenced by celebrities
  - Shirley Temple endorses complete wardrobe for girls available at Sears
  - Freddie Bartholomew endorses a line of sportswear for boys
  - English princesses Elizabeth and Margaret are frequently photographed in special occasion wear and play clothes, and are widely imitated
- denim jeans are available for play and chores
- sailor styles are very popular for both boys and girls
- girls' clothing includes dresses with no waistlines, jumpers over printed blouses, and pleated skirts worn with sweaters or blouses, with similar styles in more delicate fabrics being worn for special occasions
- boys' clothing includes suits with short pants, varying in fabric depending on the season, and tuxedo-style dinner jackets for teenagers
- socks reach to the knee for both sexes; boys wear brogues and girls Mary Janes
- knit and crochet hats are very popular for both sexes

## **Key Designers and Their Influence**

### **France**

*Madeleine Vionnet:* Her output comes to define much of the 1930s fashion aesthetic. Sculptural and fluid draping, adept incorporation of the bias cut, and a penchant for the colors white and ivory align her work with the influential neoclassic style. Though her work explores more romantic styles during mid-decade, neoclassic ideas nonetheless are consistently present. Vionnet retires in 1939.

*Jeanne Lanvin:* Continues to turn out graceful and romantic styles with flow and drape in lightweight materials with beautiful embellishments. Though her view of “feminine” is very specific, she adapts to the evolving chic aesthetic of the period and offers designs that boast art deco influence and glamorous details.

*Augusta Bernard:* Augusta Bernard begins her career as a dressmaker and opens her own house in 1923. Her work with the bias cut and construction details rivals that of Vionnet, while also incorporating many of these techniques into smart daywear. Enjoys significant press coverage and success early in the decade but is forced to close business in 1935 due to hard economic times.

*Mainbocher:* Former editor of French *Vogue*, Main Rousseau Bocher opens his own couture house in 1930. Produces understated luxurious collections for an international clientele and he becomes a favorite designer of international style setter and future Duchess of Windsor, Wallis Simpson. Closes his house in 1939 due to looming war and moves to New York.

*Edward Molyneux:* Utilizes geometrics and discreet prints for daywear and unusual fabric treatments for eveningwear. Becomes well known for trim day suits as well as for designing the bridal gown and trousseau of Princess Marina of Greece for her 1934 marriage to the Duke of Kent.

*Elsa Schiaparelli:* Known for her whimsical design details and innovative approach to materials, Schiaparelli’s designs convey an influence of Surrealism, and often feature direct collaborations with some of the movement’s most significant artists. Provocative accessories and perfumes are a key element of her business and are available for purchase at the “Schiap Shop” boutique on the ground floor of her couture house.

*Lucien Lelong:* Establishes Lucien Lelong Editions in 1934, the first genuine ready-to-wear line by a Parisian couturier. His couture output continues to gain critical praise and his stylish customers include Marlene Dietrich and *Vogue* editor Bettina Ballard. He is elected president of the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture Parisienne in 1937.

*Gabrielle Chanel:* Maintains her individual aesthetic of jersey and woven suits with cinched belted jackets while simultaneously experimenting with the decade’s prevailing taste for glamour and femininity. Collaborates with Fulco di Verdura who designs baked enamel cuff that becomes a signature of the Chanel look. House weathers economic crisis thanks to large international clientele and success of its fragrances and cosmetics.

*Louise Boulanger:* House experiences continued success, maintaining an aesthetic that simultaneously combines Old World elegance and modernity, becoming particularly known for luxurious dressing gowns. Closes in 1939.

*Maggy Rouff:* Born Marguerite de Wagner, daughter of the directors of Drecol, she changes her name to Maggy Rouff when launching her own house. Offering ensembles that are striking but not overdone, she becomes known for her skilled use of fabric and color, smartly pieced geometric details, and trademark drapery. Rouff licenses designs to McCall’s for paper patterns.

*Alix Barton/ Alix:* Technical finesse rivals that of Vionnet and Augustabernard. Eveningwear shows cut-out areas of exposure, while daywear often features unique construction details. Experiments with newer fabrics and uses unexpected fabrics for evening, such as yards of jersey worked into hundreds of tiny pleats.

*Jean Paton:* Continues to explore streamlined and slender looks for daywear, while his sportswear line maintains popularity. Dies suddenly in 1936 and business remains in operation under various family members.

*Cristóbal Balenciaga:* Establishes Paris house in 1937 and quickly acquires a word of mouth following of influential clientele. Looks to cultural elements of native Spain for inspiration including the bullfight and the paintings of Goya. Velázquez's portraits of 17th-century princesses are inspiration for his Infanta dresses of 1939.

*Nina Ricci:* Opens house in 1932 at the age of 49 and attracts a large clientele with an aesthetic that is both conservative and dramatic, often featuring sophisticated treatments such as cording and trapunto.

*Robert Piguet:* Opens couture house in 1933 after earlier employment with Poiret and Redfern and becomes known for dramatic designs featuring deep saturated colors and historic references. Hires Christian Dior as design assistant in 1938.

## **Britain**

*Norman Hartnell:* Opens house in London in 1923 and gains reputation for clothes that are romantic and chic, promoting tulle as an elegant fabrication. Collaborates with actresses, musicians, and society figures and in 1934 dresses many members of the British royal family including Elizabeth the Queen Consort; his designs for her popularize the "crinoline" look.

## **United States**

*Hattie Carnegie:* Maintains her store to great acclaim, offering French couture as well as elegant eveningwear and daywear under her one label. Duchess of Windsor is added to client roster.

*Jessie Franklin Turner:* Business continues and becomes known for distinctive bohemian aesthetic.

*Nettie Rosenstein:* Opens store in Manhattan in 1931 where she sells high-quality daywear and eveningwear. Is recipient of the Neiman Marcus Fashion award in its inaugural year (1938).

*Valentina:* Attracts glittering celebrity clientele due to her idiosyncratic designs and gift for self-promotion. Experiments with neoclassic and Moyen Age modes, asserting a theatrical aesthetic, with motion being a key source of inspiration. Headwear is key to her aesthetic and she promotes snoods, veils, wimples, and a variety of unusual fabric coifs.

*Sally Milgrim:* Promotes concept of ready-to-wear designer fashions at her shop, alongside custom creations. Work is typified by chic, crisp styles and includes suits and furs along with

elegant eveningwear in rich colors. Attracts notable celebrity clients including First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt for whom she designs a light blue gown for the inaugural ball in 1933.

*Elizabeth Hawes*: Former design assistant to Nicole Groult who opens her own store in Manhattan in 1928. Contributes to the development of ready-to-wear and advocates trousers for women.

*Muriel King*: Opens couture salon in Manhattan in 1932 while simultaneously selling a line of high-priced ready-to-wear through Lord & Taylor. Work is popular with socialite clientele who are drawn to its simplicity and quality.

### Essay and Discussion Questions

1. Discuss three ways that global economic hardship affected fashion.
2. Compare and contrast the influence of art deco on fashion in the 1920s and in the 1930s.
3. Identify six celebrity style setters of the decade, three men and three women, and discuss their impact on fashion trends.

### Further Reading

“Designing Stage Costumes.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/d/designing-stage-costumes/>

Duncuff Charleston, Beth. “Cristobal Balenciaga.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bale/hd\\_bale.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bale/hd_bale.htm) (October, 2004)

“Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

“Four Haute Couture Dresses by Madeleine Vionnet.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/four-haute-couture-dresses-by-madeleine-vionnet/>

Gross, Jared. “French Art Deco.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.  
[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/frdc/hd\\_frdc.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/frdc/hd_frdc.htm) (June 2010)

Koda, Harold. “Classicism in Modern Dress.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/god1/hd\\_god1.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/god1/hd_god1.htm) (October, 2003)

Koda, Harold. *Goddess: The Classical Mode*. Exhibition catalogue. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003.

Koda, Harold and Andrew Bolton. "Paul Poiret (1879-1944)." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd\\_poir.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/poir/hd_poir.htm) (September 2008)

Krick, Jessa. "Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel (1883-1971) and The House of Chanel." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chnl/hd\\_chnl.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chnl/hd_chnl.htm) (October 2004)

Martin, Richard. "American Ingenuity: Sportswear, 1930s–1970s." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd\\_amsp.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd_amsp.htm) (October 2004)

Reeder, Jan. "Elsa Schiaparelli." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/elsa/hd\\_elsa.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/elsa/hd_elsa.htm) (May 2011)

Rewald, Sabine. "Cubism." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd\\_cube.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd_cube.htm) (October 2004)

Voorhies, James. "Surrealism." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/surr/hd\\_surr.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/surr/hd_surr.htm) (October 2004)

Winton, Alexandra Griffith. "Design 1925-50." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn2/hd\\_dsgn2.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn2/hd_dsgn2.htm) (October 2004)

Winton, Alexandra Griffith. "The Bauhaus, 1919-1933." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.  
[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd\\_bauh.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd_bauh.htm) (August 2007)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.



## **Chapter 7**

### **The 1940s: War and Recovery**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to examine the status of fashion during a decade of disruption to the existing fashion system. Because of World War II, an international conflict that involved important urban centers, caused shortages of materials and labor, and changed patterns of distribution and consumption, fashion and politics were strongly intertwined. The chapter presents a contrast between fashion priorities during wartime and in the peacetime years that followed.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - by 1940 war in Europe is underway and by December 1941 (Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor), the two opposing forces consolidate
    - Axis Powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan)
    - Allied Nations (France, Britain and Commonwealth nations, United States, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China)
  - major battles fought in Europe, Asia, and North Africa
  - war in Europe ends on May 8, 1945 and in Asia on September 2, 1945
  - German concentration camps in Europe and Japanese camps in Asia are sites of atrocities against civilian populations as well as military prisoners
  - conscription (draft) in most countries makes the impact of the war especially widespread
  - civilian war participation includes women substituting in jobs vacated by men serving in armed forces; collection and recycling of materials; monetary support through purchase of war bonds; using bicycles instead of autos to conserve gasoline
  - after war ends, the period of recovery involves physical rebuilding, and the return of displaced people to their homes
  - the Marshall Plan, financed by the United States, offers financial and material support to European nations most affected

#### *The Arts*

- Surrealism continues as a viable artistic style, frequently influencing fashion through illustration and photography

- Emergence of Abstract Expressionism in America in work of Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb, and Jackson Pollock
- Bernard Rudofsky curates *Are Clothes Modern?* in 1944 at the Museum of Modern Art, the first fashion-focused exhibition at the museum
- Current events provide the subject of much literature, theater, and film
  - notable literary works include Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (1940) and Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940)
  - significant movies with wartime themes include *Mrs. Miniver* (1942) and *Casablanca* (1942)
- Film noir is an important aesthetic that also influences fashion photography
  - examples of film noir include *Double Indemnity* (1944) and *The Big Sleep* (1946)
- Color in film increasingly important in post-war period, seen in movies such as *The Red Shoes* (1948) and *The Pirate* (1948)
- Swing music a popular style, performed by big bands with well-known vocalists such as Ella Fitzgerald and Frank Sinatra
- Many performers called upon to entertain troops
  - British singer Vera Lynn especially noted for her wartime shows
- Award-winning stage musicals include *Oklahoma* (1943)
- Classical music shows patriotic themes such as Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* (1944) and Francis Poulenc's *Fêtes Galantes* (1943)

#### *Fashion Media*

- Magazines present fashion as an antidote to horror of war and necessary part of maintaining morale; at end of war appeal to readers to rediscover their femininity
- Lee Miller emerges as important war photographer; work of Toni Frissell also significant in diffusion of war images in fashion periodicals
- New talents in photography include Irving Penn and Richard Avedon; illustrators such as René Gruau and Vertès create dramatic fashion images
- Lisa Fonssagrives represents new generation of fashion “models”
- *Seventeen*, aimed at high school girls, debuts in America in 1944

#### *Fashion and Society*

- High society reacts to war's disruptions
  - prominent women lead charitable and fund-raising drives for war relief
  - events such as debutante balls and cotillions become less opulent

#### *The War and Fashion*

- Governments regulate use of materials resulting in restrictions on production of clothing
  - fabrics redirected from civilian to military use
  - wool, cotton, linen, and silk all restricted in fashion production
  - dye chemicals less plentiful, reducing color options in some countries
  - copper, brass, and tin previously used in jewelry and accessories not readily available
  - nylon largely unavailable

- redirected to make parachutes and for other military uses
  - forces hosiery manufacturers and consumers to use other fibers including cotton and wool
  - as a result of stocking shortage, women use leg make-up for the illusion of hosiery
- France
  - general fabric restrictions in place by 1941
  - industry responds to war by producing special pieces with references to current situation
    - jumpsuits for wear in bomb shelters
    - coats and other outerwear with large pockets to hold flashlights and other necessary items
  - some designers, including Jacques Fath, Pierre Balmain, and Hardy Amies serve in military
  - during Occupation of Paris (June 1940-August 1944) some Parisian couture houses closed by the Germans
    - recognizing the value of couture, Germans try to move the Parisian industry to Berlin or Vienna but come to an agreement with couturiers, led by Lucien Lelong
    - houses that remain open operate at reduced capacity, short on workers and materials
    - fashion clientele changes, prioritizing German customers
    - most couture production for use within France
    - no promotion of couture overseas
    - Parisian Zazous, rebellious youth, wear zoot-suit inspired styles and accessories such as bright socks and large sunglasses
- Italy
  - dictator Mussolini encourages Italians to buy clothes made in Italy
  - material shortages affect luxury leather goods manufacturers including Ferragamo and Gucci
  - establishment of couture house Fontana Sisters in Rome (1943), significant for growth of Italian fashion industry in post-war period
- Germany
  - German government urges women to abandon Parisian beauty ideals and adopt styles influenced by German history and regional dress, such as dirndl skirts and traditional embroidered blouses
  - because they control French textile manufacturers, less material shortages than in other parts of Europe
- Britain
  - designers react to onset of war with production of practical pieces such as “siren suits” – jumpsuits to be quickly donned during air raids
  - clothing rationing begins in 1941 with coupons issued to households to be used in addition to currency for purchasing
  - Utility Scheme begins in 1941
    - Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers (INSOC) produce prototypes of acceptable garments for the Utility program

- apparel styling is simple and details such as cuffs, wide belts, large pockets eliminated
  - civilians urged to carefully maintain their wardrobes and to be creative in altering and re-making clothes
- North America
  - loss of contact with Paris encourages promotion of American designers
  - imposition of General Limitation Order L-85 on April 8, 1942 restricts material usage
    - measures include limits on length of jackets, length and circumference of skirts, sleeve styles, and elimination of certain details
    - wool especially restricted
    - designers respond with simplified fashions
  - United States establishes Coty Awards in 1943 to honor American designers
  - in Canada creation of Wartime Prices and Trade Board (WPTB) to deal with shortages of labor and materials
  - because of new demands, women prioritize practical clothing, even trousers, for certain activities

#### *Film and Fashion*

- Despite war, film industry continues to operate
- Material shortages a challenge for costume designers
- More widespread use of color in film encourages color trends that influence fashion
- Leading actresses reflect, and propel, current styles in their onscreen wardrobes
- Important costume designers include
  - Orry-Kelly (*Casablanca*)
  - Bonnie Cashion (*Laura*)
  - Edith Head (*The Lady Eve*)
  - Irene Lentz (*The Postman Always Rings Twice*)
  - Jean Louis (*Gilda*)
  - Gilbert Adrian (*The Philadelphia Story*)
- First Academy award for Costume Design is awarded in 1948
  - Roger K. Furse for *Hamlet*, in black and white category
  - Barbara Karinska and Dorothy Jeakins for *Joan of Arc*, in color category

#### *The Elements of Women's Fashion 1940-1946*

- Silhouette: day
  - continuation of the silhouette established in the late 1930s
    - defined shoulder line
    - fitted but not tight
    - skirts just below the knee
  - tailored suits very popular
  - many variations in jacket including hip and waist length, boxy cuts, boleros
  - skirts are slim but with ease and small pleats or gathers at waist
  - daytime dresses very simple, often shirtwaist style and, during periods of fabric restrictions, with short sleeves

- buttoned, man-style blouses popular, as are sweater sets
- Silhouette: evening
  - evening dresses show variety ranging from columnar line to more full-skirted silhouettes (dependent on non-rationed, available fabrics)
- Outerwear
  - silhouettes range from boxy cut to more fitted princess line
  - classic colors – navy, camel, gray, plaid – all popular
  - fur coats and jackets widely available; fur pieces and fur trim on cloth outerwear
- Sports clothing
  - reflects simple lines
  - tennis clothes often in shirtwaist styles with skirts a few inches above the knee
  - swimwear available in both one-piece and two-piece styles
- Millinery and accessories
  - as many millinery materials are unaffected by rationing and shortages, decorative hats enliven otherwise simple ensembles
  - many hat shapes coexist including pillboxes, berets, stocking caps, turbans, and snoods
  - shoes
    - practical low-heeled styles such as loafers, Oxfords, and pumps worn for day
    - platform styles also popular
    - great variety of materials used including plastic, fabric, straw, and cork
  - while some metals are restricted, costume jewelry is produced in Bakelite
  - shoulder bags become popular, useful for bicycle riding and for carrying gas masks and other war-related items
- Hair and beauty
  - beauty industry affected by material shortages
  - leg make-up commercially available from numerous companies
  - cosmetics marketed as morale boosters with names such as “Fighting Red” and “Mrs. Miniver Rose”
  - hair styles include simple shoulder-length waved styles to more elaborate “Victory rolls”, formed by parting the hair and rolling up the sides to create a “V” when seen from the back

#### *The Théâtre de la Mode*

- A touring exhibition promoting French fashion opens in Paris in March 1945
  - includes over 200 wire mannequins dressed by top Parisian couture houses
  - collaboration between fashion designers and prominent visual artists who create sets for the mannequins
  - dresses, coats, ensembles for daywear and evening, and accessories included
- After its Paris showing, the show travels to other venues in Europe, Britain, Brazil, Scandinavia, and New York

