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## INTERDISCIPLINARITY OF DESIGN ARTS

**Art research paper**

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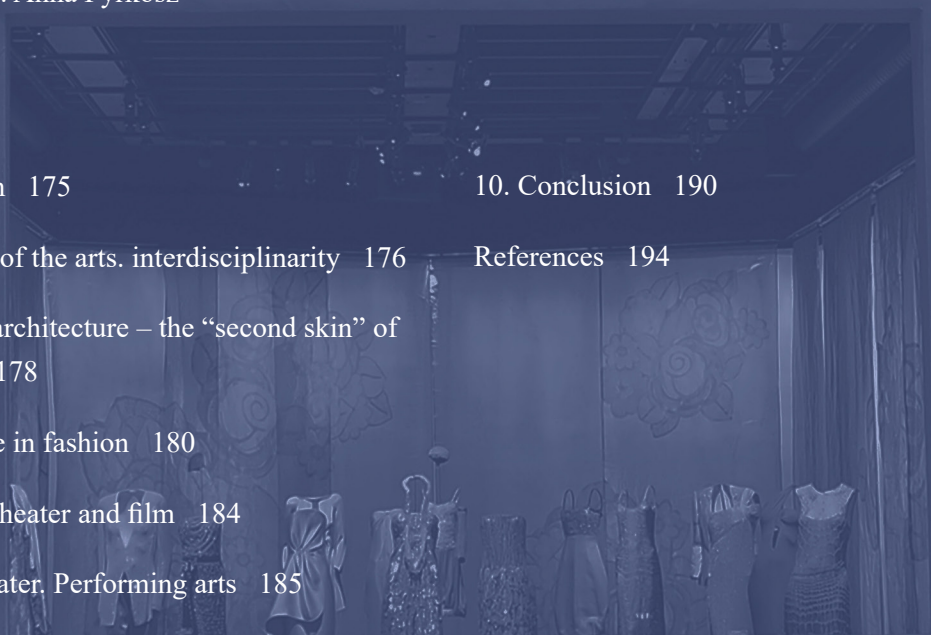
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## **Abstract**

The text takes up the problem of interdisciplinarity of fashion, architecture, exhibition, activities bordering on theatre or multimedia, pointing to the multifaceted relationship between fashion and broadly understood art. It shows that clothing design is a multi-media art.

## **Keywords**

fashion, interdisciplinarity, clothing, show, architecture, space, exhibition, multimedia, art, science, aesthetics, creativity, education, culture, synergy, transdisciplinarity, transculturality, performance

[...] an architectural dream, an unrealized plan?

I would like to design something beyond conventional architecture – something between architecture and landscape or architecture and clothing.

Kengo Kuma<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

In culture and modern art, what is important – because it is revealing, interesting, innovative and, at the same time, fundamental for the development and formation of future artistic attitudes – takes place between artistic conventions and preferences. These processes occur especially between the articulations of different media belonging to, or derived from, the visual and audiovisual arts.

**In art and science, and in the design arts above all, the fundamental process should be interdisciplinary activity, dynamic interpenetration of disciplines and fields of science, art and technology** in order to experience, experiment, to expand fields of creative experience and boundaries of knowledge about people, their place and space for life. In universities, the priority remains to set culture-forming horizons, develop tools to describe the world, change its rules, launch transformation processes in order to open up to the diversity of experiences and aesthetics, **to undermine, verify existing schemes limiting creative thoughts and activities.**

This idea is confirmed by the enormous potential of the interdisciplinarity of activities as unparalleled inspiring for the creative attitudes of contemporary designers. In an important way, its specificity is determined by the mutual overlap of different disciplines of art, science and technology.

The concept of interdisciplinary cooperation has a fundamental impact on the configuration of teaching units of higher (artistic) education, which develop and update their program guidelines on an ongoing basis, responding to the latest re-evaluations of contemporary art, science and culture.

Visual arts are a programmatic synthesis of media that simultaneously affect our different senses as recipients. The result is the combination of many fields of art using different means of communication in one realization, including also various scientific and artistic disciplines. With the development of digital forms of communication, there have been far-reaching changes that have their consequences in the ways of experiencing and understanding **the phenomenon of fashion in the sense of clothing**

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1 Quoted from: Marcin Sapeta in: „Architektura-Murator”, 2009, N° 11.

**design**<sup>2</sup>. Fashion projects are created in teams, often called “collaborations”, in cooperation with photographers, filmmakers, engineers or computer scientists. These ensembles reach for architecture, music or nanotechnology and, as a result, their activities also gain a performative character<sup>3</sup>. The process of these transformations is still ongoing. For example, at the beginning of the 21st century, a new type of **film, called “fashion film”**, developed. It shows fashion projects in the form of digital images. Fashion collections are exhibited together with works of art, they have their own museums and galleries. At the same time, artists and art curators, but also sociologists, philosophers and aestheticians, undertake research on the phenomenon of fashion as a socio-cultural and aesthetic phenomenon.



Fig. 1. Armani building, 2007 – Armani Silos Mediolan, photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka.

## 2. Syncretism of the arts<sup>4</sup>. interdisciplinarity

### The phenomenon of blurring genre boundaries characteristic of art

The most difficult process taking place in the fields of science, art and technology, which binds together in coherent wholes elements seemingly or really contradictory, because they come from different disciplines or specialties, is the so-called “**syncretism of arts**”. One of its examples a creative combination of fashion, photography and multimedia.

Since the end of the 20th century we have been asking ourselves why there is a need for interdisciplinary design activities in the building of a work, object or artistic event. To convey the character of the contemporary world, the changing and dynamic reality that surrounds us, a one-dimensional medium

2 Bogna Dowgiałło (the University of Gdańsk), *Socjolog w szafie. Prezentacja techniki pomocnej w badaniu ubierania się jako działania*: “[...] it is fashion that makes dressing an important part of social life. It is thanks to it that social diversity gains not only a new expression, but also a new plane on which it can be formed and validated. It is not without reason that fashion as a full-fledged social phenomenon was the subject of investigations of such classics as Thorstein Veblen (2008), Gabriel Tarde (1904), Ferdinand Tönnies or Georg Simmel (1980)”; [http://www.qualitativesociologyreview.org/PL/Volume22/PSJ\\_9\\_2\\_Dowgiallo.pdf](http://www.qualitativesociologyreview.org/PL/Volume22/PSJ_9_2_Dowgiallo.pdf)

3 <https://www.google.pl/search?q=husan+chalayan+pokaz+wy%C5%9Bwietlenia+led&source>.

