

## **Aalto University Summer School: Aalto Fashion Studies Seminar**

### ***Fashion – Places and Spaces***

3–14 June 2019, Aalto University Campus, Otakaari 1, seminar room M205

(Optional kick-off seminar Fashion Wednesday 29 May, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma at 16-18 and annual Aalto Fashion catwalk show Näytös19, Cable Factory at 21.00)

Credits: 5 ECTS

Level: Advanced (MA & PhD-level students) and life-long learning

Responsible teachers: Adjunct Professor Annamari Vänskä (Aalto University) and Professor Hazel Clark (Parsons School of Design, New York)

### **AIMS**

Aalto Fashion Studies Seminar *Fashion – Places and Spaces* provides a critical review of definitions, theories and practices of fashion through the study of how places and spaces have influenced and are influenced by fashion, especially in the twenty-first century. Through theoretical and contextual readings, discussions and field trips to Helsinki-based fashion brands, retail spaces, museums and galleries, the course will develop an understanding of fashion, culture, identity and the city. Areas of focus will include, fashion time and space, geographies of fashion, fashion and national identity, street style, and exhibiting fashion. Where fashion is produced and displayed in Helsinki, will be studied with reference and in comparison, to other 'fashion cities.'

Beyond close reading of texts and critical class room discussions, students will become familiar with fashion practitioners and experts in Finland through visits to companies, designer's studios, and museums. Students will work independently and according to their interests to explore one or more of the concepts and discourses introduced on the course, learning how to utilize and synthesize theoretical and primary research perspectives in the study of fashion.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

On completion of the course, students will be able to

- explain the complexity of the concept and practice of fashion
- explain the interdisciplinary nature of fashion studies and its related disciplines
- appreciate the work of key scholars who have influenced fashion studies
- understand fashion as a global phenomenon through a local lens
- analyze fashion as spatialized and site sensitive practice
- apply theories and discourses of fashion to their own work

### **COURSE FORMAT AND TEACHING METHODS**

The course consists of seminars, discussions, analysis, visits and a final presentation.

### **PASSING THE COURSE**

Passing the course, students are required to attend the class room sessions, contribute to group discussions and complete a research-based poster presentation

### **ASSIGNMENT**

There are two course assignments, in addition to the assigned readings for each class, and contribution to class discussions: weekend research and final academic poster. Grading scale: pass / fail

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1 – Contexts – places/spaces

**During the first week** the course delves into different notions of spaces and places that have influenced and are influenced by fashion. The week starts with an introduction to the course. The following days will be dedicated to specific themes: fashion cities, retail spaces, production places, and virtual places.

Mon 3 June

#### 13-16 *Fashion Studies: Introduction & Methods*

We begin by considering the development of fashion studies as a field and move on to consider the specific focus of the course – fashion places and spaces. Resulting questions will include - how is an understanding of fashion shaped by place, and equally how might fashion influence an understanding of place (especially in the current century)? How might fashion be studied as a spatial phenomenon?

#### Readings for the seminar

Jenss, H. 2016. 'Introduction: Locating Fashion/Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices,' in Jenss, Heike (ed.), *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices* (Dress, Body, Culture). Bloomsbury Publishing, 1–18.

Kaiser, Susan B. 2012. *Fashion and Cultural Studies*. London, New York: Berg, 1–27 & 172–194.

Potvin, J. 2009. 'Inserting Fashion into Space,' in Potvin, J. (ed.), *The Places and Spaces of Fashion, 1800-2007*, New York: Routledge, 1–15.

#### 17–18.30 *Film viewing*

Wenders, Wim 1991. *Notebooks on Cities and Clothes*. Film, 81 minutes, featuring Yohji Yamamoto – to be viewed in class.

Tues 4 June

#### 10–12 *Places – Fashion – Cities*

The 'fashion city' (especially Paris, London, New York and Milan) has become a contemporary site of fashion production and identification. How did this come about, and what then of other (aspirant) fashion cities e.g. Helsinki? To address this topic, we will consider how fashion might be seen to give 'value' to cities, and new and emerging fashion centers around the globe.

#### Readings for the seminar

Chun, N. & Gurova, O. 2019. 'Place-Making the Local to reach the Global: A Case Study of Pre-Helsinki,' *Fashion Practice*, 11:1, 26–52.

Buckley, C. & Clark, H. 2017. 'Introduction,' *Fashion and Everyday Life: London and New York*, London: Bloomsbury, 1–26.

Riegels Melchior, M. 2011. 'From Design Nations to Fashion nations? Unpacking Contemporary Scandinavian Fashion Dreams,' *Fashion Theory*. 15: 2, 177–200.

Gilbert, D. 2006. 'From Paris to Shanghai: The Changing Geographies of Fashion's World Cities,' in Breward, C. & Gilbert, D. (eds.), *Fashion's World Cities*, Oxford and New York: Berg, 3–32.

13:30-16 **Field trip**

Design Museum & exhibition by Aamu Song & Johan Olin (COMPANY): *Secret Universe*  
<http://www.designmuseum.fi/fi/exhibitions/company-secret-universe/>.