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion 1947-1949*

- The end of war and its shortages and restrictions makes more variety possible
- Styles highlighted in Théâtre de la Mode emphasize more feminine looks
- Introduction of Christian Dior's first collection in February 1947 important for post-war fashion
  - officially named "Corolle" line, becomes popularly known as "New Look"
  - long, full skirts and fitted jackets with softer shoulders and cinched-in waists contrast with the wartime silhouette
  - Dior receives significant press – both for and against his design – and emerges as important designer
- Silhouette: day
  - transition period combines elements of wartime and post-war silhouettes
    - for example showing longer skirts but retaining padded shoulder
  - hemlines lower
  - shoulders less defined
  - tailored suits very popular
  - peplums a frequent detail on jackets
  - daytime dresses fuller and longer, often with fuller sleeves
- Silhouette: evening
  - cocktail dresses increasingly worn
  - evening dresses show romantic inspiration
- Foundations and lingerie
  - garments important in creating the controlled, molded body shape of the New Look
  - innovations include combinations of petticoat and girdle
  - seamless stockings available
- Outerwear
  - silhouettes follow transition of tailored suits
  - some fitted coats referred to by 18<sup>th</sup>-century term "redingote"
  - fur still popular
- Millinery and accessories
  - wide brimmed "bergère" style hats seen
  - shoes
    - transition in shoes to more sleek styles
    - open-toed pumps common
    - Louis heels and buckles used as historic references
    - casual shoes include washable rubber-soled styles
  - handbags very varied, including drawstring reticule styles
  - with the end of restrictions on metals, costume jewelry returns to popularity
- Sports clothing
  - introduction of the bikini significant to swimwear style

### *Menswear*

- Wartime measures restrict menswear
  - in France, yoked backs and tunnel belt loops forbidden
  - in Britain, Utility scheme eliminates waistcoats, cuffs, and pocket flaps

- in United States, Victory suits created without patch pockets and trouser cuffs and pleats
- Less formal clothes worn for situations requiring outdoor activity or for bicycle travel
- Colorful Hawaiian “aloha” shirts popular for leisure wear
- Zoot suit, originally associated with jazz musicians, a subcultural style worn by African Americans and Mexican Americans in United States
- Military heroes influence menswear
  - Montgomery’s wool duffle coat
  - Eisenhower’s waist-length uniform jacket
- Post-war men’s fashion characterized by looser silhouette, known as “Bold Look”
  - jackets with more drape, broad shoulders, and wide lapels
  - trousers pleated and high-waisted
  - ties often bold and brightly colored

### *Children’s Fashion*

- Practicality emphasized
- Continuation of basic pieces in children’s wardrobe
  - dresses and jumpers/pinafores for girls
  - separates
  - short pants or knickers for boys
- Child-size armed forces uniforms worn for some special occasions
- Government campaigns promoting fabric conservation often include special instructions for making children’s clothing from adult garments
- Junior market increasingly important in fashion industry
  - Emily Wilkens known for innovative junior design
- Designer childrenswear receives more attention in post-war period
  - Claire McCardell and Jacques Heim both produce childrenswear lines

## **Key Designers and Their Influence**

### **France**

*Christian Dior:* After working at Piguet and Lelong, Dior opens his couture house in Paris in 1946, with backing from textile manufacturer Marcel Boussac, and presents the first collection in February 1947. The hourglass silhouette and generous use of fabric have significant impact on fashion, establishing Dior and his “New Look” as fundamental to the development of post-war fashion.

*Jacques Fath:* Fath opens his house in 1937 and serves in the military during World War II. Known for dramatic silhouettes, Fath promotes a very tightly cinched waist and often favors peplums. Clients include Rita Hayworth and Eva Perón.

*Pierre Balmain:* House established in 1945 after a number of years at Molyneux and, later, Lelong. Balmain becomes known for elegance and creativity, and by the end of the decade his international presence includes a boutique in New York.

*Marcel Rochas:* Associated with romantic influence in the post-war period and a revival of the corseted silhouette. Black Chantilly lace a signature material.

*Mad Carpentier:* Founded by two former Vionnet employees, Mad Maltezos and Suzie Carpentier. Their knowledge of Vionnet's techniques of drape and piecing leads to unique designs praised in the press.

## **Britain**

*Norman Hartnell:* Based in London, he also visits Brazil and Argentina promoting his work. Hartnell's design for the 1947 wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Prince Philip significant to his career but also symbolic of the rebirth of British society after the war.

*Hardy Amies:* With experience at Lachasse, he joins Worth in 1941 but is called for military service and serves in special operations. After the war, opens his house on Savile Row and becomes known for quality tailored clothes for men and women. Becomes an important force in post-war British fashion.

*Charles Creed:* Continuing the legacy of the renowned multi-generational tailoring house, Creed's suits are cherished by well-dressed women season after season.

*Digby Morton:* Known for his fashionable versions of tailored pieces and ensembles. Noted for technical expertise.

*Victor Stiebel:* Known for high-style eveningwear, designs couture for the Jacqmar label. Becomes chairman of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers in 1946.

## **United States**

*Hattie Carnegie:* Well-known as a designer and retailer in New York since the 1920s, she continues to enjoy prominence as a tastemaker and fashion authority, especially during the war years when American fashion is strongly promoting native talent.

*Valentina:* Creates innovative designs under L-85 guidelines, as well as coveralls for war workers. In post-war period, continues to appeal to individualistic clientele with eveningwear with historic references and unique daywear.

*Mainbocher:* Opens couture house in New York, designs uniforms for several service organizations including the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service).

*Charles James:* After spending more than a decade moving between the United States, Britain, and Paris, James works for Elizabeth Arden then establishes his own design salon in 1945. With an emphasis on sculptural shapes accomplished with complicated construction techniques, his evening gowns are especially prized by a high-society clientele.



*Norman Norell:* An important figure in the American fashion industry, Norell designs for the label Traina-Norell following early years in film costume design. His figure-hugging sequined sheaths become a signature style, but his daywear dresses and separates are also appreciated for their fine quality and timeless styling.

*Claire McCardell:* Working for the label Townley Frocks, McCardell develops her American aesthetic. Unlike other designers influenced by menswear and tailoring, McCardell emphasizes an easy fit and comfort. Her wrapped Popover dress introduced in 1942 becomes a best seller. Signature construction details include topstitching, exposed hooks and eyes, and pockets. Her wrapped, diaper-style swimwear is especially innovative.

*Vera Maxwell:* An advocate of practical clothing, she designs coordinating pieces often in soft materials, such as jersey. The cotton jumpsuits she designs for women war workers at Sperry Gyroscope Corporation receive positive press.

*Tina Leser:* A world traveler, Leser shows designs with international inspiration and clothes intended for leisure and easy travel. Hawaiian, Indian, Mexican, and South American influences particularly pronounced.

*Gilbert Adrian:* Renowned as a Hollywood costume designer, Adrian opens a fashion house in Beverly Hills in 1942, bringing his strong theatrical sense to high fashion. Adrian's tailored suits are especially significant, often featuring impeccable piecing of striped fabrics to achieve unusual visual effects. Eveningwear designs equally dramatic, often in fabric with bold motifs and painterly graphics.

## Essay and Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the effect of World War II on the fashion industries of the nations involved in the conflict. How did designers and manufacturers respond? How did consumers respond? Were there significant differences in the way governments dealt with fashion?
2. What are some of the reasons for the differences in silhouette between the early and late years of the decade?
3. Discuss the role of accessories in fashion during this decade. How did accessories reflect the changing situations of consumers? Consider materials, shapes, functions, and the relationship between apparel and accessories.

## Further Reading

Bolton, Andrew. "Le Colis de Trianon-Versailles and Paris Openings." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/psop/hd\\_psop.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/psop/hd_psop.htm) (October 2004)

Charleston, Beth Duncuff. "The Bikini." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/biki/hd\\_biki.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/biki/hd_biki.htm) (October 2004)

Charleston, Beth Duncuff. Based on original work by Harold Koda. "Christian Dior (1905–1957)." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dior/hd\\_dior.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dior/hd_dior.htm) (October 2004)

Daoust, Robert. "Fashion or ration: Hartnell, Amies and dressing for the Blitz."

<http://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/fashion-or-ration-hartnell-amies-and-dressing-for-the-blitz/>

Martin, Richard. "American Ingenuity: Sportswear, 1930s–1970s." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd\\_amsp.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd_amsp.htm) (October 2004)

"Powerdressing: Zoot Suits." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/p/powerdressing-zoot-suits/>

Reeder, Jan Glier. "Charles James (1906–1978)." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cjam/hd\\_cjam.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cjam/hd_cjam.htm) (March 2012)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 8**

### **The 1950s: Couture Opulence, Suburban Style**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to examine the fashion system of the 1950s, a decade in which Parisian design direction was reasserted but that also saw success in Britain, developments in the American fashion industry, and the establishment of Italy as a more important supplier of distinctive apparel and accessories. Post-war consumer culture and lifestyle changes were reflected in fashion for women, men, and children.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Post-war transitions include
  - election of war hero Dwight D. Eisenhower as President of the United States – in office for most of the decade
  - Nuremberg trials to punish German war criminals
  - beginning of “Cold War” – a period of tense international relations between the United States/Western Europe and the USSR
  - instability of French colonial presence in Indochina due to growth of Communism in the region
  - fear of Communism also leads to formation of the House Un-American Activities Committee in the United States
- Government measures to restore economic strength include
  - Festival of Britain (1951) showcasing consumer goods
  - French government's subsidy of couture industry
  - American G.I. Bill of Rights providing free education for veterans
- Growth of suburban living and “baby boom” emphasize family life
- Automobiles extremely important to suburban lifestyle
- Beginnings of the Civil Rights movement challenges racial segregation

#### *The Arts*

- Abstraction dominates visual arts
  - European masters such as Jean Dubuffet and Antoni Tàpies prominent
  - New York School artists include Robert Motherwell and Helen Frankenthaler
- Figurative art emphasizes distortion over realism, as exemplified in the work of Alberto Giacometti and Henry Moore

- Late in the decade, Pop Art emerges as artists find inspiration in everyday objects and pop culture references
- Architecture is dominated by International Style, typified by glass-walled skyscrapers
- Mixed influences in interior design include Colonial revival and more modern styles, as exemplified in the work of Charles and Ray Eames, and Robin and Lucienne Day
- Notable literary works that reflect the restlessness of youth include J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), Françoise Sagan's *Bonjour Tristesse* (1954), and Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955)
- Important playwrights include Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, John Osborne, and Harold Pinter
  - Avant-garde theater by Eugène Ionesco and Samuel Beckett
- Swing music style popular, but rock and roll increasingly dominates with performers such as Elvis Presley, Bill Haley and His Comets, and Buddy Holly
- International cinema features important directors including Vittorio De Sica, Federico Fellini, Akira Kurosawa, Ingmar Bergman, and Satyajit Ray
- In Hollywood, Westerns and musicals continue as popular genres
- Television becomes an important new medium, offering comedies and variety shows, as well as promoting fashion through celebrities' wardrobes

#### *Fashion Media*

- Fashion press maintains a didactic (almost dictatorial) tone
  - prominent female editors include Edna Woolman Chase at American *Vogue*, Audrey Withers at British *Vogue*, Carmel Snow and Diana Vreeland at *Harper's Bazaar*
  - the 1957 film *Funny Face* offers a gentle spoof of the fashion press and couture industry
- Elegant illustrations by artists such as René Gruau, Eric and Jacques Demachy coexist with photographs by Richard Avedon, Irving Penn, and others

#### *Film and Fashion*

- Hollywood designers stress elegance of current fashion and, with international distribution of film, spread fashion images
- Important designers:
  - William Travilla designs for Marilyn Monroe in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953) and *The Seven Year Itch* (1955)
  - Edith Head costumes leading actresses in many films including Bette Davis in *All About Eve* (1950), Elizabeth Taylor in *A Place in the Sun* (1951), and Grace Kelly in *Rear Window* (1954)
  - Helen Rose particularly impacts bridal market with wedding gowns for Elizabeth Taylor in *Father of the Bride* (1950) and Grace Kelly's real-life marriage
- Other important style-setting movie stars include Sophia Loren, Brigitte Bardot, Audrey Hepburn, Doris Day, Cary Grant, James Dean, Marlon Brando, and Elvis Presley

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Fashion emphasizes a total look – “well-turned-out”
- Fabrics
  - distinctive fabric important part of fashion at all price levels
    - high quality silks, woolens, and linens used for couture and high-fashion
    - novelty prints very popular – sometimes showing themes of travel, art, and leisure
    - synthetic fibers heavily promoted as easy-care and modern
- Wedding gowns important to fashion as post-war period stresses “family values”
  - often full length, as in Grace Kelly’s dress in 1956
  - short options also seen, as in Audrey Hepburn’s costume in *Funny Face*
- Maternity market grows substantially due to soaring reproduction rates
  - modest high-waisted and smock styles popular
  - television contributes to the adoption of more stylish maternity clothes
- Silhouette: day
  - two prevailing silhouettes
    - full skirt, created by gores or gathers, combined with fitted bodice
    - fitted bodice with narrow “pencil” skirt that molds to the hips
  - skirt lengths vary from below the knee to mid- to low-calf
  - tailored suits very popular for day
    - sometimes with full skirts, more often with pencil silhouette
    - some jackets feature three-quarter-length, or bracelet, sleeves to show jewelry
    - jackets often fitted but boxier styles also seen, a trend that gathers steam in later years of decade
  - daytime dresses often follow both silhouettes
    - elegance a priority, fabrics such as crepes and taffeta used for late day dresses
    - shirtwaist styles very popular, often with self belts
    - sleeveless and short-sleeved dresses often worn with matching jacket
  - high fashion designers influence evolution of the silhouette in late decade
    - by mid-decade seen in couture
    - by late years seen in more mainstream fashion
  - introduction of looser styles described as “chemise,” often a semi-fitted sheath dress
    - “sack” or “bag” dress combines loose body with dropped waist, prompting comparisons with 1920s fashion
  - bubble hems, another silhouette variation, seen for day and evening later in decade
  - more casual options in women’s clothes include two-piece sweater sets (twin sets) and narrow trousers such as calf-length “Capri” pants
- Silhouette: evening
  - evening dresses in “ballerina” or “waltz” length (at the ankle) very popular
  - dressing for time of day important – cocktail dresses key part of wardrobe
- Foundations and lingerie

- highly structured bras and girdles create the pointy breasts, cinched waists, and prominent hips of the fashionable figure
- “corselets” combine bra and girdle
- waist slimmer known as *guêpière*, “waspie,” or “waistliner”
- many bras feature circular stitching on the cups
- convertible, strapless, and balcony (half-cup) styles necessary under cocktail and evening dresses
- Outerwear
  - many variations
  - fitted coats continue from late 1940s
  - swing coats, flaring from shoulders, also popular
  - dress overcoats sometimes match dresses or suits
  - term “car coat” used for three-quarter-length coats, reflecting lifestyle needs of many suburban women
  - fur pieces – stoles, capelets and short jackets – worn for cocktail and evening
- Millinery and accessories
  - accessories important to fashion as finishing touches
  - daytime hats often small and head-hugging
    - style variations on berets, cloches, and small bonnets and toques
    - veils frequently seen
    - cocktail hats often frivolous and decorative, with flowers, feathers, bows
  - shoes
    - during decade shoes became more pointy and heels became thinner
    - stiletto heel introduced around 1954
    - Ferragamo, Roger Vivier, and Delman among big names in shoe design
  - gloves worn with most daytime outfits and dresses
  - pearl jewelry very popular
  - hand-held bags fashionable, often structured, in a variety of materials
  - designer scarves and cigarette holders also fashionable accessories
- Sports clothing
  - reflects simple lines
  - tennis clothes usually white
  - swimwear often boned and fitted – both one- and two-piece suits
- Hair and beauty
  - emphasizes a mature, polished look achieved with overt use of cosmetics
    - matte finish powder
    - heavily applied eyeliner
    - high arched eyebrow
    - shades of red dominate lipstick palette
  - most hair styles chin length or shorter
    - waved and cropped
    - pulled back from forehead or with short “pixie” bangs
  - late in decade, fuller hairstyles and less severe make-up emerge, presenting a younger aesthetic

### *Menswear*

- As in women's fashion, marked separation between casual and formal
  - dressing for specific occasions emphasized
- Savile Row epitomizes fine tailoring
  - some tailors offer an almost Edwardian look
- Suits remain standard for business
  - *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, 1955 novel, symbolizes the emphasis on propriety and conformity
- Two major looks coexist
  - "Bold Look" of immediate post-war period evolves into "Ivy League" look
    - slightly loose single-breasted jacket with notched lapels
    - straight trousers, often unpleated, frequently cuffed
  - sleeker, more fitted "Continental" style
    - originates in Italy
    - shorter straighter jackets, often with two side vents
    - narrow trousers without pleats or cuffs
- Formal wear more varied
  - colors include midnight blue, jewel tones, plaids, and iridescent effects
  - musical groups in coordinated dinner jackets popularize showy evening looks
- Outerwear
  - generously cut at beginning of decade but narrower in later years
  - overcoats usually loose and unbelted
  - trench coats popular
  - nylon increasingly used for raincoats and active sportswear
- Accessories
  - as with women's fashion correct accessories important to overall impression
  - designer neckties promoted – Countess Mara a prestige brand
  - during course of decade width of neckties narrows
  - hats worn with suits – often fedoras and trilbies
- Sports clothing
  - leisure wear especially colorful
    - waist-length jackets in abstract patterns
    - tropical prints on shirts
    - Western wear also popular
  - swimwear
    - boxer-style trunks seen more often than knit swimwear
    - "cabana set" – boxer swim trunks matched with terry-lined short-sleeved jacket
- Good grooming emphasized with most men clean-shaven and with short, side-parted hair the norm

### *Children's Fashion*

- Continuation of basic pieces in children's wardrobe
- Easy-care materials promoted in childrenswear
- Influence from movies and television
  - Western wear inspired by *Roy Rogers* and *Davy Crockett*

- space age style as seen in *Flash Gordon*
- As with adults, marked differences between clothes for school, play, and dressy occasions
- Teen fashion trends important
  - circle skirt a popular style
  - Junior Sophisticates, established by Anne Klein, is a well-known label
- Introduction of Barbie doll in 1959 reinforces fashion message to young girls

### *Fashion and Rebellion*

- Teenagers and young adults assert independence through clothing
  - fashion often linked to taste in music
  - countercultural influence significant
    - Existentialists – favor vernacular clothing
    - Beat Generation (called “beatniks” after 1958) – also favor vernacular clothing, often have beards or goatees
    - Teddy Boys – base look on Edwardian-style suits

## **Key Designers and Their Influence**

### **France**

*Christian Dior:* Becomes the most famous fashion designer in the world. Offers different silhouettes – presenting H line in 1954 and A line in 1955. Licensing agreements include accessories and fur. International presence expands with branches in New York, London, Caracas, Santiago, and Sydney and retail representation in many more cities. Upon Dior’s death in 1957, his assistant Yves Saint Laurent becomes design director and shows first collection in 1958.