4 Syncretism is ubiquitous in art: the “synthesis of arts”, i.e. an attempt to find a common language for art despite various forms of expression, feeling art with more than one sense ( E. Olinkiewicz, K. Radzyńska, H. Styś, *Słownik encyklopedyczny. Język polski*, Wydawnictwo Europa, 1999).

is no longer enough. **In order to be able to realize diverse, artistic and creative statements**, forms referred to as **“multi-media configurations”**. are necessary. These assumptions do not refer only to sublime forms of art and culture. Tendencies to blur the boundaries of media and sensory impressions and interactivity in creative processes **arouse interest** and the opportunities used, also outside the field of art, are perceived as fully legitimate activities<sup>5</sup>.

**One of the essential elements of presentation of fashion in relation to clothing is the selected frame of the space.** Its character, given by the shaping and composing in the aesthetic dimension, makes it both a kind of staging and exhibition with *theatrical* features, where various conventions of artistic expression, such as a collection of clothes, scene design, multimedia and others, enter into mutual relations, where everything has an impact on the reception of the whole spectacle, starting with costumes, background music, and ending with editing. Nowadays, it is becoming **a desirable skill** to construct newer and newer images for designed events. In response to these challenges, avant-garde forms of expression have emerged. These are, among others, multifaceted **artistic visual installations**. Their most important feature is visuality built based on the so-called “visual narratives” which we assume at the basis of creating artistic statements. As a consequence, we can experience events and objects from a broader perspective, in a more comprehensive dimension, perceived as **a more attractive, reflective message, because it engages our various senses**. As a result of such demands, an unconventional tool is created to present these creative activities, to communicate to others our judgments and sensory impressions and, thus, to process and create “things of the world” **anew**. The interdisciplinarity of the actions taken is inscribed in this process by all means, so that the recipient or user can interactively participate in the so-called “augmented reality”, experiencing the phenomenon of immersion<sup>6</sup>, to be **evoked** by the works, to immerse themselves in the real and virtual world, gaining **the opportunity to freely choose their viewing and experiencing**. For this purpose, **multi-directional** explorations are conducted, design takes place **in many aspects, on many levels of the process** of creation, **multi-threaded** compilations of various systems of combinations of ideas are created<sup>7</sup>, means of expression are selected and juxtaposed, and interdisciplinarity is an indispensable active state of these in-depth, complex in their structure, creative searches.

Contemporary art has no hesitation in borrowing from haute couture or prêt-à-porter fashion. An example is the artistic photographic works of Erwin Wurm made for the well-known clothing brand Palmers, which used visionary costumes by Walter Van Beirendonck<sup>8</sup>.

5 FLUXUS, eg. Grupa ETC, *Narracje estetyki geografie Fluxus w trzech aktach*, Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej.

6 The phenomenon of immersion (the process of absorption of the recipient) concerns multimedia arts, but it also finds references in other types of creativity.

7 Yves Saint Laurent, when designing the dress, was inspired by the painting by Piet Mondrian, one of his favorite painters. In 1965, the *Mondrian dress* was added to his collection, it is synonymous with the sixties and one of the most famous designs in the history of fashion (Kerry Taylor, London auction house); <http://www.blogdimoda.com/gli-abiti-la-storia-della-moda-foto-46948.html>

8 Erwin Wurm, the session for Palmers, 1996, [suyhnc.tumblr.com](http://suyhnc.tumblr.com).



Both the creators emphasize that in fashion they find great potential that allows them to manifest opinions and inspire change. Fashion shows, presentations or installations can **have such a strong and important message** as works of art, it is about creatively combining fields, while pointing to an interdisciplinary approach to fashion and art.

In the project entitled “13 Sweaters”, Erwin Wurm emphasizes the importance of clothing as a “second skin” which clearly shapes our image in the eyes of “others” and “our own”. The clothes of the exclusive Hermes brand, in turn, served him to transform the models into semi-abstract sculptures. The project with the intriguing title “59 Items” was intended to create gallery art objects, not a commercial campaign of market products. The beginning of the idea of reconfiguring clothes into artistic objects were much earlier projects by Erwin Wurm, entitled “Pedestals”<sup>9</sup>.

The artist reversed the order of things in them. Instead of setting the figures on a pedestal, he dressed the pedestals in knitted clothes to express the idea of combining geometric figures with the anthropomorphic idea of the body.

Marc Jacobs, the head designer at Louis Vuitton, designed the collections in collaboration with avant-garde Japanese artists: Takashi Murakami and Yayoi Kusama. Kusama’s characteristic dots covered Vuitton’s handbags, coats, and shop windows<sup>10</sup>.

By definition, working on complex **interdisciplinary projects** requires finding available tools and means, and inventing a whole spectrum of new ones, so that they result in original **visual-formal** projects (so-called “visual-formal messages”).

### 3. Fashion in architecture – the “second skin” of the building

All areas of life are subject to cultural and sociological conditioning, so it will not be surprising to indicate similarities and mutual formal connections or visual analogies between fashion, i.e. clothing, and, for instance, architecture.

Thanks to the digital design and the introduction of lightweight technologies to the market, architects have an opportunity to transpose techniques associated rather with textiles, such as prints or lace<sup>11</sup>.

9 Erwin Wurm, Big Coat 2010, MURM CLLC, <http://www.erwinwurm.at/>.

10 Marc Jacobs, the exhibition of the Louis Vuitton store, collection design in cooperation with Yayoi Kusama, <http://exspace.pl/articles/show/1918>.

11 *Skin+Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture*, examples and comparisons: overprint – the architects transpose the features of patterns, openwork and textures, printing them on facades to give the structures a narrative dimension. The second skin, the “clothing”, reflects identity of context. 6a Architects, Eley Kishimoto, Hairywood Tower for The Architecture Foundation, Old Street, London, 2006; Hussein Chalayan, Architectural Print Dresses from Before Minus Now collection, Spring/Summer 2000..

Herzog & de Meuron uses braided structures (the Olympic Stadium in Beijing, 2008)<sup>12</sup> or **façade quilting** (Prada Epicentre, Tokyo, 2003)<sup>13</sup>. as a means of expression particularly zealously. A great example is also our Polish pavilion designed and set up at Expo 2010 in Shanghai. The young authors (W. Kakowski, M. Mostafa and N. Paszkowska), looking for cultural references, reached for folk cut-out as an inspiration. It is a design object, such as Marcel Wanders' „Crochet chair” which looks as if it was made entirely of delicate lace<sup>14</sup>.

