

editor's note

Welcome to this, our second, fashion-themed issue for 2017. The inspiration came from a conversation about the literature of dress¹ between editor Philip Pacey and Stella Mary Newton (at the time a research fellow at The Courtauld Institute of Art) in a 1976 issue. I would re-visit that article in a conversation with Rebecca Arnold, the current Oak Foundation Senior Lecturer in History of Dress & Textiles at the Courtauld. Sadly conflicting schedules did not permit a conversation in person and I was never able to convert our 'email conversations' into a publishable article. However, I thank Rebecca for her involvement in the inspiration for both the fashion volumes this year. She started me thinking about fashion in a different way in her replies to my questions, just as she had encouraged me to think about the Stella Mary Newton archive as something beyond an archive when I, as special collections librarian, began to use it in library inductions for students of the MA History of dress at the Courtauld.

That conversation between Pacey and Newton back in 1976 was characterized by her disappointment about the lack of resources available in libraries to those studying and researching the history of dress. I think these two fashion issues demonstrate that we have come a long way forward.

1. Philip Pacey. "Literature of Dress: Stella Mary Newton in conversation with the Editor" *Art Libraries Journal* vol.1, issue 3 (Autumn 1976): 4–10 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0307472200000572>



Library induction for MA History of Dress, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2011. Photo: Erica Foden-Lenahan

In this second issue, the focus is on particular collections, including descriptions of holdings, as well as special projects they are currently undertaking. And the viewpoint by Stella Halkyard, although not about fashion at all, demonstrates how the John Rylands Research Institute is pointing a way forward for libraries and archives to exploit the potential of the research resources contained within their collections. Dieter Suls has contributed an overview of Europeana Fashion, which draws together the digital content of so many European fashion collections in a single platform to enable anyone to explore the important role fashion plays in our social and cultural history. While the Yorkshire Fashion Archive, whose

collections and digitization Suzanna Hall describes, represents how fashion is so ingrained in our cultural history at local level. Helena Britt of the Glasgow School of Art and Cathy Johns of the RCA highlight, among other things, how their archives document the student fashion shows, tracing the development of fashion education in the UK. Karen Trivette of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City and Adelheid Rasche from the Lipperheide Kostümbibliothek in Berlin describe the unique resources available to practitioners and researchers at their institutions, while Maud Roberts looks at building a 21st-century collection to serve new fashion programmes of study at the University of Stockholm.

With this wealth of fashion resources available and the emerging technologies supporting its discovery, I think the library communities can agree they have done much to address Newton's comments, although there is still so much more to do. I hope an interested researcher at the Courtauld will join with the library and create a project of the Newton archive to make it more accessible.

Erica Foden-Lenahan