*Jacques Fath:* Branches out into fragrance, accessories, and ready-to-wear. His lower-priced “Fath de Fath” line is distributed in the United States by American manufacturer Joseph Halpert. After Fath’s death in 1954, the house remains open for three more years under the direction of his widow.

*Pierre Balmain:* Continues success with full range of couture and expands into ready-to-wear. Enjoys popularity with American clientele and also designs for film and theater.

*Cristóbal Balenciaga:* Continues exploration of Spanish themes. Known for sculptural silhouettes, especially for coats, jackets, and wraps. At the decade’s end, silhouettes with loose bodies and high or low waists establishes aesthetic for designs of the 1960s.

*Jean Dessès:* Especially known for cocktail and eveningwear, often in pleated chiffon or georgette in unique color combinations.

*Jacques Griffe:* After working with Vionnet, establishes his house in 1942. By 1950s, Griffe is designing full range of clothes, as well as costumes for theater and film. Advocates looser fit for suits and coats.



*Coco Chanel:* Re-opens her house after almost a decade, showing a collection in 1954. Introduces the quilted handbag in 1955, which becomes a Chanel classic.

*Madame Grès (formerly Alix / Alix Barton):* Well known for “Grecian” evening dresses constructed of pleated silk jersey. Other designs inspired by kaftans and kimonos. Successful introduction of fragrance, Cabochard.

*Hubert de Givenchy:* After working for several couturiers, establishes his house in 1952. Aesthetic described as elegant and youthful. Designs for Audrey Hepburn for several films.

*Pierre Cardin:* Shows first collection in 1953 after training with Paquin, Schiaparelli, and then Dior. Known for innovative silhouettes. Designs for men and women.

## **Britain**

*Norman Hartnell:* Continued success; especially noted for designs for British family including coronation gown for Elizabeth II in 1953.

*Hardy Amies:* Designs for Princess Elizabeth and receives royal warrant in 1955.

*Digby Morton:* Moves to United States and works with Hathaway shirt company.

*John Cavanagh:* After assisting Balmain until 1952, establishes his house in London. His 1953 collection for the coronation especially successful.

## **United States**

*Pauline Trigère:* Known as tastemaker in American fashion receiving praise for simple well-tailored ensembles.

*Charles James:* Continued renown, especially for structured eveningwear including 1953 Cloverleaf dress. Enters into licensing agreements for outerwear and suits, and layette and toddler clothes.

*Claire McCardell:* Becomes partner in Townley Frocks. Continues many of her signature forms and details including self ties and piping, exposed hooks and eyes, cowl hoods, and topstitching. Highly honored in fashion industry prior to her death in 1958.

*Anne Fogarty:* Designs for a number of New York firms. Her signature style is a variation on New Look with full skirts and fitted bodice. Her book *Wife Dressing* (1959) becomes a popular style guide.

*Bonnie Cashin:* Known for creative variations on sportswear pieces and innovative use of materials including knits, textured wools, leather, and fur.

*James Galanos:* Establishes his line in California. Earns reputation for high-quality workmanship and enjoys much success with upscale department stores.

*Arnold Scaasi*: After work with a number of other designers, including Charles James, designs for Dressmaker Casuals. Work characterized by bold shapes and vibrant colors.

## Italy

*Emilio Pucci*: Famous for colorful sportswear, some in bold artistic patterns, sold at his boutique in Capri and upscale retail stores.

*Sorelle Fontana (Fontana Sisters)*: Famous for lavish eveningwear, wedding gowns, and designs for films, including frequently dressing American actress Ava Gardner.

*Roberto Capucci*: Establishes house in Rome and builds reputation for bold use of color and strong geometries including Box Line of 1958, a variation on the sack dress.

## Essay and Discussion Questions

4. How does fashion in this decade reflect a mature ideal? What particular styles, accessories, and practices embody maturity and sophistication?
5. What are the respective strengths of the French, British, American, and Italian fashion industries during this decade?
6. What are some characteristics of teenage fashions in the 1950s? In what ways do these teenage fashions reflect adult style? In what ways do they differ?

## Further Reading

Charleston, Beth Duncuff. Based on original work by Harold Koda. "Christian Dior (1905–1957)." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dior/hd\\_dior.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dior/hd_dior.htm) (October 2004)

Charleston, Beth Duncuff. "Cristobal Balenciaga (1895-1972)." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bale/hd\\_bale.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bale/hd_bale.htm) (October 2004)

"Cristóbal Balenciaga." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/c/cristobal-balenciaga/>

da Cruz, Elyssa. "Dressing for the Cocktail Hour." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/coho/hd\\_coho.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/coho/hd_coho.htm) (October 2004)

da Cruz, Elyssa. "Made in Italy: Italian Fashion from 1950 to Now." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/itfa/hd\\_itfa.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/itfa/hd_itfa.htm) (October 2004)

Koda, Harold and Richard Martin. "Haute Couture." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/haut/hd\\_haut.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/haut/hd_haut.htm) (October 2004)

Martin, Richard. "American Ingenuity: Sportswear, 1930s–1970s." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amp/hd\\_amp.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amp/hd_amp.htm) (October 2004)

Reeder, Jan Glier. "Charles James (1906–1978)." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cjam/hd\\_cjam.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cjam/hd_cjam.htm) (March 2012)

"The Golden Age of Couture." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\* <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-golden-age-of-couture/>

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 9**

### **The 1960s: Fashion for the Future**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to understand fashion's evolution within the context of the momentous social, political, and technological upheaval of the 1960s. With the coming of age of the post-war "baby boomers," who challenged traditional notions of society, fashion espoused a youthful ideal in accordance with the musical and artistic tastes of this highly influential generation. Growing interest in technological innovation typified by the decade's space race only underscored fashion's shift away from the "Classic" toward the "Now."

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - continuing conflict between communism and capitalism
    - building of Berlin Wall (1961)
    - Soviet Union invades Czechoslovakia (1968)
    - Cuban missile crisis (1962)
    - space race: Soviet Union sends first man into space (1961), Apollo 11 lands on the moon (1969)
  - coup in Indonesia leads to death of half a million people (1965)
  - Mao instigates the Cultural Revolution in China, eliminating "bourgeois" influence in society (1966)
  - former colonies in Africa gain independence
  - Israel emerges victorious in the Six-Day War (1967)
  - race riots erupt in Malaysia (1969)
- United States
  - first American combat missions in Vietnam (1962)
  - assassination of President John F. Kennedy (1963)
  - assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King (1968)
  - social unrest and instability
    - civil rights movement
    - Stonewall riots in New York's Greenwich village catalyzes gay rights movement (1969)
  - youth culture is expressed through demonstrations for peace and art/music festivals
    - Summer of Love (1967)

- Monterey Pop festival (1967)
- Woodstock (1969)

### *The Arts*

- Pop Art emerges as influential style; key participants include Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist, and Andy Warhol
- Op Art gains prominence through the work of Bridget Riley, Richard Anuszkiewicz, and Victor Vasarely
- Popularity of “Happenings”
- Psychedelic art reflects countercultural ideas; gains prominence in the work of Peter Max and Wes Wilson, and is prevalent in concert posters, advertisements, and album covers
- Best-selling non-fiction, such as Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) and Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), reflect emerging social causes, while popular fiction is diverse
- Theater and Hollywood productions are equally diverse, reflecting a shifting social consciousness
- Popular music continues to expand with ever more categorization of musical styles including rock, pop, folk, jazz, and soul
  - emergence of eccentric sartorial icons within music such as Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, and the Supremes

### *Fashion Media*

- Emergence of fashion and popular culture magazines geared toward the youth market
  - Britain: *Honey* (1960), *Fabulous* 208, *The Queen* is restyled as *Queen*
  - Japan: *Seventeen* (1967)
  - United States: *Tiger Beat*
  - France: *Salut les copains*
- Established magazines continue but revamp content and style to appeal to younger reader, favoring ready-to-wear coverage over haute couture coverage
- Prominent illustrators include Bobby Hillson, Caroline Smith, and Junichi Nakahara
- Prominent photographers include David Bailey, William Klein, Richard Avedon, and Irving Penn
- New standard of beauty personified by waifish, youthful models including Twiggy, Jean Shrimpton, Penelope Tree, Lauren Hutton, and Marisa Berenson
- Hints of racial diversity present in magazine models
  - *Life* magazine cover story “Black Models Take Center Stage” (1969)

### *Fashion and Society*

- Fashion setters come from all segments of society and increasingly demonstrate a mingling of youth with established society
- Celebrity style icons include Diahann Carroll, Leontyne Price, Cher, Queen Sirikit of Thailand, “Baby Jane” Holzer, and Edie Sedgwick
- Jacqueline Kennedy

- wedding dress is designed by Ann Lowe
  - Oleg Cassini is appointed official designer and popularizes sheath dresses, Empire strapless gowns, slim A-line shapes, geometric suits and coats with relaxed fits and oversized buttons
  - popularizes her favorite color, pink
  - the “Jackie Look” becomes a widely discussed subject with the fashion press
- Growth of television and media contribute strongly to the widespread awareness of celebrity weddings and wedding dress designers. Notable weddings include
  - Farah Diba to the Shah of Iran; bride wears Yves Saint Laurent
  - Doña Fabiola de Mora y Argón to King Baudouin of Belgium; bride wears Balenciaga
  - Princess Margaret to Antony Armstrong-Jones; bride wears Norman Hartnell

### *Style Tribes and the Marketing of Individual Taste*

- The Mods
  - Modernist youth lifestyle that focuses on fashion and music
  - men wear lean Italian-style suits, knit tops, pointy-toed shoes, and layered haircuts
  - women wear straight trousers, short skirts, boots, and geometric haircuts
  - look is dependent on consumption and changes with evolving trends
- The hippie movement
  - youth phenomenon based on anti-war and countercultural sentiments with roots in bohemian and beatnik styles
  - epicenter is in Haight-Ashbury neighborhood of San Francisco
  - fashions include body paint, vintage uniforms, denim, leather, suede, shaggy fur, tie-dye, ethnic influences

### *The Boutique*

- Emergence of boutique fashion from adventuresome designers and small specialty shops that target younger customers with less expensive clothing
- Promote experimental quality to fashion and shopping with music, product assortment, and onsite cafes
- Influential shops/participating designers
  - London
    - Mary Quant
    - Barbara Hulanicki
    - Carrot On Wheels
  - New York
    - Paraphernalia
  - San Francisco
    - The Gap opens in 1969, selling records and tapes along with fashions

### *Film and Television and Fashion*

- Film and television continue to affect diffusion of fashion and promotion of designers’ work
- Influential films/television shows and costume designers

- *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) – Edith Head, Hubert de Givenchy, Pauline Trigère
- *The Avengers* (1961-1969)
- *My Fair Lady* (1963) – Cecil Beaton
- *Doctor Zhivago* (1965) – Phyllis Dalton
- *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (1967) – Jean Louis
- *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) – Theadora Van Runkle
- *The Jetsons* (1962-63)
- *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) – Hardy Amies
- *Star Trek* (1966-1969)
- *One Million Years BC* (1966) – Carl Toms

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Youthful sensibility promoted through consumerism, emergence of ready-to-wear market, and the rise of the boutique culture
- Fabrics
  - knits are increasingly used in high fashion
  - textured fabrics such as tweed and bouclé
  - geometric details such as oversized buttons and patch pockets
  - proliferation of prints that reflect the hippie culture, ethnic aesthetic, and art movements
    - Marimekko
    - Lilly Pulitzer
    - Emilio Pucci
  - fad for paper dresses
  - experimentation with materials
    - plastic (vinyl, PVC)
    - metal
    - synthetic fabrics are considered fashion forward due to their ability to take brilliant dyes
- Silhouette: day
  - geometric and boxy typified by suits, coats, and two-piece day ensembles
  - A-line and flared shapes typical for day and cocktail dresses
  - shift dresses for daytime and warm weather occasions
  - hemline rises to mid-thigh; emergence of mini skirt
  - by end of decade longer hemlines are also prevalent
  - pants become more common
    - pant ensembles become popular even for eveningwear (tuxedo styles, pajama sets, harem pants)
    - emergence of “hip huggers” and bell bottoms
    - popularity of jumpsuits and catsuits
  - as shock value of hemline wears off by end of decade, focus turns to tops, which feature flounce sleeves, layered vests, and scarves
- Silhouette: evening
  - follows trend for simple shapes, often sleeveless, and fabricated in luscious materials such as satins, dimensional lace, and beaded fabrics
- Bridal

- couture bridal designs go to extremes
  - Yves Saint Laurent's hand-knitted cable dress (1965)
  - Balenciaga's conical satin dress with matching headpiece (1967)
- bridal styles become more simplified and narrow in silhouette and also reflect the varied influence of "space age" sensibilities and style tribes
- Foundations and lingerie
  - move away from sculpting foundations
  - Rudi Gernreich's "No-bra" (1964) typical of softer brassieres
  - straight slips in short lengths, sometimes known as "demi-slips" and "chemises"
  - pettipants serve as panty and slip
  - "shortie" nightgowns
  - hosiery takes on increasing importance and a wide variety of colors, textures, and patterns are available
  - stockings are abandoned for tights and "panti-legs" (pantyhose)
  - transitional inventions between stockings and pantyhose include "pantee belt" and "hiphose"
  - knee socks come into fashion
- Millinery and accessories
  - varied hat styles
    - "helmets"
    - "baby bonnets"
    - fedora variations
    - berets
  - new shoe shapes
    - square toe, low heel
    - flat-soled boots that reach lower calf
    - knee-high boots
    - low ankle boots
  - handbags and shoulder bags are both fashionable
  - many accessories feature decoration that reflect Pop Art, geometric motifs, and stylized flowers
- Hair and beauty
  - eyes become fashion focus through the use of heavy eyeliner, thick mascara, and false eyelashes
    - influence of *Cleopatra* (1963)
    - Revlon's "Cleopatra Look"
  - popularity of pale lipstick
  - nails follow same palette as lips
  - hair trends
    - bouffant or "beehive"
    - short geometric styles
    - "flip" hairstyle
    - long straight hair
    - fake hairpieces: ponytails, falls, braids, and "wiglets"
  - beauty icons include Jean Shrimpton, Peggy Moffitt, Penelope Tree, and Veruschka



### *Menswear*

- Encourages variety and personal style
- Trend toward informality
- Emergence of the “Peacock Revolution” that promotes an experimental approach
- “London Look” typified by daring styles and bright colors
  - John Stephen, His Clothes
  - Michael Fish, Mr. Fish
  - Tommy Nutter, Nutters of Savile Row
- Suit becomes focus of experimentation with silhouette evolving throughout decade and materials ranging from corduroy to velvet
  - silhouette becomes longer and more fitted throughout decade
  - suits often worn without neckties
  - neckties go from narrow to wide through course of decade
- Hippie style influences menswear by end of decade
- Ethnic diversity spawns trend for Nehru jacket
- “Space Age” styling also seen, notably in the work of Pierre Cardin
- Style icons include Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., The Beatles, Mick Jagger, Pete Townsend, Peter Fonda in *Easy Rider* (1969), and Sean Connery as James Bond
- Beauty/grooming icons include Roger Daltrey, Robert Redford, Paul Newman, and Ryan O’Neal
- Womenswear designers, such as Oleg Cassini, Guy Laroche, Ted Lapidus, and Pierre Cardin, enter menswear market

### *Children’s Fashion*

- Emergence of media tie-ins and licensed clothing inspired by popular cartoons and musical groups
- Space-themed play clothes and pajamas for boys, while Space Age look in womenswear influences girls’ clothing
- Proliferation of mother-daughter fashions due to youthful look of women’s clothing
- Retro and romantic styling affect children’s clothes by end of decade

### **Key Designers and Their Influence**

- Couture still prized by loyal clients, but designer ready-to-wear increasingly accepted
- Younger generation of designers acknowledge importance of youthful customers

### **France**

*Pierre Balmain:* Praised for luxurious eveningwear that often displays historic inspiration. Extremely select clientele includes Queen Sirikit of Thailand.

*Chanel:* Continues to assert relevance of her signature style and updates her classic cardigan suits with brighter colors.

*Cristóbal Balenciaga:* Continues experimentation with form, space, and cut. Closes his house in 1968 due to disillusionment with fashion industry.