In order to strengthen the experience at many levels of perception, at the end of the 20th and early 21st centuries, a direct way of linking the space of presentation of collections with the spectacular architectural spaces became an attractive concept for fashion brands. Fascinating settings for the most famous fashion companies are created by star architects including Herzog & de Meuron, Renzo Piano, Frank Gehry, Jean Nouvel or Rem Koolhaas.

By transposing features, following characteristic shapes in the collections of a given brand, referring to the ideological concepts guiding them, visionary architects create unprecedented blocks of urban buildings. They create gallery spaces with surprising technological and formal solutions with sophisticated innovative material combinations. Exhibitions of clothes and accessories combined with architectural structures take on the dimension of works of art.

The concept of “interpassive shopping”, which is the result of research carried out by Rem Koolhaas, gave rise to architectural trends in fashion. In 1999, at Harvard University, the architect and his students developed guidelines for the concept of “interpersonal shopping”. Together, they proved that sales in stores increase when the shopping is done without pressures generated by the environment. It has been observed that the intriguing shape and interesting arrangement of store interiors, and the name of a recognized creator, add to increase popularity of the company, thus shaping its new image. Koolhaas, having presented the results, was able to verify them in practice almost immediately. He was offered to design Prada stores (New York<sup>15</sup>, Los Angeles) and the brand soon launched stores in this convention designed by other well-known architects and fashion companies. The trend has become widespread, which is why there have been so many recent ideas to transform modern retail space into cultural and exhibition centers. Architects use available high technologies and various possibilities of expression, especially in the expression of subtle transparencies, light and movement. Dior and Chanel department stores should actually be called “art galleries”. The same applies to Armani who commissioned the design of their store to Massimiliano Fuksas. It is also necessary to mention

12 Herzog & de Meuron using braided structures (the Olympic Stadium in Beijing, photo by T. Kapecki; Bird's Nest, stadium); architects: Ai Weiwei, Pierre de Meuron, Jacques Herzog, Li Xinggang in Beijing, photo by T. Kapecki (photo at the end of the article)

13 Prada Epicentre, Tokyo, 2003, photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka (photo at the end of the article)

14 Wanders Marcel, <https://www.marcelwanders.com/>.

15 Photo at the end of the article – Rem Koolhaas, Prada Epicenter, New York, 2000/2001.

P&C in Cologne by Renzo Piano's design studio, Frank Gehry's TriBeCa project in New York or Tod's store by Toyo Ito in Tokyo<sup>16</sup>.

The development of new commercial architecture is a trend particularly evident in Japan, where it is associated with fashion trends represented by many architectural gems designed by Japanese and foreign architects<sup>17</sup>.

The concrete ornament on the façade of Tod's Tokyo store designed by Toyo Ito, referring to the context of the place and synthetically transposing the appearance of neighboring trees, can be perceived as a mannerist, arbitrarily applied decoration, while it has been conceived as an essential structural element of the building. As a result of the use of fillings in the form of glazing in one plane, it is also a reference to the metamorphosis of openwork fabric. Considered together with the integrally designed element of lighting in LED technology, it generates transparency, which dematerializes and gives the form the effect of lightness, making the architecture a variable multimedia object with the characteristics of a work of art.

The closeness of links between fashion and architecture results from similar functions, and the perceived relationships are based on the fact that works in the both fields are based on form and construction<sup>18</sup>.

"The idea is to make a work of architecture and a work of tailoring art beautiful and functional at the same time." A good fabric, texture, which is a two-dimensional plane, is an essential requirement also when choosing an architectural material. The right form, construction and, finally, the cut model the external space, interior space or silhouette. In addition to the fact that it protects, providing a covering, it ennobles, as well as decorates, creates – whether it is an image, space or scale<sup>19</sup>.

#### 4. Architecture in fashion

Changes in fashion also occur under the influence of evolution in architecture. Fashion has always been subject to evolution, but especially dynamic seasonal changes began in the 20th century. Such architectural styles as Gothic, Baroque, Modernism, Eclecticism or Postmodernism were also reflected in the fashion proposed by individual designers. However, in contrast to architecture, in which styles are transformed especially as a result of the development of technology and are not repeated so

16 Photo at the end of the article.

17 Ewa Maria Kido, <http://www.polenia-jp.jp/obserwacje-japonskie/item/855-architektura-i-moda/> [15/05/2017].

18 <http://inkultmagazine.com/blog/fashion-rei-kawakubo>, <https://pl.pinterest.com/modlar/frank-gehry/>.

19 *Skin+Bones...*, examples and comparisons: structures – Diller Scofidio + Renfro Alice Tully Hall Renovation, New York 2009; Slideshow, Gehry Partners Todd Eberle, Los Angeles 2003; Heatherwick Studio/ East Beach Café, Littlehampton 2007; Moda – Comme des Garçons Ensembles from Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body, collection Spring/Summer 1997; Stretch nylon-urethane fabric; down pad Courtesy of Comme des Garçons.



often, in fashion stylistic references or processed inspirations return much more often, e.g. the style of the 1060's 1970's.

Fashion creators also use elements characteristic of architectural objects. Wardrobe collections are presented on catwalks around the world decorated with elements of such "building" materials as metal, glass or wood, which make the clothes similar, or refer to, formal structural solutions or decorative elements characteristic of well-known buildings<sup>20</sup>.

Recently, the fashion world has also been fascinated by the achievements of the latest technologies, reaching for multimedia and digital fabrics. The outer surfaces of clothes take on the function of coatings-screens to emit various images and patterns, as it happens with **media facades**<sup>21</sup>.

For the first time, using a technical trick, they were suggested to the Belgian duo Viktor & Rolf in a show under the eloquent title "Long Live the Intangibility" (the autumn 2002 / winter 2003 season). This time, the designers known for their sophisticated and careful designs of outfits made all the clothes from fabrics in the shade of blue used in the TV "blue box". Guests of the show could watch the models simultaneously on the catwalk and on screens where, in real time, various views and ornaments were applied in place of the blue fabrics. At the exhibition entitled "Skin + Bones. Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture"<sup>22</sup> presented an intriguing para-architectonic project of Hussein Chalayan, considered the greatest experimenter in the world of fashion, intriguing in its correlation of artistic statements<sup>23</sup>.