Address: Korkeavuorenkatu 23

Wed 5 June

10-12 ***Spaces of Fashion – Retail***

Fashion is associated with the commodity sphere and thus defined within the context of contemporary consumption. The development of modern spaces of consumption and display, notably the department store and the museum, will be considered as the foundation to the question of the role of contemporary retail spaces in fashion promotion, display and sales in our understanding of fashion, along with the relationships between spaces of fashion and art.

**Readings for the seminar**

Bengtson, P. 2018. 'Fashion Curates Art: Takashi Murakami for Louis Vuitton,' in Vänskä, A. & Clark, H. (eds.): *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 199–212.

Crewe, L. 2016. 'Placing fashion: Art, space, display and the building of luxury fashion markets through retail design,' *Progress in Human Geography*, 40:4, 511-529.

Potvin, J. 2008. 'Armani / Architecture. The Timelessness and texture of Space,' in Potvin, J. (ed.) *The Places and Spaces of Fashion, 1800–2007*. London and New York: Routledge, 247–263.

Oswald L. 1996. 'Review: The Place and Space of Consumption in a Material World'. *Design Issues* 12:1, 48–62.

13:30–15 ***Field trip: Kämp Garden***

13-13.30 Kämp Garden concept

13:45-14:15 Samuji

14:30-15:00 Nomen Nescio

Thurs 6 June

10-13 ***Spaces of Fashion – Production***

How does production of clothing affect understanding of fashion? In the twenty-first century fashion has become typically 'fast fashion', characterized by mass production, preference over high turnover and clothes that last for a very short time. As a counter reaction to fastness, some designers and brands have taken a 'slow' or more 'sustainable' approach to designing and making clothes, exemplified by several Helsinki-based designers and brands.

**Readings for the seminar**

Gurova, O. & Morozova, D. 2018. 'A Critical approach to sustainable fashion: Practice of clothing designer in the Kallio neighborhood of Helsinki,' *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 18:3, 397–413.

Crewe, Louise 2017. 'Slow Fashion and Investment Consumption,' *The Geographies of Fashion: Consumption, Space, and Value*. New York: Bloomsbury, 65–79.

Moon, Christina 2014. The Slow Road to Fast Fashion. GIDEST publication (published as earlier version under the title 'The Secret World of Fast Fashion,' *Pacific Standard*, March 17.)

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/53a0503be4b0a429a2614e8b/t/5424204be4b0e8cce9e065b3/1411653707529/Moon.pdf>

Clark, Hazel 2008. 'Slow + Fashion: An Oxymoron or a Promise for the Future...?' *Fashion Theory*, 12:4, 427–446.

Leopold, Ellen 1992. 'The Manufacture of the Fashion System,' in: Juliet Ash, Elizabeth Wilson. *Chic Thrills: A Fashion Reader*. London: Pandora, 101–117.

### 13:30–16 *Field trip*

13:30-15:00 Finlayson, address: Porkkalankatu 13

15:30-17:00 Miltton Studios, address: Uudenmaankatu 4-6

18:00 Social event (optional): Attending the opening party of the exhibition 'Future Delay' at Helsinki Contemporary gallery, address: Bulevardi 10.

Fri 7 June

### 10-12 *Spaces of Fashion – Helsinki – Public vs. Virtual*

In the twenty-first century, fashion is undergoing a radical change with the rise of visual culture and digitalization. One of the most prominent 'places' of fashion is the internet and its social media applications. Digitalization has democratized and disrupted fashion from manufacturing to distribution. Today we will be discussing how visualization and digitalization are changing the understanding of fashion and our sense of fashion places and spaces.

### Readings for the seminar

Bendoni, W. K. 2017. 'Digital Disruption of The Fashion Industry,' in *Social Media for Fashion Marketing. Storytelling in a Digital World*. London and New York: Fairchild Books, especially pages 9–32.

Rocamora, A. 2017. 'Mediatization and Digital Media in the Field of Fashion,' *Fashion Theory*, 21:5, 505–522, DOI: 10.1080/1362704X.2016.1173349

Luvaas, B. 2016. 'Urban Fieldnotes: An Auto-Ethnography of Street Style Blogging,' in Jenss, H. (ed.), *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London & New York: Bloomsbury, 83–100.

Findlay R. 2015. 'The Short, Passionate, and Close-Knit History of Personal Style Blogs,' *Fashion Theory*, 19:2, 157–178.

### 13–16 *Preparing for the weekend assignment: Fashion in Helsinki*

Researching fashion in Helsinki. You will explore fashion in Helsinki in a small-group. Your group will collect data in the city center or in a chosen suburb, e.g. Kallio or Punavuori, as well as from online platforms. The relevant data can consist of photographs, videos, observations, interviews etc. collected in the area.

Guiding questions:

- a) *Examine boutiques in the area.* What are their local characteristics? What kind of clothes do they sell?
- b) *Observe street styles in the area.* How do people dress? Are there recognizable dress codes or fashions?
- c) *Compare your findings with fashions represented on online platforms (blogs, Instagram, online stores).* Analyze the characteristics of “Finnish fashion” based on your observations in both places.

Preliminary findings of the weekend assignment will be presented in class on Monday 10 June e.g. as a PowerPoint presentation.