*Jules-François Crayon:* Presents “tomboy” collection for Nina Ricci in 1962 and creates a ready-to-wear line, “Mademoiselle Ricci,” for the American market. Leaves Ricci in 1963 to design at Lanvin.

*Yves Saint Laurent:* Solidifies central role in fashion, dressing many of the most important women in the world. Establishes namesake house in 1962 and demonstrates keen cultural awareness, designing collections inspired by the street, fine arts, as well as exotic ethnicities and locales. Popular styles include “Le Smoking” tuxedo and color-blocked “Mondrian” dresses. Opens Rive Gauche prêt-à-porter boutiques in 1966 bringing design sensibility to a larger, more youth-oriented clientele.

*Marc Bohan:* Appointed designer and creative director of Maison Dior and returns the house to its established couture aesthetic. Provides sophisticated and chic designs for a discerning clientele and does not cater to decade’s youth-driven trends.

*Hubert de Givenchy:* Maintains unique combination of youth and elegance and his designs demonstrate softer versions of prevailing geometric lines of fashion. Noteworthy clients include Audrey Hepburn, Diana Vreeland, and Jacqueline Kennedy.

*Pierre Cardin:* “Futuristic” designs for men, women, and children combine immaculate tailoring with youthful styles. Includes Space Age icons and his monogram logo as appliqués or on belt buckles throughout designs.

*André Courrèges:* Focus on precision tailoring and structural details of clothes earn him the nickname “the architect,” along with a cult-like following among fashion-forward women. Influential in the promotion of shorter hemlines and establishes “Couture Future,” a ready-to-wear line in 1967.

*Emanuel Ungaro:* Opens couture house in 1965 and gains reputation as an “ultra-modern” designer. Promotes very short skirts and often shows them with shiny boots or over-the-knee-socks.

*Paco Rabanne:* Epitomizes experimental spirit of the decade using unusual materials such as plastic discs and chains within designs. His metal dresses, tunics, and bra tops resembling chain mail earn him impressive media coverage.

*Jacques Esterel:* A pink gingham dress for Brigitte Bardot’s wedding establishes his career. Collections often include theatrical elements and references to Op Art.

*Guy Laroche:* Promotes a modern and sometimes futuristic aesthetic. His fashions are particularly appreciated by Parisian women and are often viewed as the epitome of French chic.

## Britain

*Hardy Amies:* Continues to design for Queen Elizabeth II and maintains successful womenswear and menswear lines. Designs costumes for *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).

*Foale & Tuffin:* Colorful shop on Carnaby Street, London features Op Art-inspired pieces, and designs are also sold in Paraphernalia and J. C. Penney.

*Mary Quant:* Opens boutique, Bazaar, in artsy Chelsea neighborhood drawing large crowds with pieces selling out quickly. Is known for her promotion of the “miniskirt.” Quant diversifies into other corporate partnerships including J. C. Penney and is viewed as respected authority in fashion.

*John Bates:* Demonstrates distinct visions for sharp geometric designs alongside softer romantic ones. Experiments with plastic and vinyl, and is an early advocate of short skirts. Celebrity clients include Diana Rigg.

*Barbara Hulanicki:* Opens Biba boutique that sells casual and eclectic merchandise aimed at a young clientele. Advocates “retro” aesthetic and also makes styles available via mail-order catalog business. Promotes dark tertiary colors described as “Auntie colors” and company becomes famed for art nouveau graphic logo.

*Ossie Clark:* Shows affinity for fluid, body-conscious construction, vintage glamour, and bold use of color. Collaborates with wife, Celia Birtwell, whose textile designs are often incorporated into his designs. Designs become popular with well-known music performers including Mick Jagger and Marianne Faithfull.

## Italy

*Emilio Pucci:* Printed silk jersey dresses are popular with an international clientele. Full-length skirts and palazzo pajama sets are favorites for entertaining. Also known for colorful printed ski jackets.

*Roberto Capucci:* Designs “Optical Line” featuring Op Art-inspired fabrics and experiments with plastic garments and space helmet-like hats later in the decade. Successfully moves his business to Paris.

*Simonetta et Fabiani:* Husband and wife team whose collections display skill with tailoring along with emphasis on volume and drama in eveningwear.

*Princess Irene Galitzine:* Known for superb tailoring and colorful beach and evening looks. Aesthetic combines beauty and informality, with palazzo pajamas being a key element of both evening looks as well as daywear.

*Valentino:* Hailed as a rising star from very first collection in 1962, becoming known for signature “Valentino red.” Frequently presents ensembles that mix black and white to great effect. Celebrity clientele includes Elizabeth Taylor and Jacqueline Kennedy.

## United States

*Pauline Trigère:* Designs are often featured in advertisements for other prestigious products. Favors textural, sophisticated fabrics for dresses and work is consistently mature and elegant.

*Anne Klein:* Continues to be a force in the American fashion industry and establishes her own label in 1968.

*John Weitz:* Known for practical and well-designed wardrobe basics that are often featured as perfect travel clothes.

*Oleg Cassini:* Rises to fame with designs for Jacqueline Kennedy. Develops menswear line that is known for vibrant, fashion-forward look and provides suits for American television talk-show host Johnny Carson.

*James Galanos:* Maintains devoted society following and reputation for extremely high quality. Creates conservative yet daring designs and does not closely follow trends.

*Arnold Scaasi:* Well established by the 1960s with several different lines. Designs provocative pajama set for Barbra Streisand's Academy Awards acceptance, and media attention that ensues contributes to his celebrity.

*Bonnie Cashin:* Continues to be known for work in leather and begins designing for leather goods company Coach in 1962. Work ranges from tailored and fitted clothes to loose and natural, with unusual applications of leather typically the focal point.

*Rudi Gernreich:* Develops an association with model Peggy Moffitt, who becomes his muse. Sometimes presents a futuristic aesthetic and becomes known for unexpected exposures of the body, including his famed topless bathing suit (1964). Considered among the most influential designers of the decade.

*Bill Blass:* Finds success in upscale ready-to-wear designs characterized by simple shapes and quality materials, deemed "good investments" by the fashion press. Brings menswear influence into dresses and reinvigorates classics such as shirtwaist dresses and sheaths.

*Geoffrey Beene:* Work is characterized by easy-fitting silhouettes in unusual materials. Evening dresses are often playful including sequined "football jerseys" (1967) and gingham gowns (1968).

*Donald Brooks:* Opens store in 1964 while simultaneously designing costumes for Broadway musicals.

*Oscar de la Renta:* Starts ready-to-wear label in 1965 and becomes known for using ruffles, small bows, flower details, and a rich color palette.

*Betsey Johnson:* Begins as designer at New York boutique, Paraphernalia, where her offbeat aesthetic develops. Becomes most visible American designer of cutting-edge fashion trends. Opens her own boutique, Betsey Bunky Nini, in 1969.

*Giorgio di Sant'Angelo*: Design aesthetic is described as “rich hippie” for its typical mixing of a variety of inspirational sources in one ensemble. Floral and paisley prints, fringe, ruffles, suede, tie-dye, and embroidery are typical features of his work.

### Essay and Discussion Questions

4. Discuss the emergence of London as a key fashion city and give three examples of its influence on fashion as a whole
5. List and discuss several ways in which fashion was impacted by the technological innovations of the decade. Be certain to incorporate the Space Age into some of your examples.
6. Examine the impact of the “youthquake” on designers within each of the major fashion cities. How did designers and retailers adapt to the changing demographic of their clientele, if at all?

### Further Reading

“Pierre Cardin.” In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/p/pierre-cardin/>

Charleston, Beth Duncuff. “Cristobal Balenciaga (1895-1972).” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bale/hd\\_bale.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bale/hd_bale.htm) (October 2004)

Charleston, Beth Duncuff. “The Bikini.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000.  
[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/biki/hd\\_biki.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/biki/hd_biki.htm) (October, 2004)

“André Courrèges.” In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/a/andre-courreges/>

“Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

“Fashion in 1960s London.” In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/1960s-fashion-london/>

“Marion Foale & Sally Tuffin.” In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/m/marion-foale-and-sally-tuffin/>

Gross, Jared. "Design, 1950-75." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn3/hd\\_dsgn3.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn3/hd_dsgn3.htm) (October, 2004)

"History of 1960s Fashion and Textiles." In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/h/history-of-1960s-fashion-and-textiles/>

"Barbara Hulanicki and Biba." In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/b/biba,-barbara-hulanicki/>

Martin, Richard. "American Ingenuity: Sportswear, 1930s-1970s." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd\\_amsp.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd_amsp.htm) (October 2004)

"Mr Fish." In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/m/mr-fish/>

"Yves Saint Laurent." In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/y/yves-saint-laurent/>

"Emanuel Ungaro." In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/e/emanuel-ungaro/>

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 10**

### **The 1970s: Revivals and Individuality**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to view the development of fashion in the highly experimental "Me decade" of the 1970s. As the questioning of the cultural status quo that began in the 1960s evolved into a deeper sense of skepticism and rebellion, fashion reflected this sensibility with the emergence of idiosyncratic experimentation and the abandonment of conventional standards of fashionable appropriateness. The conflicting interests in environmental preservation and technological advancement further added to the sense of variety and eclecticism that came to define the decade.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - OPEC oil embargo (1973) causes economic difficulties throughout much of the industrialized world and culminates in gas rationing
  - murder of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 summer Olympics in Munich by Palestinian terrorists further strains conflicts within the Middle East
  - series of high profile murders and kidnappings by revolutionary groups around the world including the IRA, Brigade Rosse, and Symbionese Liberation Army
  - Camp David Accords signed between leaders of Egypt and Israel (1978)
  - 1979 revolution in Iran leads to installation of extremist Islamist government lead by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
  - death of Mao in China and international recognition of the People's Republic; American President Richard Nixon visits China
  - Communist revolution in Cambodia leads to widespread famine and death of tens of thousands of citizens
  - expansion of apartheid restrictions in South Africa deprives the non-white majority of civil rights
  - death of Francisco Franco (1975) results in more social freedoms in Spain
- Britain
  - "Winter of Discontent" (1978-1979)
- United States
  - effects of lingering Vietnam war, economic instability and recent memory of assassinations dampen social and political climate

- Wounded Knee incident (1973) crystalizes tensions between the Native American populations and the US government
- Watergate scandal leads to the resignation of President Richard Nixon (1974)
- Vietnam War ends (1975)

### *The Arts*

- Emergence of conceptual art; key artists include Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, and Joseph Beuys
- Photorealist painters produce detailed images of modern life
- Pop Art remains vital in the work of David Hockney and Wayne Thiebaud
- Feminist art develops; as exemplified by Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*
- Concerns for the environment lead to a back-to-earth sensibility and handcraft revival, while the emergence of personal computers and other technological innovations simultaneously affect design aesthetics
- Interior decoration reflects both the craft aesthetic and the emerging high-tech look
- Major exhibitions, such as those mounted by Diana Vreeland at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, bring in new audiences and are influential on fashion
- The spirit of the "Me decade" is reflected in the decade's popular literature; *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* is a best-seller
- Significant films reflect diverse subjects and moods including period pieces, nostalgia, and gritty contemporary realism; landmark movies include *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Taxi Driver* (1976), and *Star Wars* (1977)
- Association of popular music styles with fashion is particularly important
  - soul music, as seen on television series *Soul Train*
  - disco, as embodied by the nightclub scene of New York's Studio 54
  - folk singers like Judy Collins promote an artistic Bohemian look
  - cultural diversity and exotic orientalism are reflected in the wardrobes and music of Cher
  - emergence of punk in both London and New York leads to a fashion aesthetic that reflects its discordant music and anti-establishment lyrical content

### *Fashion Media*

- Emergence of newer types of magazines that increase the spread of fashion
  - United States: *Essence* (1970) targeted at black women, celebrity-focused *People* (1974)
- Name recognition of models becomes more important and fresh-faced Americans, mostly blondes, dominate fashion media including Cybill Shepard, Christie Brinkley, and Patti Hansen
- African American models gain prominence; key trailblazers include Naomi Sims, Pat Cleveland, Beverly Johnson, and Iman



- New darker aesthetic of fashion photography emerges that often suggests violence and sadomasochistic sexuality; champions include Helmut Newton, Guy Bourdin, and Chris von Wangenheim
- Fashion illustration remains relevant in the work of Kenneth Paul Block and Steven Stipelman

### *Film and Fashion*

- A wide range of films affect fashion trends
  - costuming of Jane Fonda in *Klute* (1971) by Ann Roth popularizes “hooker” boots and shag haircuts
  - “Blaxploitation” films have strong impact
  - *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) reflects punk and glam trends
  - John Travolta’s white three-piece suit by Patrizia von Brandenstein in *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) has strong impact on menswear
  - Diane Keaton’s wardrobe in *Annie Hall* (1977) inspires the “Annie Hall Look”
- Period films encourage retro fashion; key examples include *American Graffiti* (1973), *Chinatown* (1974), and *Grease* (1978)
- Theoni V. Aldredge is most celebrated costume designer of the decade, winning the Academy Award for her work on *The Great Gatsby* (1974) and enjoying great success on Broadway

### *Denim in Fashion*

- Denim aesthetic evolves during decade moving beyond blue denim trousers to more fitted styles and fashionable cuts
- Exists at all market levels for both men and women
- Comes to represent sexual equality and liberation that cuts across all social classes
- Head-to-toe styles emerge including bib overalls, jeans paired with denim jackets, and designer denim suits for men
- Jeans embellishment is seen as an art form with tie-dyeing, bleaching, embroidery, patches, beading, and studding evolving into expensive status symbols
- Pioneers of high-end denim include Gloria Vanderbilt and Calvin Klein

### *Active Sportswear*

- Focus on fitness and exercise helps expand the market for active sportswear
- Emergence of sports/leisure fashions such as jogging suits, “gym shorts,” and fashionable athletic shoes
- Styles worn for hiking and outdoor sports, such as flannel shirts and nylon down filled jackets, enter the general wardrobe
- Debut of the string bikini
- Designer swimsuits such as Rudi Gernreich’s thong styles and Halston’s asymmetric one piece styles
- Abbreviated styles of swimwear for men

### *The Unisex Style*

- “Unisex” (usually based on masculine dress) typified in high fashion by Yves Saint Laurent’s pantsuits
- Rudi Gernreich’s unisex collection (1970) shows men and women in gowns, jumpsuits, and skirts
- “His and hers” leisure suits promoted by Marimekko
- Celebrity couples appear in his and hers suits

### *Punk Fashion*

- Distinctive style worn by both men and women that combines elements of 1950s greaser styles with more aggressive elements such as slashing, rips, studs, and obscene imagery and slogans
- Sexual provocation and sadomasochistic references are expressed in items such as bondage pants and leather and vinyl styles
- Associated on a commercial level with British designers Vivienne Westwood and Zandra Rhodes

### *The Elements of Women’s Fashion*

- Acceptance of individualized taste is permanently established; rules of dress established in the post-war period and challenged in the 1960s now virtually eliminated
- Trends such as hippie, peasant and ethnic, retro, and unisex styles dominate the early and middle years of the decade
- Casual dressing grows and divisions between afternoon and dinner dressing disappear; only the most formal of occasions require designer glamour
- Pants are more prevalent and T-shirts and tank tops become acceptable streetwear, while halter tops, crop tops, and tube tops are accepted for leisure attire
- Fabrics
  - contrasts in color and fabric display the contradictions of the era
    - one part of fashion moves into earth tones, denim, darker hues, and heathered effects reflecting ecological consciousness
    - brightly colored synthetic materials also continue in favor
  - surface detail such as buttons, zippers, and topstitching is profuse
- Silhouette: day
  - adoption of the midi and maxi hemline over a slow period of time
  - mini skirt wanes as hot pants become more popular choice for showing off legs
  - coexistence of midi and mini lengths in early part of decade, with midi reaching dominance by mid-decade
  - boxy silhouette is replaced by one that is softer, sleek, and closer to the body
    - emphasis on giving lower body definition via gores
    - cinched-in waistlines
    - wrap construction
    - bias cut stripes to create diagonals
  - pants styles include wide-legged bell bottoms, knickers, gauchos and, by decade’s end, narrow cigarette cut

- blouses vary and range from shirtwaist styles to cowl styles to jabot tied bow fronts
  - appearance of more volume by 1976 in the form of tiered skirts, gathered skirts, blouson style tops, and fuller sleeves
  - popularity of both pants and skirt suits
  - knits are important and are frequently worn in lean, layered combinations; thicker knits emerge after 1975
- Silhouette: evening
  - evening clothes become less formal
  - disco dressing extremely important
- Lingerie and loungewear
  - trend for going bra-less
  - foundations are increasingly abbreviated and lightweight, with many styles having minimal seams to reduce visibility under clinging tops
  - tap pants are worn, often with matching camisoles
- Outerwear
  - trim, princess-line coats, and belted, trench coats reflects slender shape of fashion
  - prevalence of leather and suede, along with shawls, ponchos, and capes that reflect ethnic influences
- Millinery and accessories
  - individualism of fashion is often conveyed through accessories with the most popular examples being boots, shoulder bags, and wide belts with hardware
  - hats are seen in every conceivable shape including wide brimmed, fedoras, and tight knit caps
  - shoes and boots are very varied and include platform styles with square and round toes, clogs, espadrilles, and Frye boots
  - legwear is textured and colorful early in the decade and includes legwarmers, socks worn rolled down, and anklets
  - bags range from large, soft shoulder bags to sculpted clutches and disco bags
  - belts are worn at the waist or at hip for blouson effect and feature oversized hardware
  - scarves are popular in all shapes and sizes
  - jewelry is piled on in gypsy style or shows art deco revival and Egyptian influence
- Hair and beauty
  - emphasis on “natural look” early in the decade with minimal make-up and stylization
  - more contrast in make-up is favored past mid-decade with darker, smoky eyes, heavily blush-defined cheekbones, and deeper colors for the mouth
  - new musk-based fragrances such as Yves Saint Laurent’s Opium emphasize decadence and sexuality
  - hair is major component of style and celebrity hairstyles are particularly important
    - Ali MacGraw’s long, straight, center-parted hair
    - Angela Davis and the Afro (“natural”)
    - Jane Fonda’s shag haircut