Hussein Chalayan has created a set of electronics and furniture, which consists of four armchairs and a table, and which in a few dozen seconds can be converted into clothes and suitcases useful in case of need for a quick escape. This "portable architecture" for wearing like clothes is an **intriguing work on the borders of fashion, architecture and design**, and, presented in the form of an exhibit and an instructional film, it fits into **the primal functions of the discussed fields: the protection of the human body from external influences**.

20 Paco Rabanne, Fashion and Architecture, Armored Space Princess Dress, *12 experimental and unwearable dresses in contemporary materials*, <http://www.mikapoka.com/2010/07/paco-rabanne-designer-and-rebel.html>. Paco Rabanne zawsze znajdował się pod wpływem architektury, jako że ukończył Wydział Architektury w École des Beaux-Paco Rabanne has always been influenced by architecture, as he graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. On February 1, 1966, a collection of *12 experimental and unique costumes made from contemporary materials* was displayed, which was an artistic manifesto.

21 <https://www.google.pl/search?q=husan+chalayan+pokaz+wy%C5%9Bwietlenia+led&source>, <http://edition.cnn.com/style/article/hussein-chalayan-innovation-and-the-fashion-industry/index.html>.

22 *Skin+Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture* is organised by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA) Somerset House Strand, London WC2R 1LA 020 7845 4600, [info@somersethouse.org.uk](mailto:info@somersethouse.org.uk), [www.somersethouse.org.uk](http://www.somersethouse.org.uk).

23 <https://architectureandfashion.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/huschal2.jpg>, <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/473933560757918753/>.

The authors of the “Skin + Bones” exhibition have undoubtedly given a new perspective on the both fields. Using more than two hundred works by over fifty innovative architects and designers from the last dozen or so years, they showed surprising convergences and connections in the search, in relation to both the form and the technology, and common inspirations in the process of creative thinking of simultaneously used methods of work.

Analogies are shown on examples of formal solutions used in relation to the outer shells of architectural solids and costumes, or to the construction of clothing and the structure of a given object. The both fields have evidently emerged as signs of prestige and a tool for, or way of, expressing the authors’ identities. Based on collected and developed examples from the both disciplines, mutual relationships were demonstrated, manifesting themselves already **at the end of the 1980’s**, when minimalist trends became visible on the catwalks, giving rise to the same trend in architecture. A characteristic feature was the shaping of the form in such a way that the function, construction and outer shell constitute a single, synthetic, inseparable whole.

In the 1980’s, for the first time, fashion questioned the concepts of beauty and femininity and introduced concepts of the body in a conceptual dimension. It should be noted, however, that the beginnings of the transformation lie in the fashionable punk costumes from the late 1970’s, which already took the initiative in deconstructing clothing, while showing a “politicized tendency”.

In 1982, architect Bernard Tschumi won the international design competition for the Parc de la Villette in Paris. His work and the associated collaboration between architect Peter Eisenman and philosopher Jake Derrida introduced the ideas of “deconstructivism” into architecture.

On May 15 of the same year, the exhibition entitled “Intimate Architecture: Contemporary Clothing Design” opened at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). It was the first fashion exhibition treated as an equal discipline in the field of design, organized by curator Susan Sidlauskas. The exhibition presented achievements of eight designers called “fashion architects”, who share a tendency to minimalist design and conceptual tailoring: Giorgio Armani, Claude Montana, Ferre<sup>24</sup>, Mandelli, Shamask, Issey Miyake, Yeohlee Teng and Stephen Manniello. During the vernissage, Issey Miyake said that fashion should not be separated from other design disciplines and pointed out that the fact that MIT had prepared this exhibition should inspire students to become not only computer but also fashion engineers.

This groundbreaking exhibition was the first public fashion presentation to explore the architectural aspects of contemporary clothing design while combining these disciplines into creative intercultural

dialogue. Since then, the mutual exchange of practices has provided a lot of inspiration for future architect designers<sup>25</sup>.

In recent years, the relationship between fashion and architecture has been expressed even more strongly thanks to the already widely used computer technology, as a result of which there has even been a kind of “coexistential exchange, when costumes begin to resemble architecture and buildings resemble costumes”<sup>26</sup>. Fashion designers create mobile, structural forms. Hussein Chalayan’s dresses have already gone down in history: remotely controlled, turning into angel wings or transforming into a flying snake.

Architects sensitive to fashion often engage in the design of clothes or jewelry. A well-known example is the Japanese architect Kengo Kuma who participates in the design of MaYu jewelry. Clothes, handbags or shoes reflect trends in construction, but also the aesthetic side of formal solutions of buildings, clearly noticeable in such directions as constructivism or minimalism.

Mutual influences, absorptions of architecture and fashion, can also be seen in the work of such fashion designers as Martin Margiela, Issey Miyake or Alexander McQueen and such architects as Tadao Ando, Kazuyo Sejima or Daniel Libeskind. In the both fields there are many outstanding figures. Among them the already mentioned Hussein Chalayan or Rei Kawakubo who admit how important inspiration fashion is for them. The influence of fashion on architecture is also reflected in the symbolic sphere of the work.

The use of metal, membrane structures, light glass, durable structural glass and plastics in contemporary architecture, as well as inspiration from deconstructivist or expressionist trends, has crossed the boundaries of architectural ateliers and construction sites to find themselves on the catwalks. It is clear that the development of modern fashion was also influenced by the development of textile technologies, which allowed to produce materials that, for example, are sensitive to ambient environment change thanks to built-in sensors. Materials resistant to climatic conditions also inspired the creation of clothes. Architects, in turn, continued to transpose traditional tailoring techniques of pleating<sup>27</sup>, stitching, cutting, draping or applying transparent layers, which allowed them to design flexible,

25 *Skin+Bones...*, examples and comparisons: deconstruction – Ralph Rucci, autumn / winter 2005; Comme des Garçons, Junya Watanabe, Martin Margiela, spring / summer 2005, architects: Eisenman Architects Project for a garden design, Parc de la Villette, Paris, France Presentation model of first scheme, June 1986; Nigel Coates New Wing, Royal College of Art, London (competition design) 2000

26 *Skin+Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture* is organised by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), Somerset House Strand, London WC2R 1LA 020 7845 4600, info@somerset-house.org.uk, www.somerset-house.org.uk.