## **Week 2 – Practices – in places/spaces**

**During the second week** we will deep-dive into places and spaces of fashion by preparing the final assignment: a poster. The week will start by unwrapping the weekend assignment, and be followed by the final theme, fashion and museums. The rest of the week will be dedicated to preparing the poster, presenting it and summing up the course.

Mon 10 June

### **10–16 *Spaces of fashion: Unwrapping the weekend assignment***

Each group will present their findings as a PowerPoint-presentation. The time allocated to each group is 30 minutes. After each presentation, you will be given feedback which you can use in preparing the final assignment.

Tues 11 June

### **10–12 *Fashion – Exhibitions***

The final theme of the course dives into the art-fashion discussion. While fashion is increasingly displayed in art museums and galleries, retail spaces and boutiques are becoming more like gallery spaces. How does this affect understanding of fashion and its consumption?

## **Readings for the seminar**

Clark, H. 2019. ‘Curation and Exhibition,’ in Geczy, A. and Karaminas, V. (eds.), *The End of Fashion: Clothing and Dress in the Age of Globalization*, London: Bloomsbury, 155–170, 203–205.

Clark, H. & Vänskä, A. 2018. ‘Introduction: fashion curating in the museum and beyond,’ in Vänskä, A. and Clark, H. (eds.), *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond*, Bloomsbury, 1–15.

Vänskä, A. 2018. ‘Boutique- Where Art and Fashion Meet: Curating as Collaboration and Cultural Critique,’ in Vänskä, A. and Clark, H. (eds.), *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond*, Bloomsbury, Chapter 7, 119–135.

Buckley, C. & Clark, H. 2016. ‘In Search of the Everyday: Museums, Collections, and Representations of Fashion in London and New York,’ in Jenss, H. (ed.), *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London & New York: Bloomsbury, 25–41.

13:30–16 **Field trip**

EMMA Museum, the exhibition *Interwoven*,  
<https://emmamuseum.fi/en/exhibitions/interwoven/>  
Address: Ahertajantie 5

Wed 12 June

10–16 **Project preparation**

This day will be dedicated to preparing the second assignment: an academic poster. The final assignment will demonstrate a response to *Fashion – Places and Spaces*, based on the weekend research and course reading. The poster will be developed on the basis of Monday’s class and feedback you have been given as well as tutorials during the day. The aim is to further analyze your research findings and contextualize them with the help of literature you have read during the course. You have access to a computer class where you can design the poster with guidance from Professors Clark and Vänskä.

In the poster you will include a discussion of chosen examples, exploration of a chosen concept, presented visually and with text, and include some key readings.

Each poster will include a title, author’s name, 3-4 keywords, aims and/or a hypothesis, a project description, relevant images, references/citations. For background for creating an academic poster – see for example:

<https://dukeahead.duke.edu/sites/dukeahead.duke.edu/files/u94/Poster%20Creation%20Presentation.pdf>

Guiding questions to think about:

- What are the characteristics of Helsinki as a fashion city? What are characteristics of Finnish fashion in the global context?
- OR: Who creates fashion (consumers, marketers, environment and space (including retail)?
- OR: How is fashion created in specific places/space?

Thurs 13 June

10–16 **Student poster production & presentations**

Finalizing the posters, printing them and presenting them in class. Final feedback and end discussion.

10–12 Finalizing and printing the posters

13–16 Final presentation of the posters and feedback

Fri 14 June **Poster exhibition**

10-12 Exhibiting the posters in Väre and summing up the course

## SOURCES

- Ash, J., Wilson, E. (eds.) 1992. *Chic Thrills: A Fashion Reader*. London: Pandora.
- Bendonj, W. K. 2017. *Social Media for Fashion Marketing. Storytelling in a Digital World*. London and New York: Fairchild Books.
- Beward, C. & Gilbert, D. (eds.) 2006. *Fashion's World Cities*, Oxford and New York: Berg.
- Buckley, C. & Clark, H. 2017. *Fashion and Everyday Life: London and New York*, London: Bloomsbury,
- Crewe, L. 2017. *The Geographies of Fashion: Consumption, Space, and Value*. London & New York: Bloomsbury.
- Geczy, A. and Karaminas, V. (eds.) 2018. *The End of Fashion: Clothing and Dress in the Age of Globalization*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Jenss, H. (ed.) 2016. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices (Dress, Body, Culture)*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Kaiser, S. B. 2012. *Fashion and Cultural Studies*. London, Oxford: Berg.
- Potvin, J. (ed.) 2008. *The Places and Spaces of Fashion, 1800-2007*, New York: Routledge.
- Rocamora, A. 2009 *Fashioning the City: Paris, Fashion and the Media*, London: IB Tauris.
- Rocamora, A., Smelik, A. (eds.) 2015. *Thinking Through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris.
- Shields, R. (ed.) 1992. *Lifestyle Shopping: The Subject of Consumption*, New York: Routledge.
- Vänskä, A. & Clark, H. (eds.) 2018. *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond*. London and New York: Bloomsbury
- Willis, S. 1991. *A Primer for Daily Life*, New York: Routledge.