- Dorothy Hamill's "wedge"
- Farah Fawcett's feathered style
- Bo Derek's cornrows

### *Menswear*

- Experimentation continues as the role of name designers in men's fashion is firmly established
- Fit and silhouette is lean and body-conscious
- Variations on Norfolk and safari jackets are popular in a wide range of fabrics including corduroy, denim, twill, and synthetic double knits
- Pants are in "hip hugger" and "sansabelt" styles with denim and corduroy as popular fabrications
- Emergence of the leisure suit
- Brightly colored and patterned shirting of synthetic material is popular option
- Velvet is key fabrication for evening suiting
- Silk pajamas and robes are popular style for lounging
- Outerwear varies and fur is promoted as the ultimate "Peacock" statement by celebrity athletes
- Neckties remain wide until late decade
- Hats are no longer considered essential part of wardrobe but are treated as fashion accessory; styles vary and range from cowboy hat to knitted watch caps
- Shoes evolve over course of decade, moving from chunky and round-toed to a more sleek line; boots in many varieties are extremely popular
- Range of acceptable jewelry for men expands with chains, medallions, and distinctive rings widely seen
- Underwear reflects the slim cut of fashion with many men opting for briefs or low-cut bikini styles instead of boxer shorts
- Distinctive hairstyling is integral and popular styles include long over the ears, sideburns, well-trimmed mustaches, beards, and goatees
- While much of the decade is defined by experimentation and casualness, by 1978 a return to seriousness pervades

### *Children's Fashion*

- Shares many of the general trends of fashion
- Ethnic and gypsy styles are adapted for girls with wrap and smock-style dresses being made in ethnic inspired fabrications, and shoe styles such as clogs and sandals being worn
- Knits are popular for both sexes, particularly in outerwear, where ponchos, long mufflers, and knitted caps and gloves are prevalent
- Dress codes are relaxed in some areas leading to the introduction of pantsuits and pant ensembles for girls
- Denim is popular for both sexes, and the progression of denim styles mirrors that of adults as hippie look gives way to designer jeans
- Retro mood influences dressy clothing

- Emergence of popular children's brands including Garanimals, Laura Ashley, and the Gunne Sax line by Jessica McClintock

## Key Designers and Their Influence

- Death of Coco Chanel in 1971
- Excitement of fashion comes from new talents who emphasize a livelier, more diverse aesthetic
- Increasing focus on ready-to-wear and boutique brands
- Global interest in American design

## France

*Pierre Cardin:* Successfully navigates fashion's transition toward eclecticism and variety. Enthusiastically embraces knitwear and varied lengths while brand's exposure continues to increase through licensing

*Yves Saint Laurent:* Emerges as one of the decade's most important designers producing unusual, and at times controversial, collections that simultaneously inspire other designers as well as mass-market trends. Key collections are inspired from a variety of subjects ranging from the 1940s (1971) to China (1977). His haute couture styles are reflected in Rive Gauche collections which bring Saint Laurent's design aesthetic closer to the mainstream.

*Karl Lagerfeld:* Named head designer of Chloé in 1966 and provides an update to the house's *haute bohème* style. Also designs for Fendi and is known for his consistent use of art history as inspiration.

*Sonia Rykiel:* Establishes label in 1968 and builds her reputation with luxurious but unconventional knitwear, earning the title "Queen of Knits." Promotes adaptable layering pieces and a sophisticated monochrome color palette.

*Emmanuelle Khanh:* Launches her own label in 1971, opening a Paris boutique in 1977. Offers full range of clothing from slim knitwear to embellished peasant-style ensembles.

*Dorothée Bis:* An offshoot of Dorothée, a trendy boutique owned by Elie and Jacqueline Jacobson. The label is known for its distinctive knitwear as well as layered ensembles that combine lengths and textures. Focus on contemporary yet playful interpretations of sportswear.

*Cacharel:* Establishes itself as a major label with soft blouses and dresses made of Liberty prints along with feminine knits. Romantic sensibility is enhanced by successful advertising campaign.

*Kenzo Takada:* Opens boutique Jungle Jap in 1970 featuring colorful, playful clothes. Some silhouettes are based on kimono and other Japanese styles, while a mixing of patterns, colors, and textures pervades.

*Issey Miyake:* Establishes style based on exploration of materials, unique interpretations of traditional dress from around the world, as well as experimentation with wrapping. Late in the decade pioneers the look of oversized tops over narrow pants.

## **Britain**

*Mary Quant:* Achievements are celebrated in an exhibition at the London Museum. At its height, scope of her business includes fashion, fragrance, cosmetics, toys, and wine.

*Ossie Clark:* Career continues until mid-decade with continued focus on innovative cut and daring combinations of materials.

*John Bates:* One of the best-established designers in London. Continues to maintain reputation for originality despite commercial success.

*Biba:* Grows notably in the 1970s with continued focus on retro themes. Store location moves and expands into a department store concept, “Big Biba,” where women’s clothing, accessories, and cosmetics are offered along with menswear, childrenswear, housewares, books, and a restaurant.

*Thea Porter:* Reinterprets Middle Eastern silhouettes and motifs in her exotic expensive creations. Her varied clients include Elizabeth Taylor, Princess Margaret, and Mick and Bianca Jagger.

*Laura Ashley:* Inspired by handcrafts with clothing designs recalling Regency and Edwardian England; bohemian “milkmaid” styles emerge as popular options. Company experiences rapid global growth and aesthetic has great impact.

*Jean Muir:* Focuses on simple svelte silhouettes created with high-quality materials and construction, and subtle dressmaker details. The fluid designs suit the sleek mode of the 1970s.

*Vivienne Westwood:* Embodies the link between music and fashion with shop that evolves throughout the decade coinciding with the evolution of music street culture. Designs feature “punk elements,” such as bondage and provocative slogans, and by decade’s end designs prefigure the aesthetic of the 1980s’ New Romantic music style.

*Zandra Rhodes:* Emphasizes textile design as basis of her fashions and often draws on multi-ethnic influences such as folk art patterns and Aboriginal Australian art. “Conceptual Chic” collection in 1977 emerges as high style take on punk sensibility.

## **Italy**

*Valentino:* Continues to grow with romantic designs that are prized by elite clientele but do not necessarily reflect widespread trends. Empire develops further with the introduction of ready-to-wear, a home line, fragrance, and a more international presence.

*Missoni:* Offers completely knitted outfits that layer pieces such as vests or pullovers over turtlenecks and knit skirts or trousers. Knit patterns are instantly recognizable for their mixed zigzags, flame stitches, and stripes in a range of colors.

*Laura Biagiotti:* Presents her first women's collection in 1972 and becomes known for her use of cashmere, often in unusual layers.

## **United States**

*Bill Blass:* Accommodates modern ideas of career and leisure, but maintains a high society focus and a classic aesthetic. Promotes the revival of the cocktail dress mid-decade.

*Anne Klein:* Dies suddenly in 1974 and her assistants, Louis Dell'Olio and Donna Karan, take over as designers and create polished, urban coordinates.

*Oscar de la Renta:* Continues reign as "The King of Evening," dressing an international group of prominent women using inspiration from both travel and history to create beautiful, flattering clothes.

*Stephen Burrows:* Known for unstructured, body-conscious silhouettes, witty details, eye-catching color combinations, and signature "lettuce edge" finish. Independent-minded clientele includes Cher, Diana Ross, and Barbra Streisand.

*Halston:* Establishes line in 1968 and becomes known for sophisticated and urban style that intertwines with disco scene. Works in limited palette, favoring solid colors and his best designs are minimal in styling and luxurious in fabrication. His Ultrasuede shirtwaist dresses become instant classics.

*Calvin Klein:* Known for sportswear and separates that are elegant, simple, polished, but easy fitting. Offers softer, less structured version of tailoring and becomes known for styles that are described as the pinnacle of "American Casual." Becomes household name through the wide distribution of his signature line of women's jeans.

*Ralph Lauren:* Establishes an aesthetic of smartly tailored pieces and sportswear that evoke styles of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s and incorporates product diversification to promote Ralph Lauren lifestyle of classically chic American sportswear. Cotton piqué knit polo shirt with embroidered polo player logo creates sportswear sensation.

*Geoffrey Beene:* Career continues to build momentum based on a reputation for cut that is architectural but never stiff. Experiments with a variety of materials, often favoring jersey. Launches lower priced Beene Bag label in 1971 and begins showing ready-to-wear collections in Europe in 1976.

*Diane von Furstenberg:* Introduces printed jersey wrap dress with a deep V-neck and narrow sleeves that becomes a best-selling style in 1974.

*Mary McFadden:* Work is characterized by great creativity and exotic glamour, with inspiration coming from a wide variety of sources including regional styles, the ancient world, and

fashion designers Poiret and Fortuny. Creates notable textile designs that include pleating, hand-painting, and striking prints inspired by Gustav Klimt.

*Adolfo*: Produces elegant and individualistic clothes including knit suits that are favorites among socialites.

*Adri*: Known for her commitment to making fashion flattering to all figures and maintains an emphasis on comfort and adaptability.

*Clovis Ruffin*: Leader in knitwear, credited for promoting the “t-shirt dress.”

*Scott Barrie*: Known for matte jersey dresses.

*Carol Horn*: Inspiration comes from travel and sources as diverse as India and Native American design, and her creative dresses and separates exemplify a downtown, artistic look.

*Albert Capraro*: Commissioned by First Lady Betty Ford. Designs raise his profile and expand the market for his suits and dresses that are classic yet feminine.

## **Japan**

*Hanae Mori*: Opens salon in Paris in 1976 and begins showing couture in 1977.

*Rei Kawakubo*: Establishes Comme des Garçons label in Tokyo in 1969; designs both womenswear and menswear inspired by her interest in synthetic materials.

*Kansai Yamamoto*: First Japanese designer to show in London. Takes great inspiration from traditional Japanese forms including kabuki, traditional clothing, historical paintings and printing, and irezumi tattoos. Mixes these sources with a contemporary Pop Art aesthetic and remarkable experimentation with form and shape. Creates striking costumes for David Bowie.

## **Essay and Discussion Questions**

7. How does the line between men’s and women’s fashions blur in the 1970s? Explore three to five examples of this “blurring.”
8. Discuss the casualness of fashion in the 1970s. What factors contribute to the relaxation of standards of appropriateness within fashion?
9. Examine the relationship between music and fashion in the decade. How do the varying musical styles of the 1970s contribute to fashion’s eclecticism? Illustrate your discussion with at least three examples.



## Further Reading

Adlin, Jane. "Design, 1975-Present." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd\\_dsgn4.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd_dsgn4.htm) (October, 2004)

Da Cruz, Elyssa. "Miyake, Kawakubo, and Yamamoto: Japanese Fashion in the Twentieth Century." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd\\_jafa.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd_jafa.htm) (October, 2004)

Eklund, Douglas. "Conceptual Art and Photography." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cncp/hd\\_cncp.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cncp/hd_cncp.htm) (October 2004)

"Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

Gross, Jared. "Design, 1950-75." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn3/hd\\_dsgn3.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn3/hd_dsgn3.htm) (October, 2004)

Martin, Richard. "American Ingenuity: Sportswear, 1930s-1970s." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd\\_amsp.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amsp/hd_amsp.htm) (October 2004)

Price, Shannon. "Vivienne Westwood and the Postmodern Legacy of Punk Style." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd\\_vivw.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd_vivw.htm) (October 2004)

"Zandra Rhodes." In *1960s Fashion and Textiles*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/z/zandra-rhodes/>

"Vivienne Westwood Designs." In *Vivienne Westwood*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/vivienne-westwood-designs/>

"YSL + Halston: Fashioning the 70s." New York: Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, 2015.

<http://exhibitions.fitnyc.edu/ysl-halston/>

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 11**

### **The 1980s: Power Dressing and Postmodernism**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to examine the paradoxical fashion climate of the 1980s as one defined by status, luxury, and conformity, while simultaneously being the reflection of a postmodern "anything goes" era. As global financial markets surged, materialism and "dressing up" reentered the fashion vernacular. The global dissemination of information allowed for a multiplicity of looks and the emergence of uniquely assembled subcultural styles.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

##### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - "Black Monday" begins in Hong Kong (1987) causing a ripple effect of stock market crashes throughout the world
  - People Power revolution in the Philippines deposes President Ferdinand Marcos (1986), who is replaced by Corazon Aquino, becoming the first female President of an East Asian country
  - violent protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square (1989)
  - fall of Berlin Wall (1989)
  - identification of HIV/AIDS (1981) causes retrenchment of attitudes toward sexual liberation
  - emergence of computer technology as a more common tool in the workplace
- Britain
  - Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher initiates free market policies which lead to economic prosperity
- United States
  - return to conservatism and boom of economic prosperity under President Ronald Reagan
  - success on Wall Street leads to increase of personal fortunes along with buoyant real estate markets, as well as conspicuous consumption of fashion and fine arts

##### *The Arts*

- Artwork in many media features unusual juxtapositions, humorous reworkings of classic forms, and unprecedented mixing of media, and is termed postmodernist

- Major works of architecture in postmodernist aesthetic include Philip Johnson's AT&T building in New York City and Michael Graves' Public Service Building in Portland, Oregon
- Key postmodern painters include Julian Schnabel, Sandro Chia, and Robert Longo
- Graffiti emerges as legitimate art form in the work of Keith Haring, Futura 2000, and Jean-Michel Basquiat
- Performance art gains wider recognition in the work of Leigh Bowery, Klaus Nomi, and Laurie Anderson
- Art market sets sales records with each passing season
- Emergence of Memphis movement in decorative arts
- Decade defining films include *Raging Bull* (1980), *Chariots of Fire* (1980), and *Dangerous Liaisons* (1988)
- Debut of outstanding theatrical works and musicals including *Les Misérables*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Cats*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*

#### *Fashion and Society*

- Decade is characterized by renewed emphasis on high-society style
- Revival of society rituals including ballroom dancing and debutante parties
- Emergence of "style tribes of affluence"
  - preppies (United States)
  - Sloane Rangers (Britain)
  - BCBG's (France)
- Mature style setters exemplified by Nancy Reagan
- European royals such as German Princess Gloria von Thurn und Taxis and Monaco's Grimaldi family captivate public interest
- Lady Diana Spencer fascinates the world upon engagement to Charles, Prince of Wales (1981)
  - dresses in "Sloane Ranger" style early in her public life before transforming into one of the 1980s most notable fashion icons
  - wedding dress is designed by husband and wife team David and Elizabeth Emanuel, and inspires copies throughout the world
  - laid-back and casual daytime styles coupled with sleek and elegant eveningwear is widely imitated
  - often wears designs by British designer Catherine Walker
  - becomes regular cover model for the world's most prominent fashion magazines

#### *Fashion Media*

- Prominence of lifestyle oriented publications that cover fashion
  - *Tatler*, *i-D*, and *The Face* (Britain)
  - *Town & Country*, *Connoisseur*, and *Interview* (United States)
- "Supermodels" set beauty standards that emphasize height and physical fitness
  - key figures include Naomi Campbell, Cindy Crawford, Linda Evangelista, Elle Mcpherson, and Christy Turlington
- Notable illustrators include Antonio Lopez and Michael Vollbracht

- Significant photographers include Herb Ritts, Francesco Scavullo, and Bruce Weber

### *Music and Fashion*

- Launch of MTV in 1981 makes visual fashion imagery of Pop, New Wave, arena rock, and rap more accessible to public
- Emergence of New Wave in the United States and Britain with notable style setters such as Joan Jett, Siouxsie Sioux, and Debbie Harry
- The New Romantics in London, embodied by Boy George, promote a look of “gender bending”
- Over the top hairstyles, such as the upswept versions worn by the members of A Flock of Seagulls, typify the fashion style of many different musical genres
- Madonna and Cyndi Lauper popularize postmodern “bricolage” aesthetic
- Rap and hip hop infiltrate the mainstream, promoting a style inspired by black urban street dress; influential acts include Salt-N-Pepa and Run DMC

### *Film and Television and Fashion*

- Film and television worlds continue frequent tie-ins with fashion designers
  - *American Gigolo*; Giorgio Armani (1980)
  - *Blade Runner*; inspiration of Adrian’s 1940s silhouettes (1982)
  - *Dynasty*; Nolan Miller
  - *L.A. Law*; Hugo Boss
- Emergence of “white flannel” film genre; exemplified by Merchant Ivory productions
- Establishment of eclectic and individualized looks for teens in the films by John Hughes, costumed by Marilyn Vance, such as *The Breakfast Club* (1985) and *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* (1986)
- Milena Canonero emerges as one of the decade’s most significant film costume designers with notable films such as *Chariots of Fire* (1981) and *The Cotton Club* (1984)
- Deborah Nadoolman Landis also has crucial impact on costume design with work ranging from *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) to Michael Jackson’s *Thriller* video (1983)

### *The Elements of Women’s Fashion*

- 1980s fashion is indicative of social status and economic achievements with key looks coexisting including preppy, “power dressing,” and avant-garde Japanese
- Return of black and neutrals coupled with unusual tertiary colors and jewel tones
- Emphasis on natural fibers
- Silhouette: day
  - 1940s revival particularly expressed with the V-shaped silhouette of wide shoulder and narrow skirt
  - volume is key, particularly in shoulders, sleeves, skirts, sweaters, and coats
  - skirt lengths vary from very short to ankle length
  - pants feature high waistline and are often pleated; leggings often worn instead of trousers
  - popularity of jumpsuits
  - romantic blouses dominate and are often worn with shoulder pads