27 *Skin+Bones...*, examples and comparisons: pleating – Issey Miyake introduced an innovative technology of pleating fabrics, resulting in structural clothing, collection, Pleats Please material (Miyake’s most innovative project was considered to be a “self-transforming” outfit under the name A-POC – A-Piece-Of-Cloth – as well as the concept of Making Things – a new principle of giving the fabric form by the user himself – a proposal for the 21st century); architecture – Gehry Partners – IAC Building, New York Digital prints i Alber Elbaz – Lanvin Dress autumn / winter 2003–2004.

transparent, non-flammable, and even folding and portable buildings (such as the Chanel Mobile Art mobile pavilion designed by Zaha Hadid)<sup>28</sup>.

Of course, the means of expression of architecture and fashion will always differ but both can be changeable, seasonal, universal or ephemeral. Progress and experiments in material technology and computer software make it possible to shift the boundaries between the two disciplines, making buildings more attractive and costumes more geometric, for example<sup>29</sup>.

## 5. Fashion in theater and film

[...] the actor's clothing, characterizing a given character [...], the costume better reflects the era in question; it is such a transfer into another world [...], the set design and costume allow to properly introduce the viewer into the atmosphere of the performance [...].

Today, space is built with costume, prop, light. Glossy floors, mirrors, aluminum, colorful lights and effects "boost" the performance. Against this background, the costume associated with an actor must appeal to the viewer. It is a complement to the stage design: a creation, not a simple reproduction of historical truth. It defines the characters, talks about their profession, social status or character. The theatrical costume is actually the only external attribute that the actor can reach for, which is why it is very important that the stage dress allows the artistic concept of the performance to be realized. The fashion for costume in the theater is constantly changing.

Martin Margiela, a master of theatricality, **repeatedly emphasized that the most important is the vision that embodies in clothes: "cut, rework, deconstruct and draw fabrics from everything at hand". He is significantly interested in the texture of the material.** The designer uses unusual materials to produce his unusual creations. He likes to combine the softness of fabrics with hard materials, referring to the idea of a formal solution to the iconic dress of Yves Saint Laurent<sup>30</sup> inspired by the work of Piet Mondrian, testifying to how much **fashion owes to art.**

Digital fashion films<sup>31</sup> are a form of (re)presentation of fashion, which has fully developed in the 21st century. They were started by Nick Knight, a photographer whose interests develop around the

28 <http://bubblemania.fr/pl/bulle-zaha-hadid-architects-art-mobile-chanel-art-contemporain-container/>.

29 *Skin+Bones...*, examples and comparisons: geometry – Kazuyo Sejima + Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan 2004 and Yohji Yamamoto Whalebone Top and Skirt from Wedding collection Spring/Summer 1999; J. Meejin Yoon Möbius Dress, 2005, Felt Views of Möbius Dress Looped and Unlooped 2005 and Eisenman Architects Max Reinhardt Haus, Berlin (unbuilt) 1992–1993.

30 Zob. <http://www.blogdimoda.com/gli-abiti-la-storia-della-moda-foto-46948.html>. One of the most famous fashion designers of all time, Yves Saint Laurent, when designing a dress, was inspired by an abstract painting by one of his favorite painters – Piet Mondrian. The dress, which got the name in his honor, went to the creator's collection in 1965. *Mondrian dress* is synonymous with youth and fun of the swinging sixties. "It's one of the most famous designs in the history of fashion," says Kerry Taylor of London-based Kerry Taylor Auctions, which specializes in selling luxury vintage fashion (<http://www.tvn24.pl>).

31 A. Raciniewska, *Cyfrowy film modowy*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Bankowej w Poznaniu”, vol. 67, 2016, N° 2.

possibility of showing “clothes on the move”<sup>32</sup>. These “visual fashion re-presentations” are just as present in the fashion world as actual physical shows. Fashion films are made in cooperation with professionals from the industry and beyond, reaching for fine arts, music, architecture or performance backstage in order to explore new forms of aesthetic expression. They are to emphasize and strengthen links between fashion and art. The SHOW.studio.com platform created by Nick Knight and Peter Saville, which they based on values such as movement, time, duration, sound, participation and dialogue, enabled the creation of the subgenre of the digital fashion film called the “designer’s film”<sup>33</sup>.

## 6. Fashion theater<sup>34</sup>. Performing arts

Costume exhibitions often contain elements of a scenographic nature. Similarly, contemporary **fashion shows** have been raised to the rank of real shows<sup>35</sup> with sophisticated scenography, extensive scripts, sound and lighting effects. **In this way they emphasize links between theatre and the world of fashion, clearly showing the interdisciplinarity of activities in the areas of knowledge, science and art** more closely related to theatre, such as costume design, music, visual arts, multimedia or exhibition, and even textiles<sup>36</sup>. **The form of the spectacle is art referred to as performance**, combining music, dance and theater interspersed with playing social and professional roles, with the use of media, as well as the Internet. So, in this form of creation, in the fundamental dimension, there is a simultaneous synthesis of image, sound, movement and narration.

Also fashion is a form of performance, although it is argued that this applies *strictly* to the “style of dressing”, which is a certain category of rebellion against what is personalized. By embracing symbolic forms, it affirms individual and cultural values. This type of art, artistic expression, assumes that fashion is a regulatory mechanism in the society, occurring in the form of performances played every day, and clothing is one of its most important elements. The way we dress, on the one hand, makes it possible to fulfill the need for belonging through imitation and, on the other hand, it becomes a means of emphasizing our individuality and creating identity.

Currently, fashion houses make spectacular shows, a kind of performance art<sup>37</sup>, providing a variety of aesthetic experiences. These shows take place in an area arranged in an extremely visionary way, **at**

32 Ibid, p. 96.

33 Ibid, p. 98.

34 In order to prove that, despite the post-war crisis, Paris is still the capital of fashion, French designers proposed in 1945 an unusual form of presentation of the latest fashion creations. Instead of models, they used dolls that were exposed against the background of an extensive scenography.

35 “Life is theatre”. This is mentioned by E. Goffman in his work “Man in the Theatre of Everyday Life”. Each of us has a role to play, puts on masks and constantly plays, communicating with others. It is important to be aware of the subject and that he has to communicate something. In performatives, what is important is what happens between the viewer and the work of art.

36 Speaking of the complex relations between art and science, it is impossible not to notice the activities of artists drawing from science (cf. Victoria Vesna and her pioneering activities).

37 <https://kulturalnyswiatm.wordpress.com/2014/10/14/niezwykly-performans/> NIEZWYKŁY PERFORMANS [14.05.2017].