- Silhouette: evening
  - cocktail dresses are staple, with the short dress for evening an important concept
  - full skirts, leg-of-mutton sleeves, volumetric ruffles, and peplums often highlighted through use of silk taffeta
  - tuxedo-style pantsuits and glamorous jumpsuits offer alternatives for evening
- Outerwear
  - popularity of dusters and oversized overcoats
  - prevalence of graphic plaids and tweeds
- Millinery and accessories
  - very important as status symbols
  - hat styles vary and include berets, felt gaucho hats, and fedoras
    - Stephen Jones emerges as influential headwear designer
  - shoes
    - pumps return to fashion in varied silhouettes
    - popularity of shoe clips to dress up plain shoes for evening
    - other important shoe styles include loafers, oxfords, slouched boots, and plastic “jellies”
  - ubiquity and variety of legwear ranging from seamed stockings for evening to layered ankle socks for day
  - handbags are varied with key daytime designers, such as Louis Vuitton and Coach, maintaining popularity alongside popular eveningwear names including Judith Leiber
  - jewelry is large and worn in multiples, often reflecting a pronounced historic style
  - sunglasses emerge as key designer statement piece worn constantly throughout the day
- Sports clothing
  - celebrity influence on activewear trends including fitness wear worn by Florence Griffith Joyner and Olivia Newton John
  - synthetic materials are encouraged
- Hair and beauty
  - hairstyles are often linked with musical personalities or celebrities and are styled differently for day and evening
  - popularity of bows as embellishment for sleek ponytails and French braids
  - emergence of the curly permanent
  - made-up face is fashionable
    - smoky eye for evening
    - thick eyebrow
    - defined cheekbones via blusher
    - focus on lipstick

### *Menswear*

- Characterized by continental elegance, classics, and edgier styles
- Top womenswear designers such as Saint Laurent, Valentino, Montana, and Moschino maintain success in menswear as well

- Traditional looks are revitalized as part of “dress for success” ideology
- Distinction between Italian and Anglo-American tailoring
- Suits are dominant look for business and evening with shoulders becoming exaggeratedly wide as decade progresses, mirroring the V silhouette of womenswear
- Popularity of vests as fashion staple
- Trousers worn at waist height with wide legs; pleated fronts produce a baggy profile
- Shirts move away from body-conscious tapering of previous decade and are cut full
- Neckties are focal point and a wide range of designer and novelty prints and shapes are prevalent
- Wide range of knits are promoted including fisherman sweaters and V-necks
- Outerwear options include overcoats and topcoats, as well as waist-length leather blouson jackets
- Footwear trends emphasize quality as many traditional styles are brought into focus including wingtip and two-tone Oxfords, as well as loafers in tasseled, plain, and “penny” styles
- Athletic shoes make transition from sports to general wear
- Hair is often side-parted or slicked back as men’s grooming emphasizes neatness and an Establishment look

#### *Children’s Fashion*

- Preppy look greatly affects children’s fashions
- Trend for dressing up influences girls’ party dresses
- Backlash against synthetic fibers is seen in childrenswear as well
- Popular music influences teen styles
- Brands such as Brooks Brothers and Ralph Lauren feature children in advertising, and more designers begin adding childrenswear to product line
- Athletic shoes begin to replace other shoe styles for all but dressy occasions

### **Key Designers and Their Influence**

#### **France**

*Yves Saint Laurent:* Celebrates twentieth anniversary in 1982 and is subject of retrospective exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1983. Designs continue to draw on a variety of inspirations, and luxurious output contributes to the cultivation of 1980s glamour. As decade wears on, role as trendsetter diminishes though continues to dress many of the world’s most fashionable women.

*Claude Montana:* Establishes ready-to-wear company in 1979 and menswear line Montana Hommes in 1981. Becomes known for innovative designs in leather and promotes a wide-shouldered, hourglass silhouette.

*Thierry Mugler:* Known for dramatic and at times campy aesthetic and one of the first designers to advocate the strong-shouldered silhouette. Work shows influence from the 1940s with details such as narrow skirts, swing-style coats, and peplums.

*Christian Lacroix:* In 1987 opens the first new couture house since Yves Saint Laurent, indicating a renewed interest in haute couture. Becomes renowned for frivolous evening looks, often inspired by the 18<sup>th</sup> century and colorful regional pieces from the south of France and Spain. Emphasizes luxurious materials and “pouf” dresses are extremely popular and widely imitated.

*Emanuel Ungaro:* Reenters spotlight with his designs that demonstrate a return to femininity. Short, draped silk “wrap” dresses are best sellers, while sexy, body-hugging evening dresses – often in jewel tones – are extremely popular.

*Jean Paul Gaultier:* Work is experimental and challenges convention, earning him the nickname *enfant terrible*. Work features cone-shaped bra bodices, corsets, and bustiers, and unisex looks including skirts for men.

*Karl Lagerfeld:* Becomes artistic director at Chanel and revitalizes the brand with an ironic examination and re-presentation of signature Chanel elements such as chain trim, quilting, and patent leather. Updates archetypal tweed suits with bolder tweeds, narrower cuts, and exaggeration of details.

*Azzedine Alaïa:* Launches ready-to-wear collection in 1980 and wins over press with his skill in drape and cut, often working directly on the body. Takes inspiration from Madeleine Vionnet, as well as from spandex activewear and earns the nickname “king of cling.”

*Patrick Kelly:* Earns reputation for crisp clothes with witty details such as colorful buttons or bows. Celebrity clients include Madonna and Isabella Rossellini.

*Issey Miyake:* Continues to show in Paris, with designs that are marked by experimentation with materials and an architectural approach. Outerwear is especially striking, ranging from wide blanket coats to futuristic nylon ponchos. Publication of book of Irving Penn photographs in 1989 reinforces his image as a creator of sculptural clothing.

*Rei Kawakubo:* Work features slashes and cut-outs, asymmetry, and creative fabric treatments. Experiments with wrapping and tying for skirts, pants, and booties. Work runs counter to prevailing designer trends and embraced by young women and the artistic avant-garde.

*Yohji Yamamoto:* Work is described as shocking and inspirational with ensembles that combine traditional Japanese elements such as kimono sleeves, quilting, and indigo with layering and menswear details.

*Mitsubishi Matsuda:* Work is distinguished by a minimalist aesthetic and quirky detailing. Pioneer in designer eyewear with frames and sunglasses that feature his architectural sensibility.

## **Britain**

*Catherine Walker:* Achieves notoriety due to her association with Diana, Princess of Wales, for whom she designs several hundred dresses and ensembles. Looks to classic styles for

inspiration, often the 1940s, and is captivated with the idea of the elongation of the silhouette. Eveningwear features elaborate couture details such as passementerie and embroidery.

*Vivienne Westwood:* Evolves from fledgling punk provocateur into significant designer, becoming noted for juxtaposition of old and new with a global flavor. Famed 1980s collections include “Pirates,” “Buffalo Girls,” and “Mini-Crini.”

*Rifat Ozbek:* Becomes known for exotic styling and details influenced by his Turkish heritage including velvets, ogival cut-outs, embroidered moon and stars, and deep color combinations.

*Katherine Hamnett:* Features smart and inventive fashion for men and women and is particularly known for t-shirts that feature slogans linked to political and social issues.

## **Italy**

*Krizia:* Offers slinky evening gowns and graphic separates alongside amusing knits.

*Byblos:* Offers clothes with a youthful focus ranging from bright tartan wool dresses to colorful “gypsy” ensembles.

*Benetton:* Family-owned knitting business that expands product line by adding sportswear, sporting goods, homewares, and watches, becoming one of the largest fashion manufacturers in the world.

*Giorgio Armani:* Emerges as the decade’s most famous Italian fashion designer, gaining recognition for his “elegance without stricture” aesthetic. Tailored womenswear is extremely popular at a time when professional dressing is important but women do not want to feel constrained by their clothes. Advocates for restraint in color and narrower silhouette.

*Gianni Versace:* Designs are aggressive yet playful and feature influence from regional dress and historic sources. His menswear experiments with shape and proportion, while his womenswear is dramatic and seductive.

*Romeo Gigli:* Promotes newer, softer shapes and inspirations range from counterculture street fashion to historical themes. Designs are outside the mainstream and appeal to a selective, individualistic customer.

*Franco Moschino:* Creates remarkably witty clothing combining an appreciation for Surrealism with a sense of humor about the fashion industry and consumer culture. Offers well-tailored silhouettes enlivened with comical details.

*Gianfranco Ferré:* Designs are dramatic, frequently opulent, and sometimes witty. Architectural structure and geometric details are common; overt historic inspirations and borrowings from menswear are often featured.



*Valentino:* Dramatic elegance of designs perfectly suits the prevailing tastes of the decade. Established product caters to the middle-aged wealthy woman who eschews more experimental styles.

*Roberto Capucci:* Combines highly developed skill for cut with a vivid color sense, creating complex and voluminous evening gowns for adventurous customers.

## **United States**

*Geoffrey Beene:* Designs take on a new wit and geometry winning over a new audience. Begins designing for men with comfort as a priority.

*James Galanos:* Enjoys renewed success due to being a favorite designer of Nancy Reagan. Exquisitely detailed gowns display inventive but restrained chic, favoring timeless style over trends.

*Victor Costa:* Known as the “King of Copycats” for his near knock-off designs of couture gowns. Dresses enjoy popularity during the affluent and aspirational decade and are particularly sought after during the decline of the economy toward the decade’s end.

*Calvin Klein:* Maintains relaxed good taste and continues updated takes on great American sportswear tradition with elegance and restrained chic. Calvin Klein Jeans become fixture of popular culture, while debut of men’s underwear in 1982 creates vogue for designer underwear.

*Ralph Lauren:* Continues to build on patrician theme adding Western and prairie influences. Equestrian logo becomes status symbol and appears on a wide range of products. Moves flagship store into former Rhineland mansion on New York’s Madison Avenue, further emphasizing elite lifestyle-driven approach.

*Perry Ellis:* Output features relaxed and sexy womenswear and menswear that takes traditional styles and gives them an offbeat, playful twist. Known for sweaters which are frequently long and baggy, as well as for short bolero styles, often with unusual color blocking.

*Donna Karan:* Offers career wear with distinctly urban sensibility and promotes black as a fashion color and for career wear. Believes in “strong basics” and advocates bodysuits as stylish, practical concept. Launches lower-priced DKNY line by the end of the decade.

*Stephen Sprouse:* Promotes a modernist aesthetic of bright colors, hints of androgyny, and punk-influenced details that appeal to an art-world clientele.

*Norma Kamali:* Known for spandex bodywear suitable for exercise or layering. Sweatshirt fleece emerges as signature fabric.

*Sandra Garratt:* Creates Multiples line in 1989 which features one-size poly-cotton jersey mix-and-match modular pieces that can be worn in a variety of ways.

## Australia

*Katie Pye*: Output is a distinct expression of the post-punk aesthetic with inspirations ranging from urban street life to Asian traditional dress to Apocalyptic. Clothes often make political statements with collection titles such as “The Ascension” and “Desperados.”

## Essay and Discussion Questions

10. Compare and contrast the silhouette of women’s fashions of the 1980s to that of the 1940s.
11. Discuss the impact of the global financial boom of the 1980s on men’s and women’s fashions.
12. Choose three designers and describe their work within the context of postmodernism.

## Further Reading

Adlin, Jane. “Design, 1975-Present.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd\\_dsgn4.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd_dsgn4.htm) (October, 2004)

Da Cruz, Elyssa. “Miyake, Kawakubo, and Yamamoto: Japanese Fashion in the Twentieth Century.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd\\_jafa.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd_jafa.htm) (October 2004).

“Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

“Patrick Kelly: A Retrospective.” Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 2004.

[https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/626/Patrick\\_Kelly](https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/626/Patrick_Kelly)

“Patrick Kelly: Runway of Love.” Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

<http://www.philamuseum.org/exhibitions/2014/799.html>

Price, Shannon. “Vivienne Westwood and the Postmodern Legacy of Punk Style.” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd\\_vivw.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd_vivw.htm) (October 2004)

“The Corset in Late Twentieth Century Fashion.” London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-corset-in-late-20th-century-fashion/>

“Vivienne Westwood Designs” In *Vivienne Westwood*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/vivienne-westwood-designs/>

“Vivienne Westwood, 1980-89.” New York: The Museum at FIT, 2011.

[http://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/past/2010-2011/index.php#Vivienne Westwood 1980 89](http://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/past/2010-2011/index.php#Vivienne_Westwood_1980_89)

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 12**

### **The 1990s: Subcultures and Supermodels**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to explore the eclectic fashion atmosphere of the 1990s as one marked by fragmentation and individualism, and whose diverse points of reference ranged from glamorous celebrities to gritty underground drug culture. Though luxury was still as coveted as it was in the 1980s, the definition of what constituted luxury changed, and access to brands that had historically been accessible only to the financial elite now became more attainable through diffusion lines.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

##### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - recession in many parts of the world in first half of decade, remedied in many locations by 1995
  - East and West Germany reunify in aftermath of the fall of Berlin Wall
  - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics splits into smaller independent nations (1991)
  - Slovenia and Croatia declare independence from Yugoslavia (1991)
  - during first Gulf War (1990-1991) an international military coalition liberates Kuwait from occupying Iraqi forces
  - civil war in Somalia
  - leadership instabilities in Haiti
  - global reaction and protest in aftermath of 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre
  - computer use enters daily life and early social networking, as well as online commerce, is firmly established

##### *The Arts*

- Young British Artists (YBAs) such as Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin present works calculated to shock
- Performance art reaches an extreme
- Exhibitions and media collaborations acknowledge the symbiosis between art and fashion
  - 1996 Florence Biennale
  - Marc Jacobs' collaboration with Jürgen Teller
  - Prada's contemporary art space

- Museum buildings such as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao designed by Frank Gehry are among most significant architectural achievements
- Variety of styles coexist in interior design
  - minimalist aesthetic
  - feng shui influence
  - “shabby chic”
  - opulent glamour
- Films explore a variety of themes including horror, history, human relationships, violence, and science fiction; key examples include *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), *Titanic* (1997), *Pulp Fiction* (1994), and *The Matrix* (1999)
- Science fiction, fantasy, police, and crime dramas are notable television themes around the globe
- Significant theatrical dramas and musicals such as *Angels in America* and *Rent* address issues of mortality and drug abuse
- Popular music is varied with the emergence of numerous festivals and charity concerts reflecting the diversity of genres; Nirvana’s *Nevermind* is generally considered the decade’s most significant album

#### *Fashion Media*

- British editor Anna Wintour revamps American *Vogue* to include more celebrity covers
- Glenda Bailey is appointed editor of American *Marie Claire* (1996)
- influential fashion journalists include Suzy Menkes, Isabella Blow, Iain Webb, and André Leon Talley
- Supermodels gain celebrity status as term becomes more ingrained in popular culture; newer faces include Tyra Banks, Shalom Harlow, and Alek Wek
- Anti-glamour and “heroin-chic” are personified by Stella Tennant, Kate Moss, and Kristen McMenamy
- Prominent photographers include Mario Testino, Nick Knight, and Steven Meisel
- Emergence of artistically driven fashion publications including *Dazed & Confused* (1992) and *Wallpaper* (1996)

#### *Heroin Chic*

- Emerges from a number of sources including punk, the grunge aesthetic, and the presence of HIV
- Photographic style is ubiquitous by mid-decade and features expensive designer clothing on emaciated models in dingy settings
- Models associated with look include Kate Moss, Jodie Kidd, and Jaime “James” King
- Aesthetic appears both in independent publications such as *i.D.*, as well as mainstream advertising campaigns including those of Calvin Klein

#### *Fashion and Society*

- Diana, Princess of Wales continues to fascinate the world as best-dressed divorcée, putting 79 of her gowns up for auction at Christie’s in New York to benefit charities

- America produces its own “royalty” including the Miller sisters and John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette, all of whom are covered extensively in the fashion press as style setters

#### *Film and Television and Fashion*

- Movie costumes have widespread impact on mainstream fashion
- Influential films/costume designers include Marilyn Vance for *Pretty Woman* (1990), Mona May for *Clueless* (1995), and Michael Kaplan for *Fight Club* (1999)
- Several costume designers’ careers are strongly asserted including Richard Hornung (*Natural Born Killers*, *The Grifters*), Sandy Powell (*Shakespeare in Love*, *Interview with the Vampire*), and Eiko Ishioka (*Bram Stoker’s Dracula*)
- Award-winning period dramas are fuel for numerous fashion editorials and designer inspiration; key examples include *Elizabeth* (1998), *Titanic* (1997), and *Evita* (1996)
- Trend for hiring fashion editorial stylists as film costume designers demonstrates significance of fashion within film
- Television exerts profound impact on fashion with shows like *Friends* (1994) being especially noted in the media and influencing youth fashion
- Diversity of female characters and wardrobes reflects extremes in womenswear ranging from Carrie Bradshaw in *Sex and The City* (1998) to the title character in *Ally McBeal* (1997)

#### *Music and Fashion*

- Prominent music magazines and MTV contribute to fashion trends in their coverage of performers
- Female musicians present a broad range of styles from the offbeat glamour of Gwen Stefani of No Doubt to the feminist vintage looks of the Riot Grrrl bands
- Many male musicians’ styles stem from grunge Goth and heavy metal genres, while the emergence of Latin pop artists promotes an elegant look

#### *Grunge*

- Style tribe embraced by Generation X that relies on vernacular of American staples such as flannel shirts, thermal underwear, jeans, and stocking caps
- Popularized by several Seattle based bands including Nirvana and Pearl Jam who reject slick looks of the 1980s in favor of layering improbable and often thrifted elements such as pajamas under ragged jeans and Henleys under t-shirts
- Reaches mainstream through the film *Singles* (1992) and the television series *My So Called Life*
- Editorialized in fashion media including American *Vogue* and Italian *Glamour*
- Reflected in designer runway shows including Marc Jacobs for Perry Ellis, Anna Sui, and DKNY

#### *Goth*

- Rebellious stance of Goth in the 1980s takes on a higher degree of artifice in the 1990s with head to toe black, including lipstick and nail polish, being the cornerstone of the look

- Aesthetic includes religious motifs as well as references to Victorian mourning costumes
- Films such as *Edward Scissorhands* (1990) and *The Crow* (1994) contribute to the propagation of the style
- Popular musical acts such as Marilyn Manson and Nine Inch Nails contribute to the look through performance clothing

### *Hip-hop Style*

- Hip-hop performers promote aesthetic that has global and multi-racial impact, favoring oversized t-shirts, hoodies, sports jerseys, and pants with dropped waists exposing underpants
- FUBU, Cross Colours, Timberland, and Lagerfeld for Chanel are among most desired brands
- Accessories include baseball caps, do-rags, “bling,” and teeth decorated with gold or platinum “grills” or “fronts”; premium attention on sneakers
- Male style leaders include Will Smith, Biggie Smalls, Puff Daddy, and Snoop Dogg
- Female style leaders include Queen Latifah, Lauryn Hill, and Mary J. Blige.