**a specific time and place: site-specific. It is important that the subject of artistic reception is not only the presented collection but the entire performance consisting of the place, scenography, choreography, script and performers presenting creations.**

**Of course, one can agree that the real performance takes place on the street, where different people meet, becoming active participants in the ongoing process of arranging space, at the same time as presentation and observation.** This definition of performance, the artistic situation, includes Lady Gaga's artistic performances. The artist also in her everyday life, through her stage creation "external in character", gives her actions a dimension of a street performance, playing a significant social role, e.g. assuming an eloquent creation in the form of a dress "sewn" from raw meat.

The vast semantic field of performance allows us to perceive fashion as interdisciplinary activities of a cultural nature.

Another example of an artist using fashion in his work is the Italian artist Vanessa Beecroft who engages models for her artistic projects (performances), turning them into motionless mannequins to record reactions taking place during contact with the audience<sup>38</sup>.

In the space we are interested in, between fashion and art, there are also installations by Ewa Kulasek. The work entitled "Table with 12 Hats" consists of two tables, on which various colored and different-shaped felt hats are arranged in two rows. The hats, made by the artist, perform the function of sculptures but they are also purely functional and are suitable for wearing, which is visible at fashion shows presented under the SCHA brand. We find out how much fashion, art and performative activities, as well as social media, have in common, following the work of Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, called the master of color, a graffiti artist and an intriguing exhibitionist of the Facebook era, an avant-garde iconoclast, who in the 1970's and 1980's collaborated with such creators of contemporary art as Robert Combas or Loulou Picasso. The example of Castelbajac's work shows another way of combining fashion with art<sup>39</sup>.

Fashion, in order to find inspiration and creative experiences, can cross all boundaries; for example, completely break with the scheme of classic presentation of clothes and models. During his shows, Hu Shenguang creates an atmosphere similar to that prevailing during a film adaptation of a horror, and the presented projects can hardly be called clothes: they are rather costumes behind which you can hide, but which you can not actually wear. These elaborate combinations of wire, leather, plexiglass and netting that the models wear make the whole thing look like moving sculptural objects taken from science fiction or horror movies. Often, by design, Hu Shenguang's shows abound in accents of horror. Studded with metal spikes, the costumes carry with them an aura of dark nightmares.

38 <http://www.radio-mazowsze.pl/index.php/moda-w-sztuce>.

39 <http://olkakazmierczak.com/blog/marka-jean-charles-de-castelbajac> [06/05/2017].

Artistic creation or performative activity, including fashion shows located in an interdisciplinary approach, consist in **crossing borders**. Fashion<sup>40</sup> is constantly expanding its borders, as a result of which it is consistently entering newer and newer territories.

## 7. Crossing borders. Transgression

Performativity is the work of imagination, permanently incarnating in new roles, contributing to the building of common experiences based on the need to simultaneously affect all senses (touch, hearing, taste, smell, sight or balance), because „the whole body is the perceptual organ”<sup>41</sup>. In these situations, space, having a fundamental impact on the reception, determines how and whether we experience it in the theatre of life, determines the distance between the stage and the audience, the object and the recipient, in order to touch our emotionality. Scenography understood as a broadly designed “visual narrative”, co-creating a performative space of assumed references and influences, and at the same time its reception, uses an evocative arrangement of spatial forms, matter and images. **Until now, philosophical concepts and artistic attitudes have largely assumed that it is the artist – the designer, architect, costumed – who decides what is to be seen and, to a large extent, how it is seen.** The designed reality defined by multimedia art in the field of exhibition accepts an increased expression of forms and means within possible equal areas of design, such as the exhibition of objects, 2D and 3D advertising projects, presentations from the video mapping category or animations. Therefore, with the advent of the 21st century, art is developing in many scientific fields, thus becoming an extremely dynamic area for research<sup>42</sup>. With the new century, important new issues have entered into life, which have given rise to different ways of thinking and, thus, stimulated intensive interdisciplinary scientific discussions and cooperation projects.

Among these issues, the most important are the latest **electronic technologies and the visual culture** which has been granted the status of a scientific discipline and which in many ways tries to understand what different types of images communicate and how they participate in building phenomena such as identity or dignity and freedom of the individual, important social and political values and concepts. We observe processes related to conducting multidirectional analyses in relation to various forms of popular culture – films, television programs, graphic novels – but also to fashion projects, using for this purpose theories and methodologies from the areas of such scientific disciplines as semiotics, sociology, psychoanalysis or reception theory (various models of coding and decoding media discourses; see Stuart Hall) and the important theory of view (the concept of “interpassiveness of

40 In the context of the suspension of “in between”, while for some fashion begins to become “art”, for others it has always been so

41 Edward T. Hall.

42 The author of the essay – Prof. Jean Robertson, Rector of the Department of Art History at the Herron School of Art and Design, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, <https://pl.khanacademy.org/humanities/global-culture/beginners-guide-contemporary-art1/a/art-in-the-21st-century> [20/05/2017]

view”; see: Jacques Lacan), which introduces a fundamental **change** for the creators **in the traditional logic of vision. In the Lacanian approach, “it is the image that designs and determines the coordinates of looking, it is the image that places the subject in the presented space”**<sup>43</sup>. Creators of the 21st century, together with researchers of visual culture, dealing with images (projects) and media of various types, point to the complexity of the interactions between science and contemporary art, referring to scientific development. Inspired by the discoveries of mathematician and artist Ben F. Laposki, using the oscilloscope as a medium for abstract art creation, Kim Hagelind designs futuristic clothes. Hagelind creates outfits resembling sculptures made of laser-cut plastic (the “Oscillons” collection)<sup>44</sup>. His creations kept in dark tones are created on the model of electronic abstractions.

Based on her research on the structure and history of tears, considered as a “private, intimate emotional experience”, designer Tomoko Hayashi creates **jewelry unique in the sensual dimension**. The artist places collected tears in a food substance traditionally used in the production of Japanese sweets, in order to create **a new kind of specific exchange of experiences**.

The presented collections of fashion objects have the dimension of works of art, aiming at visibility while implementing ecological and pro-social features, so in cooperation with various fields of industry and science, **clothes are created, for example, from paper that can be recycled, or from a whole series of super fabrics made from nanofibers of nickel, copper or silver**, textile fibers carrying electric microimpulses, or prototypes of clothes made of fibers from microcapsules, which cause the fabric to change its properties under the influence of temperature or light. In the fashion world, we are dealing with designers such as Olivier Lapidus who, using the latest technological achievements, creates, among other things, jackets that regulate temperature, while stylist Elisabeth Senneville is working on a project aimed at creating clothes that filter environmental pollution.