### *Fashion Trends*

- Although 1990s fashion is eclectic and segmented, a number of general trends emerge
  - couture continues to excite and inspire
  - “deconstruction” emerges and is expressed as unfinished-looking garments with torn edges, exposed seams, tears, and holes
  - “minimalism” favors simple clean lines and solid, often neutral, colors
  - “business casual” revolutionizes dressing for the workplace
  - 1970s revival in the form of low-rise flared trousers, body-hugging silhouettes, and tie-dye
  - distressed denim is fashionable, particularly in the form of cargo pants

### *Body Modification*

- Tattooing subculture emerges with influential artists such as Ed Hardy and Horyoshi III
- Scarification, piercing, and manipulation gain prominence with multiple piercings, nose piercing, and earlobe gauging becoming commonplace
- Prominence of music festivals contributes to propagation of tattooing and other body art

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Diverse and eclectic, with designers, stylists, and consumers almost perversely mixing clothing genres
- Fabrics
  - advances in synthetic fibers result in more upscale reputation for synthetics
  - popularity of animal prints
  - leather and snakeskin are popular pants materials
- Silhouette: day

- slender cut and small waist
- skirts are long and narrow, trousers are slim fitting
- pantsuits are extremely popular and are often feminized with silky blouses
- popularity of skirt suits with very short skirts
- mini skirts are worn at hip
- fluid bias cut skirts are worn at knee length
- knit tops are often very short and revealing
- emergence of babydoll dresses and body-skimming slip dresses
- Silhouette: evening
  - shows polar extremes of fashion and includes body-conscious bondage looks, 1930s inspired bias cut silk dresses, along with extremely casual maxi skirt/top combos
- Foundations and lingerie
  - emergence of “shapewear” to help consumers conform to lean lines of fashion
  - Wonderbra offers pushed up look that becomes standard bust shape
- Outerwear
  - wide silhouette is popular at beginning of decade with more slender shapes dominating by mid-decade
  - many coats are belted including short satin evening trench coats
  - fur and fur-trimmed jackets and coats are promoted in spite of protests by animal rights activists
- Millinery and accessories
  - top hat variations are particularly fashion forward, while mainstream hat styles include berets, newsboy caps, and baseball caps
  - shoes
    - emergence of luxury shoe designers such as Manolo Blahnik and Jimmy Choo
    - popularity of Mary Janes and T-straps along with high-heeled strappy sandals and mules of all heights
    - revival of platform shoes and clogs
    - boots of all shapes and styles are fashionable including laced-up granny styles, Dr. Martens, and over-the-knee boots
  - fashionable “it” bags dominate with each passing season including Fendi’s “baguette” and the Birkin bag by Hermès
  - jewelry trends include extremely long necklaces, chokers, and striking cuff bracelets
- Hair and beauty
  - hairstyles are inspired by film and television including the layered “Rachel” worn by Jennifer Aniston on *Friends*
  - popular hairstyles for women include smooth bobs, chin to shoulder length blunt cuts, and various up-dos with face-framing tendrils
  - experimental hair dying is popular, both for all-over coloring as well as for high-contrast highlights
  - make-up is balanced, with matte lipstick coming into fashion mid-decade



- nails are important part of beauty story with low-cost nail salons making regular manicures feasible

### *Menswear*

- Very designer driven and reflects influence from 1970s, subcultures, film, and television
- Dress codes continue to relax and personal styling of the suit emerges as norm with such key designers as Paul Smith, Hugo Boss, and Ermenegildo Zegna
- High fashion moves toward a narrow silhouette for tailored clothes showing influence from Victorian, Edwardian, and Mod modes
- Shirts are often tapered and feature a smooth finish, while collar shapes vary
- Sports clothing from golf wear to skateboarding and surfing styles enter general fashion vernacular
- High status underwear is aggressively marketed by designers such as Calvin Klein and Versace
- Shaved head becomes popular symbol of masculinity and general body hair is discouraged
- Ideal male body image is muscular, leading to extremes such as obsessive body building

### *Children's Fashion*

- Continues move toward informality begun in the 1960s; children dress in casual attire for all but formal occasions
- Little differentiation between school and play clothes
- Military styling influences boys' and girls' fashions in the wake of the Gulf War
- Brand awareness is influential and identifiable logos are prominent
- Many major labels such as Armani, Krizia, and Moschino offer children's fashions
- Professional sports are extremely influential
- Pronounced gendering of colors emerges and is even applied to the recoloring of the popular camouflage print
- Name brand athletic shoes are status items

### *Asian Style*

- Asian style and style setters are more prominent than ever before in Western culture, while Western fashion becomes more important in Asian countries
- Prominence of Asian and Asian American designers in fashion
- Japanese popular culture exerts marked influence, with Lolita style emerging as a prominent subcultural mainstay
- Successful Asian film stars including Leslie Cheung and Michelle Yeoh become celebrity style setters
- Asian Americans break numerous "glass ceilings" in popular culture and receive more media attention; model Rick Yune is the first Asian man to appear in Ralph Lauren and Versace advertisements

## Key Designers and Their Influence

- Late 1990s sees new designers moving rapidly and internationally between name-brand houses
- British designers exert international influence and design schools such as Central Saint Martin's nurture revolutionary talent
- Belgium established as source of avant-garde design through work of "The Antwerp Six"

### France

*Thierry Mugler:* Presents his first couture collection in 1992 mixing custom pieces and ready-to-wear, insisting there is little difference between the two.

*Claude Montana:* Continues focus on body-conscious styles. Designs for Lanvin from 1990-1992.

*Azzedine Alaïa:* Work remains in high demand, especially dresses made of strips of elasticized material that cling to the body.

*Jean Paul Gaultier:* Explores variety of themes that further cement his reputation for wit and invention with examples ranging from Rastafarian style in 1991 to Hasidic Jews in 1994. Costumes Madonna's 1990 "Blond Ambition" tour, revisiting iconic cone-shaped bra.

*Christian Lacroix:* Introduces more casual Bazar line in 1995 and continues fascination with embellishment and vivid color combinations. Designs eye-catching costumes for figure skater Surya Bonaly for the 1992 Winter Olympics.

*Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel:* Keeps the brand modern and relevant by utilizing exaggerated Chanel motifs including pearls, camellias, and black. Overt use of logos maintains house's relevance within popular culture.

*Helmut Lang:* Becomes known for signature style of spare silhouettes and a limited palette dominated by darks and neutrals that often include unexpected pieces in bright colors. Known for "hard" materials such as leather and rubber in the beginning of the decade and features softer fabrics by the end of the decade.

*Issey Miyake:* Launches Pleats Please label in 1993 and APOC line in 1997.

*Rei Kawakubo:* Challenges conventional silhouettes in her 1997 collection of gingham pieces that feature padding in unexpected areas.

*Junya Watanabe:* Launches label in 1994 and maintains a distance from prevailing trends, concentrating instead on experimentation with textiles on the body.

## Britain

*Vivienne Westwood:* Deepens her identification with British traditions through such collections as “Cut, Slash and Pull” in 1991 and “Anglomania” in 1993. Ruffs, panniers, and corsetry are repeatedly revisited.

*Rifat Ozbek:* Work shows a variety of influences ranging from Native American jewelry to the rainbow-colored styles worn by rave music fans. Output is often based on a body-conscious fit.

*Nicole Farhi:* Eschews theatricality in favor of consistent elegance, showing body-skimming slip dresses and simply cut pieces.

*Alexander McQueen:* Earns reputation as the “bad boy” of British fashion with such controversial collections as “Highland Rape” in 1995 and unusual silhouettes such as his “bumster” trousers. Theatrical runway presentations are integral to the realization of his ideas.

*John Galliano:* Revitalizes the house of Dior with designs that combine historical references with impressive craftsmanship. Explores such themes as the Belle Epoque, chinoiserie, and the 1940s, and stages runway collections in memorable locations.

*Stella McCartney:* Aesthetic is marked by quirky but wearable combinations that appeal to younger customers. Appointed to the helm of *Chloé* in 1997 and designs prove to be a good fit for the label’s *haute bohème* heritage.

*Hussein Chalayan:* Presents themes of time, movement, and cultural ideas of modesty with a predominantly minimalist aesthetic. Range of conceptual ideas includes “airmail” clothing in 1994 as well as surgical corsets in 1996.

## United States

*Donna Karan:* DKNY brand becomes particularly visible with flattering separates, often in black, that are versatile to wear. Cold Shoulder dress becomes best seller and is seen on celebrities ranging from Hillary Clinton to Candice Bergen.

*Calvin Klein:* Aesthetic reflects important trends of the decade including minimalism, lean fit, and provocative advertising. Diversification into lower-priced lines as well as fragrances return the struggling business to profitability.

*Ralph Lauren:* Growing roster of brands reflects interests of broad customer base with a focus on sports and outdoor wear. Wins praise during the Gulf War for varied interpretation of military look.

*Tom Ford:* Rekindles the house of Gucci through a sexy sensibility that favors a disco-inflected yet minimalist aesthetic reminiscent of Halston.

*Marc Jacobs:* Becomes head designer at Perry Ellis but his controversial “grunge” collection in 1992 ends the association. Accepts position with Louis Vuitton that helps finance 1994 revival of his own label.

*Issac Mizrahi:* Collections concentrate on wearable separates that acknowledge mid-century American sportswear. Career gains momentum very quickly due to wide distribution, television appearances, and 1995 documentary.

*Anna Sui:* Colorful versions of fashion classics establish reputation for original vision, with key collections drawing inspiration from grunge and rave aesthetics, mixing in more optimistic and retro elements. Becomes known for eclectic combination of inspirations ranging from global ethnic traditions to popular music.

*Vivienne Tam:* Her 1995 “Mao” collection is met with acclaim and controversy. Business enterprise grows quickly even encompassing consulting roles for automobile manufacture.

*Todd Oldham:* Launches womenswear line characterized by colorful pieces with whimsical touches that earns a young following. Pioneers use of “pleather” as a result of his animal rights activism.

*Cynthia Rowley:* Inspired by vintage style, including Claire McCardell.

*Francis Christian Roth:* Hailed for small collections of witty designs, some with cut-out shapes and *trompe l'oeil* details.

*Vera Wang:* Former fashion editor at *Vogue*, opens a bridal salon that features designer creations as well as her own designs. Espouses a modern and “fashionable” approach to bridal design.

*Michael Kors:* Focuses on well-fitting separates in quality materials that are sold in in-store boutiques in luxury department stores.

*Randolph Duke:* Swimwear designer who is contracted in 1996 to re-establish the Halston brand. Debuts own eveningwear line in 1998 and earns celebrity clientele.

*Pamela Dennis:* Gowns celebrities and top models in columnar evening dresses, while after-five looks are carried by department stores and boutiques.

*Richard Tyler:* Meticulously tailored clothing becomes favorite with entertainers.

## **Italy**

*Giorgio Armani:* Continues to show deceptively simple clothes that maintain his signature “illusion of weightlessness.” Also adds new lines to already impressive empire.

*Gianni Versace:* Work is simultaneously derided for objectifying women and praised for empowering their sexuality. Highlights include short evening dresses based on lingerie and corsetry, leather jackets adorned with studs and trapunto, and his famed safety pin collection.

Menswear includes bold printed shirts and is underscored by provocative advertising campaign.

*Dolce & Gabbana:* Known for “cinematic” collections that find inspiration in Italian heritage, Sicily, and the Catholic religion. Incorporate retro references into their collections and become favorite amongst celebrities and musicians.

*Prada:* Experiments with proportions and color combinations that are at odds with prevailing tastes. Accessories and eyewear are extremely popular, with black nylon “Prada bag” becoming an international sensation.

*Jil Sander:* Takes strict approach to fashion with a design aesthetic that is sometimes described as “sensual solemnity.” Trouser suits and unadorned dresses are especially appreciated for their blend of menswear detailing with feminine cut.

## **Belgium**

*Walter Van Beirendonck:* Work is characterized by bright, often fluorescent colors and willful exaggeration of silhouette. Collections from mid- to late 1990s combine retro references to futuristic styles, with the candy-colored aesthetic of the rave subculture and the emerging visual vocabulary of computer graphics.

*Anne Demeulemeester:* Uses strong tailoring and luxury materials to produce an elegant version of the deconstructionist aesthetic. Favors slim, disciplined silhouettes with surprise elements such as frayed seams or asymmetry.

*Dries Van Noten:* Work is especially distinguished for the international scope of his textile selection. Emphasis on layering is important often doing so in unmatched fabrications.

*Martin Margiela:* Aesthetic of deconstruction is expressed with unfinished seams, frayed areas, and some pieces subjected to mold or rust. Incorporates vintage pieces into many collections.

## **Essay and Discussion Questions**

13. How did the diverse range of 1990s subcultures influence both mainstream and designer fashion within the decade? Be sure to incorporate at least three examples of subcultures and three examples of designers.
14. Examine the minimalist aesthetic of the 1990s. How did this look differ from that of the 1980s? What factors might account for these differences?
15. Discuss the emerging and diverse influence of Asian cultures within Western fashion.

## Further Reading

Adlin, Jane. "Design, 1975-Present." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd\\_dsgn4.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd_dsgn4.htm) (October, 2004)

"All of Everything: Todd Oldham Fashion." Providence: RISD Museum, 2016.

[http://risdmuseum.org/art\\_design/exhibitions/109\\_all\\_of\\_everything\\_todd\\_oldham\\_fashion](http://risdmuseum.org/art_design/exhibitions/109_all_of_everything_todd_oldham_fashion)

Da Cruz, Elyssa. "Miyake, Kawakubo, and Yamamoto: Japanese Fashion in the Twentieth Century." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd\\_jafa.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd_jafa.htm) (October 2004)

"Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

"Gothic: Dark Glamour." New York: The Museum at FIT, 2008.

<http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Gothic/>

"Isaac Mizrahi: An Unruly History." New York: The Jewish Museum, 2016.

<http://www.jewishmuseum.org/exhibitions/isaac-mizrahi-an-unruly-history#gallery>

"Isabel Toledo: Fashion from the Inside Out." New York: The Museum at FIT, 2009

[http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Isabel\\_Toledo/](http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Isabel_Toledo/)

Price, Shannon. "Vivienne Westwood and the Postmodern Legacy of Punk Style." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd\\_vivw.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd_vivw.htm) (October 2004)

"The Corset in Late Twentieth Century Fashion." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-corset-in-late-20th-century-fashion/>

"Vivienne Westwood Designs" In *Vivienne Westwood*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/vivienne-westwood-designs/>

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.

## **Chapter 13**

### **The 2000s: Mixed Messages**

This Teacher's Guide, compiled with the assistance of Stephanie Kramer, is designed to provide you with a summary of the key points in the development of fashion during the period/decade covered in this chapter. It also provides a concise survey of the significant designers of the time, essay and discussion questions, and further reading and research suggestions.

#### **Objective**

The main objective of this chapter is to examine the highly convoluted fashion climate of the 2000s as one defined by globalization, popular culture, and a “mixed bag” approach. As fashion and its industries became more central within the mainstream consciousness, greater attention was devoted to the study of designers and styles past through film and exhibitions, as well as to the promotion and exaltation of designers of the future.

#### **Key Teaching Points**

The following teaching points have been arranged thematically and highlight the important topics that need to be covered in order to meet the main objective of the chapter.