**These avant-garde experiments with technologies, materials and form provide extraordinary feelings and bring reflection of an existential, philosophical nature. On the occasion of visual impressions, they question the usual patterns of thinking about fashion as a biased outfit.**

## 8. Transculturality

The ever **faster** exchange of human activities and information in time and space – of course, thanks to the development of the Internet and mass media – means that the awareness of the vitality of contemporary art (21st century) in societies around the world is growing at a very **fast pace**. The constant

43 Katarzyna Swinarska, *Przemieszczenie. Interpasywność spojrzenia*, [http://www.asp.gda.pl/upload/private/przemieszczenie\\_streszczenie\(2\).pdf](http://www.asp.gda.pl/upload/private/przemieszczenie_streszczenie(2).pdf) [12/05/2017].

44 Kim Hagelind, *Oscillons* – the collection inspired by electronic abstractions and oscilions by Ben F. Laposki, 2011. Clothes made of plastic, photo by Alexander Dahl, <http://magazyn.o.pl/2013/zuzanna-sokolowska-czy-moda-jest-sztuka-cuda-niewidy/2/>.

intensive movement of artists results in the mixing of different influences and different artistic languages, and universal access to the network allows you to keep track of the achievements of artists from Tokyo, Seoul or Milan. As a result of this global, spreading at the speed of light, exchange of content, ideas and images, the implemented fashion projects also have a transcultural dimension<sup>45</sup>. In the era of globalization, they grow out of multiculturalism, consciously using and combining cultural codes with experience and knowledge of the latest technological and scientific achievements.

The already mentioned Hussein Chalayan, through clothes, also tries to see the dependencies that determine the outfit and the reality that surrounds us. Presenting the video installations entitled “The Absent Presence” (2005) or “The Place of Passage” (2003)<sup>46</sup>, **he forces us to consider fashion in aesthetic terms**, not limited to design. Words describing ideas, stylizations juxtaposing photographs and films in a mutual context, create a message about their purpose. The discourse and visual message, the introduced context of symbols raise clothes to the rank of **creative fashion** and clearly affect our idea of clothes.

This image is a product of our knowledge of similar forms, works of the same designer or creator with a similar style, but also the overlap of cultural clichés and, therefore, tradition which made the verbal and pictorial representation of exclusive costumes reach the audience in the right form.

## 9. Site-specific art<sup>47</sup>

Today, fashion and related design activities refer to broadly treated artistic activity, addressing issues related to the coexistence of a person, recipient or user with his environment, considering important social issues and cultural development along with the changes taking place. Fashion issues identified by clothing or fabric and the technological processes associated with it also address **problems of the landscape environment**, referring to specific spaces and places of particular importance. Creative reference in the form of the formulation of the object, artistic expression is preceded by a study of the **“cultural matrix of the place”, the site-specific<sup>48</sup>**, taking into account, among others, its historical, architectural, environmental or social aspects. So, there is an interdisciplinary and multi-discipline

45 Transculturality is a concept that was created by the philosopher Wolfgang Welsch. He says that today’s cultures are largely characterized by mixing, penetration and hybridization, cultures no longer have the previously suggested form of homogeneity and distinctiveness. The concept of transculturality as a new concept of culture arose in response to the lack of satisfaction with concepts such as multiculturalism and interculturality. Transculturality is a term representing contemporary tendencies in the philosophy of culture and in the area of cultural studies, dealing directly with the study of cultural spaces.

46 Hussein Chalayan, *Miejsce przejścia*, 2003. Color and sound, screenplay and direction of the film: Hussein Chalayan, 12’10”, courtesy of Galerist, Istanbul.

47 Site-specific art was initially described by architecture critic Cathrine Howett and critic Lucy Lippard as a movement.

48 The field of art that includes works of art created to function in a precisely defined place. This place is usually known in advance – it is already taken into account in the design stage of the work itself. It refers to architecture, interior architecture / show / scenography. Also, works using the achievements of blue box technology obtain the described feature.

cooperation. An example of this is the “Transfashional”<sup>49</sup> project based on an experiment of young artists and designers operating on the border of fashion and art with a goal of crossing the boundaries between the disciplines. From the search for alternative solutions, they work to develop a “production” of ideas. Many of their creations are characterized not so much by wearability (or rather by their distinctive feature is a functionality) as by a critical, **engaged conceptual character**. In this sense, **they can be read as symbols and symptoms of the spirit of our times**. Artist Lara Torres in her video essay “Unmaking” urges viewers to stop and think about what fashion will be created in the future. The visual narrative consists of a series of performative gestures such as ripping or tearing, as a result of which “awareness of the symbolic meaning of the thread, fragment and everything that becomes a material trace of human existence” is built. The works of another artist, Ana Rajčević, taking the form of sculptures that can be worn, were aimed at activating both ancient and futuristic connotations in the recipient. Kate Langrish-Smith has gone a little further in her reflections on the concept of wearability and functionality, encouraging viewers to interact. The performative objects-sculptures designed and made by her imitate the movements of characteristic body postures. Other projects, using the language of artistic analysis, look for a potential in the materials used, experimenting with their destruction, creating from them sets of a nature of systemic sets for creating a variety of composition layouts on the user’s body. Graphic designer Maximilian Mauracher, in turn, undertakes in his site-specific installation activities related to the translation of graphic signs and textures into fabrics. Noteworthy is the series of interactive video installations<sup>50</sup> reaching for work with the text, in this case inspired by Robert Musil’s novel “The Confusions of Young Törless”, focusing on civic and creative attitudes in relation to the broadly defined environment, including cultural and social ones. Intriguing ideological assumptions were adopted by the artistic project by Manory Auersperg. **The recipient participates in the process of tracking the transformation of the original structure of the fabric to its total destruction: then there is a complete change in its relationship with the surrounding environment. This multi-threaded and creative analysis has a deeply contextual background, with an indication of its significant role in the sustainable planning of our environment.**

## 10. Conclusion

A significant role in the current post-humanist culture is attributed to design, fashion and advertising, which make us “observe a systematic and intense esthetization of the everyday life of each of us”, including the environment closest to us: home, workplace or recreation<sup>51</sup>. The phenomenon of fashion

49 *Transfashional. Eksperymentalna moda w kontekście sztuki*, the Ujazdowski Castle’s Centre for Contemporary Art, <https://asp.waw.pl/2017/05/09/transfashional-pokaz/>.