#### *Social and Economic Background*

- Global
  - uncertain mood of the decade is defined by acts of terrorism such as the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the US Pentagon (September 11, 2001), as well as the Madrid train bombing (2004)
  - US President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair lead military action in the Middle East
  - Indian Ocean Tsunami claims more than 150,000 lives (2004)
  - influential heads of state include British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, France's Jacques Chirac, and US President Barack Obama
  - Vladimir Putin of Russia alienates historic allies through authoritarian agenda
  - despite friction between countries, global trade flourishes, encouraged by adoption of the euro as common currency throughout most of Europe
  - Western companies expand presence in previously underdeveloped markets
  - ubiquity of portable technology and rise of social media further add to the concept of a “shrinking world”

#### *The Arts*

- New York and London remain important art centers, while other regions such as Africa, mainland China, and India develop significant art scenes
- Most publicized works of the decade include Damien Hirst's diamond-encrusted skull and large-scale installations of Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson
- Several touring exhibitions such as *Bodies* and *Titanic* become mass market spectacles
- Monumental architecture projects include Taipei 101 and Dubai's Palm Islands, while the “small house” movement emerges in North America, Britain, and Japan
- Eclecticism continues in interior design, with the concept of democratic good design gaining prominence due to brands such as IKEA

- Films are extremely diverse with DVDs drastically reducing movie theatre attendance
- “Reality” television threatens to dominate medium and creates numerous celebrities such as Paris Hilton and Kim Kardashian
- Television dramas and comedies are still popular with paranormal themes emerging as a particular subject of interest
- Stage productions are varied and are often adapted from films, such as *The Producers*, *Spamalot*, and *Billy Elliot*
- Popular music is extremely varied with acts ranging from long established bands like the Rolling Stones to classical music singers such as Charlotte Church

#### *Fashion Media*

- Online sources become increasingly important for fashion information with blogs concentrating on “real people” through street photography and personal wardrobe posts
  - key international blogs include *The Sartorialist*, *The Style Rookie*, and *Style Bubble*
- *Vogue*, *L'Officiel*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Elle* launch editions in several Asian markets and develop websites and mobile applications
- Celebrities displace models on covers, with digital retouching reaching new heights
- Standards of beauty continue to expand, though established archetypes still dominate
- US television series *Project Runway* shines a light on the fashion design process, further projecting it into mainstream consciousness

#### *Designers as Celebrities, Celebrities as Designers*

- Details of designers’ personal lives become subject of public fascination due to fashion’s overall place within the media
  - Valentino’s de luxe lifestyle subject of documentary film
  - Marc Jacobs’ personal struggles detailed in press
- Many designers venture outside of fashion realm
  - Roberto Cavalli introduces premium vodka
  - Tom Ford ventures into movie making
- Many mainstream celebrities establish fashion lines and brands including J.Lo by Jennifer Lopez, The Row by Mary-Kate and Ashley Olson, and Sean John by Sean Combs

#### *Fashion and Society*

- American First Lady Michelle Obama emerges as important style setter advancing the careers of several young designers such as Jason Wu and Rodarte, while simultaneously wearing clothes from mainstream brands such as Gap and J.Crew
- In wake of the constant dubbing of the latest “fashion icon” by the press, curators and authors reinforce fashion legacies through retrospective exhibitions, whose openings become “red carpet” events
- Edith Ewing Bouvier Beale becomes accidental style setter inspiring numerous fashion editorials, as well as several designers including Marc Jacobs and Phillip Lim



### *Film, Television, Stage, and Fashion*

- Numerous films such as *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006) and *Zoolander* (2001) feature fashion as central component of plot
- Period films such as *Marie Antoinette* (2006) and *The Duchess* (2008) have considerable impact on fashion press, trends, and style tribes
- Fantasy films including *The Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Twilight* (2008) are influential on masquerade as well as vernacular fashion
- Films such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and *Kill Bill* (2003, 2004) reinforce interest in Asian style
- Television series such as *Sex and the City* and *Gossip Girl* hammer brand names into the minds of the general public and instigate major fashion trends
- Theatrical productions including *Spring Awakening* and *Wicked* feature highly publicized and influential costuming

### *Music and Fashion*

- Wide range of female performers from Jennifer Lopez to Amy Winehouse influence high fashion, as well as mainstream fashion trends
- Lady Gaga and Bjork are particularly noted for their provocative ensembles and collaborations with leading designers
- Male bands express a variety of styles ranging from the post grunge aesthetic of Coldplay to the New Wave and Teddy Boy look of The Killers
- Hip hop fashion continues to infiltrate mainstream style
- Male solo artists such as Jason Mraz and Josh Groban reflect and perpetuate trends in menswear

### *Fashion Trends*

- Informality prevails despite periodic calls from designers and press for “dressing up”
- “Fast fashion” offers democratized styles at low prices
- Millennials (Generation Y) display changed ideas about modesty
- Expansion of premium denim market
- “Hoodie” becomes wardrobe staple
- Camouflage is firmly ensconced in general fashion story
- Slashing, frayed edges, beading, and sequins are common forms of embellishment
- Innovations in competitive sports are adapted to consumer sports clothes
- Tattooing is widespread and de-stigmatized

### *Responsible Fashion*

- Fashion industry begins to address sustainability in various ways
  - promotion of hemp, bamboo, and corn-based fibers
  - some designers focus on organic materials and artisanal practices
  - magazines publish “green issues” and industry associations are formed
  - vintage and do-it-yourself are touted as sustainable fashion practices
- corporations take “social responsibility” pledges in the wake of high-profile cases involving child labor violations

### *Style Tribes*

- Hipsters affect an urban pastiche that is heavily influenced by past subcultures
- Emergence of “geek chic” that combines elements of retro styles with an adolescent or college sensibility
- Steampunk aesthetic emerges from 19<sup>th</sup>-century science fiction and shows influence from a variety of sources including Goth and Japanese street style, mixing improbable and anachronistic elements

### *The Elements of Women's Fashion*

- Fabrics and colors
  - bright bold colors are often seen as “pops” (accents) to otherwise neutral ensembles
  - animal prints are still extremely popular
  - popularity of futuristic fabrics such as vinyl
  - increased use of digital printing
- Silhouette: day
  - “boho-chic” is prevalent style and derives from a wide range of sources including the Middle Ages, Pre-Raphaelites, bohemians, gypsies, and the multicultural chic of the 1970s
    - tops are often camisoles, tank tops, and peasant blouses
    - popularity of gauzy babydoll dress
    - “floaty” full skirts are integral to the look, often tiered or gored
  - Revival of boyfriend style
    - boyfriend jeans are baggy, usually cuffed, and cinched at the waist
    - oversized t-shirts, jackets, and overcoats are common
  - popularity of “patio dresses” frequently of jersey with spaghetti straps or halter necklines and a long narrow skirt shape
  - continued popularity of skirt suits and pantsuits
  - skirt lengths with varied and often asymmetrical hems
  - lean, low cut pants are popular throughout decade, with high-waisted pants seen toward the decade's end
- Silhouette: evening
  - varies greatly
  - Goth inspiration found at all levels, from avant-garde designers to mainstream
  - popularity of classically inspired “goddess” dresses
- Foundations and lingerie
  - shapewear becomes increasingly important with Spanx emerging as an industry leader
  - bras emphasize cleavage
  - popularity of thong underwear
- Outerwear
  - coats are quite tight-fitting and often belted
  - trench coat variations are still popular
  - popularity of ponchos
- Accessories

- important vehicle for designer's aesthetic
- shoes
  - stiletto heels are fashionable early in decade with platforms gaining prominence by decade's end, often featuring a thin heel coupled with a platform sole
  - shoes are elaborately decorated
  - boots of every shape are prevalent
  - Christian Louboutin emerges as key shoe designer
  - popular casual shoes include UGG boots and Crocs
- bags are often large and ornate in a range of materials
- fashion for large plastic eyeglasses
- sunglass styles include aviators and oversized ovals
- Sports clothing
  - swimwear shows varied inspiration from retro to surfing
  - development of yoga clothing category
- Hair and beauty
  - prevailing hairdo is long straight or slightly waved, center parted or side parted
  - trends for bobs and long bangs
  - make-up focuses on eyes
    - includes the "smoky" look and cat eyes
    - brow shaping is important
    - emergence of false eyelashes and lash extensions
    - trend for natural cosmetics
  - manicures become more elaborate with decals, jewels, and sculptural details
  - prevalence of pubic grooming
  - use of cosmetic surgery and injectables increases among men and women

### *Menswear*

- General trends include continued influence from the 1970s and 1980s with looks ranging from preppy to futuristic biker
- Minimalism is asserted
- Vogue for men in skirts – limited but noteworthy
- Male style setters are varied and include Justin Timberlake (traditional look) and Beck and Johnny Depp (boho style)
- Emergence of the term "metrosexual"
- Two-button suit becomes widespread with the "shrunk" look becoming popular
- Trouser silhouette evolves from baggy to lean during the decade
- Shirts adhere to a traditional cut; shirt tails often worn untucked
- t-shirts are more popular than ever, often with slogans, logos, or embellished decorations
- Popularity of duffle coats, pea jackets, and trench coats
- Neckties become optional, while scarves of all sorts emerge as important accessory
- Popularity of traditional footwear styles such as Oxfords along with a variety of boot styles

- sneakers continue to be popular for casual wear
- Prevalence of large hand-held “status bags”
- Ubiquity of beanies and baseball-style caps
- Celebrity athletes such as Shaun White and David Beckham influence sportswear styling
- Male grooming and body image receive a lot of attention, with the “fauxhawk” emerging as a trendy hairstyle

### *Children's Fashion*

- Blend of diverse influences with inspiration from the 1970s and 1980s continuing
- Jeans, knit tops, and sweaters are basics of both boys' and girls' wardrobes
- Logos and licensed images continue to maintain importance
- “Flashdance” look is popular trend in girls' wear while skull and crossbones motif is ubiquitous on boys' pieces
- Special occasion styles include princess and ballerina-inspired pieces for girls and mini three-piece suits for boys
- Celebrity inspiration is important, and key style setters include Sasha and Malia Obama, Miley Cyrus, and Zac Efron
- Trend for high-top sneakers for boys and UGG boots for girls

### *Traditional Dress, Modern World*

- Global political events bring greater awareness of traditional Islamic dress such as the hijab, burqa, niqab, and chador
- Fashion thrives in the Arabian peninsula and European prestige labels create fashionable versions of *abayat* (women's overgarments)
- Popularity of *keffiyeh* scarf within Western culture, especially worn by hipsters
- Religious communities such as Orthodox Jews, the Amish, and Sikhs cling to traditional dress
- Promotion of *mitumba* (second-hand clothing) worn with indigenous garments by some sub-Saharan Africans
- Emergence of international style tribes such as the Sapeurs in the Congo as well as global fashion weeks such as the “Lakmé” Fashion Week in Mumbai

### *Asian Style*

- East Asia and Southeast Asia are firmly positioned in the global fashion scene, both as consumers and contributors
- Entertainment industry is strongly linked to promotion of fashion trends and fashion press grows notably
- Key Korean fashion designers include André Kim and Lie Sang Bong
- Revival of leather goods brand MCM by Sung Joo Kim
- “K-Pop” has a strong impact on fashion
- Growth of shopping malls and megastores in Mainland China
- Established Mainland China entertainers endorse luxury brands, while designers Guo Pei and Ma Ke lead the fashion industry

- Hong Kong continues to be prominent in film, music, and fashion with actor Edison Chen following example of celebrities involved in fashion lines
- International and high-profile success of Shiatzy Chen and Jason Wu encourage awareness of Taiwanese fashion
- Japanese style continues to encourage street looks with “cosplay” being strongly encouraged by style tribes
- Philippine Fashion Week becomes an important event in the Asia/Pacific scene with Philippine-born Monique Lhuillier enjoying success as a special occasion designer

## Key Designers and Their Influence

- Designers expand lower-priced lines as several houses and brands are updated
- Emergence of the designer collaboration phenomenon with such examples as Karl Lagerfeld for H&M (2004) and Issac Mizrahi for Target (2002)
- “Fast fashion” brands such as Zara and Uniqlo grow in size and become international powerhouses
- Red carpet exposure is key for popular special occasion designers including Zac Posen and Elie Saab
- Revival and reassertion of existing designers including Roberto Cavalli and Diane Von Furstenburg
- Reinvigoration of established houses through the installation of emerging design talents
  - Nicolas Ghesquière for Balenciaga
  - Alber Elbaz for Lanvin
  - Raf Simons for Jil Sander
  - Phoebe Philo for Céline

## France

*Yves Saint Laurent:* Under design direction of Stefano Pilati who successfully pairs references from the past with trend-inspiring silhouettes. Saint Laurent’s death in 2008 marks the end of an era while the overflow crowds at his funeral reconfirm his pre-eminent position in French culture.

*Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel:* Expands fine jewelry offerings and opens boutiques worldwide. Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2005 and documentary *Signé Chanel* in 2006 underline brand’s significance.

*John Galliano for Dior:* Continues to reinvigorate brand, expanding product lines and offering theatrical runway shows. Sixtieth anniversary couture showing in 2007 is held at Versailles and includes updates on the famous 1947 Bar suit.

*Jean Paul Gaultier:* Named artistic director of women’s ready-to-wear at Hermès in 2003 and continues to design his own collections, counting the actress Marion Cotillard among his most prominent clients.

*Olivier Theyskens:* Named artistic director of Rochas in 2002 and then moves to Nina Ricci in 2006. His Goth-inflected romanticism represents exciting aesthetic development for both houses.

*Shiatzy Chen:* Offers restrained and elegant styles that mix Eastern and Western influences. Gains membership in the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture in 2009.

*Viktor & Rolf:* Abandon couture and launch ready-to-wear line excelling at original designs such as blue-screen dresses with projected images.

*Martin Margiela:* Continues to challenge fashion world with collections made of recycled materials and conceptual presentations. Maintains cultish following of fashion insiders.

*Giambattista Valli:* Renowned for elegant eveningwear with hints of mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century structure.

## **Britain**

*Burberry:* Updates image with the appointment of Christopher Bailey who expands brand from classic outerwear to fashion, using memorable advertising campaigns to promote brand image.

*Alexander McQueen:* Expands into menswear, with drama and creativity that mark early years continuing with full force. Runway shows are especially elaborate, with models sent down the catwalk in 12-inch (30-centimeter) “Armadillo” shoes. His 2010 suicide ends momentous and industry-impacting career.

*Hussein Chalayan:* Collections featuring pieces such as wood skirts reinforce reputation for innovation, as artistic use of technology offers possibilities for fashion’s future.

*Gareth Pugh:* Background in theatrical costumes comes through in collections with futuristic silhouettes and Gothic references.

## **Italy**

*Valentino:* Retires in 2007 and house continues under creative directors Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli, who maintain house’s reputation for high style and fine craftsmanship.

*Giorgio Armani:* While numerous lines at varying price levels enjoy continued success, his couture collection, Armani Privé, is especially notable.

*Donatella Versace:* Continues the bold, sexy, and colorful aesthetic associated with the label, with visible entertainment clientele including Elizabeth Hurley, Angelina Jolie, and Lucy Liu.

*Dolce & Gabbana:* Maintain devoted following of high-profile customers and expand into a variety of collaborations and licensing opportunities including a make-up line.

*Minuccia Prada:* Becomes major financial player in the fashion industry and brand name becomes shorthand term for “high fashion.”

## **United States**

*Marc Jacobs:* One of the most visible designers in the world, with lower-priced Marc line debuting in 2001 and work for Vuitton marked by bold reimagining of the house’s traditions.

*Tom Ford:* Expands influences through work for Gucci and YSL Rive Gauche and establishes his own line in 2005. Reputation for highly sexualized version of luxury is underscored with lavish runway shows, chic retail design, and provocative advertising.

*Ralph Rucci:* First American to show couture in Paris since Mainbocher. Couture line features innovative construction such as “suspension” technique and work is featured in many exhibitions.

*Rodarte:* Unique approach to materials catches the attention of press and fashion-forward clients. Becomes known for artistic manipulation of materials and unexpected juxtapositions.

*Derek Lam:* Known for collections with feminine flavor and fine construction details.

*Peter Som:* Creates chic American clothes for his own line and serves as creative director for Bill Blass.

*Phillip Lim:* Establishes 3.1 Phillip Lim in 2004 with a mission to produce affordable, contemporary women’s clothes.

*Thakoon Panichgul:* Shows first collection in 2004 and reviews stress the elegance of his aesthetic with *Vogue* becoming an enthusiastic supporter.

*Alice Roi:* Establishes reputation for distinctive downtown sensibility.

*Proenza Schouler:* Established by Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez who rapidly acquire celebrity and socialite clientele with their distinctive aesthetic of colorful mix of traditional and modern.

*Jason Wu:* Career is ignited due to association with First Lady Michelle Obama.

*Alexander Wang:* Launches label in 2007 with a collection of interesting sweaters, leather pants, and knit dresses all designed to mix and layer.

## **Essay and Discussion Questions**

16. How does the global and technological expansion of the mass media impact the design and promotion of fashion? Consider the effect of film, television, social networking, and blogs.

17. Discuss the relationship between fashion and traditional/regional dress. Which designers were particularly influenced or inspired by traditional and/or regional dress? How did mainstream fashion influence traditional dress?
18. Examine the fashion trends and movements of the 2000s, such as boho chic, responsible fashion, etc. Which outside factors contributed to their propagation?

### Further Reading

Adlin, Jane. "Design, 1975-Present." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd\\_dsgn4.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dsgn4/hd_dsgn4.htm) (October, 2004)

"The Corset in Late Twentieth Century Fashion." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-corset-in-late-20th-century-fashion/>

Da Cruz, Elyssa. "Miyake, Kawakubo, and Yamamoto: Japanese Fashion in the Twentieth Century." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd\\_jafa.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jafa/hd_jafa.htm) (October 2004)

"Ethical Fashion Debate." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/e/ethical-fashion-debate/>

"Fashion Drawing and Illustration in the Twentieth Century." London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/fashion-drawing-in-the-20th-century/>

"Isabel Toledo: Fashion from the Inside Out." New York: The Museum at FIT, 2009.

[http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Isabel\\_Toledo/](http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Isabel_Toledo/)

"Japan Fashion Now." New York: The Museum at FIT, 2010.

[http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Japan\\_Fashion\\_Now/](http://sites.fitnyc.edu/depts/museum/Japan_Fashion_Now/)

Price, Shannon. "Vivienne Westwood and the Postmodern Legacy of Punk Style." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd\\_vivw.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vivw/hd_vivw.htm) (October 2004)

"The Rise of Sneaker Culture." Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 2015.

[https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/rise\\_of\\_sneaker\\_culture](https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/rise_of_sneaker_culture)

"Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back," London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/s/spectres/>



“Vivienne Westwood Designs” In *Vivienne Westwood*. London: The Victoria and Albert Museum.\*

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/vivienne-westwood-designs/>

\*Please note that the Victoria and Albert Museum website is in the process of being relaunched and articles and web addresses may be subject to revision.