50 Authors: Janusz Noniewicz, Dominika Wirkowska, Wojciech Małolepszy, Robert Pludra and students of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. The organizers of the *Transfashional* show – the Austrian Cultural Forum in Warsaw in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, the University of Applied Arts in Vienna (Die Angewandte) and the London College of Fashion, with the support of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts and Culture, Constitution and Media.

51 B. Dziemidok, *Główne kontrowersje estetyki współczesnej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2002, p. 306.



should therefore be looked at comprehensively, as an important means of expression regulating the social life of people and their interpersonal contacts.

According to Gilles Lipovetsky<sup>52</sup>, the French sociologist and philosopher, fashion already “at the end of the 19th century began to be a common form of socialization”<sup>53</sup>, and now it consists in the taste for having all novelties. In our consumerist culture, every day there is an exchange or borrowing between different fields and disciplines of knowledge, science and art, as a result of which **fashion has also begun to “go beyond ready-to-wear clothes”**<sup>54</sup>.

Iris van Herpen<sup>55</sup>, considered to be an advocate of the digitization of fashion, creates her futuristic designs at the interface of art, architecture and technology. Using 3D printers and laser technology to process various types of polyurethane plastics and metal, she gives spectacular evidence of legitimacy of undertaking interdisciplinary explorations. Sophisticated, very complex laser cuts determine the matter and futuristic form of the objects designed by her. In cooperation with Isaie Bloch, an architect and graphic designer, she has realized one of the most valued hybrid creations: the “Magnetic Motion” depicting the result of the collision of two nuclear molecules. Using Mammoth’s new stereolithography technologies, an additive fabrication technique, a three-dimensional object was created layer by layer in a one-piece form that is the physical equivalent of a computer project. It should be emphasized that reaching for solutions and workshop possibilities brought by the latest technologies is dictated by the need to implement the most daring, often very complicated, projects.

Designer Nicolas Ghesquière is currently the greatest authority on futuristic fashion. Working for the Balenciaga fashion house, and then for Louis Vuitton, he became famous as a precursor of new technologies in fashion, designing futuristic creations in a “cyber” climate for “women from the future”, considering as a priority the need to combine virtual media with the realities of everyday life.

In avant-garde projects, fashion combines futuristic technologies with a conceptual approach to the role of cut and fabric, placing itself between work of art and creative engineering. Thus, fashion is activated as a visual art at the junction of various poetics, media and technologies with emotional potential, also presenting reflective and metaphorical searches. In such examples of creation, it seems obvious to say that fashion is an interdisciplinary art, and its vision sets the future directions for the development of visual arts and the broadly understood culture of society.

52 B. Dowgiałło, *Socjolog w szafie. Prezentacja techniki pomocnej w badaniu ubierania się jako działania*, „Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej”, vol. 9, 2013, no 2, p. 184–201, online: [www.przegladsocjologiijakosciowej.org](http://www.przegladsocjologiijakosciowej.org) [26/05/2017].

53 P. Nowak, *W stronę Ja relacyjnego? Moda, autoprezentacja i tożsamość*, <https://books.google.pl/books?id=9pbFBgA-AQBAJ&pg=PA346&lpg=PA346&dq=badacze+o+modzie&source#v=onepage&q=badacze%20o%20modzie&f=false> [22/05/2017].

54 <http://magazyn.o.pl/2013/zuzanna-sokolowska-czy-moda-jest-sztuka-cuda-niewidy/#/>.

55 <https://www.google.pl/search?biw=1371&bih=679&tbm=isch&sa=1&q=van+Herpen&oq,> also the author of selected creations m.in for Björk and Lady Gaga.



Fig. 2. Prada Epicentre, Tokio, 2003, photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka.



Fig. 3. Rem Koolhaas, Prada store in New York, photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka.

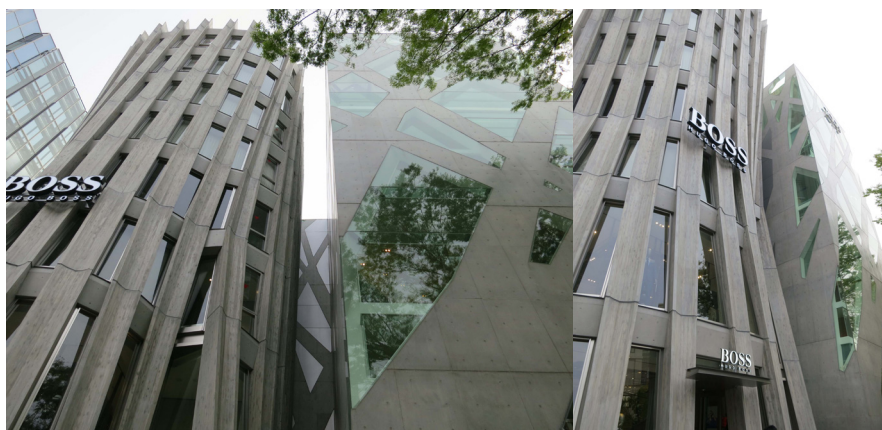


Fig. 4. Tod's store by Toyo Ito in Tokyo. photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka.





Fig. 5. Mikimoto Building by Toyo Ito in Tokyo, photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka.

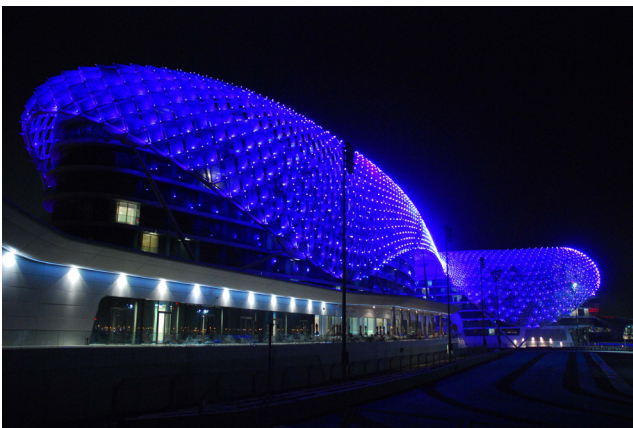


Fig. 6. Yas Hotel, Abu Dhabi, by Asymptote, 2009, photo: B. Gibała-Kapecka.



Fig. 7. Beijing National Stadium, „The Bird’s Nest”, by: Ai Weiwei, Pierre de Meuron, Jacques Herzog, Li Xing-gang, photo: T. Kapecki.

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