

Institution: Cambridge University
Unit of Assessment: UoA30
Title of case study: Re-creating the Look of the Past: Renaissance Fashion
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Ulinka Rublack's research focuses on the history of Renaissance dress. Her work has enhanced public awareness that social groups beyond courtly elites created fashion in the past. It led to a re-creation of one of the most significant outfits recorded in the wardrobe of a sixteenth-century accountant. Rublack's work has reached beyond academic audiences by influencing theatre practices and education and has been disseminated through broadcasting, filming and print media. Most recently, it has led to collaboration with a fashion designer and an artist to create contemporary fashion and photography in connection with the story of the Renaissance accountant.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Professor Rublack has been employed in the Faculty of History at the University of Cambridge since October 1996. In 2000, Rublack began research which resulted in her prizewinning 2010 Oxford University Press monograph <i>Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe</i> [3A]. Chapter 2 presented the first in-depth analysis in English of a unique historical document, a book of 137 water-colour images which a man called Matthäus Schwarz (1497-1574), head-accountant of the Fugger merchant firm in sixteenth-century Augsburg, compiled to depict himself dressed from his infancy to old age. This <i>Book of Clothes</i> provides an unparalleled record of Renaissance male fashion, and includes comments on the materials used as well as the occasions for which particular outfits were worn.</p> <p>The research argues that dress was a key symbolic and nuanced tool to signal belonging, age, gendered identifications and thus a whole set of emotions as well as status aspirations. Love and courtship, for example, were already linked to a range of commodified goods, such as heart-shaped purses, fancy belts or caps. Fashion allows us to see that artistic innovation was shaped by makers, different status groups and new types of social spaces and practices rather than solely by top aristocratic elites. Rublack therefore shows why we need to re-imagine the look of this society as far more colourful and diverse than hitherto, and recognize dress as a key aesthetic language through which people created culture in myriad ways. Her research demonstrates that the detail and perfection of dress in period is frequently misrepresented through simplified dress in re-creations.</p> <p>A wider aspect of Rublack's research is that it underlines that the formation of subjectivity needs to be understood in relation to material culture. The Renaissance marks a historical watershed in this respect. People were more likely to own many goods and consume a greater variety of things than in previous centuries. Protestantism no longer sanctified poverty. Print disseminated information on goods and resources on a completely new scale. The Atlantic trade took off, while traffic along many long established trade routes thickened. Urban growth created concentrated markets. Courts and town magistrates were eager to spur on craft skills and protect local excellence. Technological advances in many areas are astounding and have often barely been uncovered. Rublack's research draws attention to the fact that we need to explore how this greater engagement with things was integral to people's emotional lives.</p> <p>In addition to <i>Dressing Up</i>, Rublack published a <i>Past & Present</i> article on the use of leather in male sixteenth-century dress and in particular on the significance of shoes [3B]. She has published an article on male power dressing in the magazine <i>History Today</i> and was commissioned by the <i>BBC News</i> website (magazine section) to write an analysis piece on Renaissance fashion for their feature on her research and the reconstruction of the accountant's dress. She has cooperated with Cambridge University on research for a film on Schwarz and his dress which led to a popular</p>

Youtube video.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- A. Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2010 and paperback 2011), winner of the Ronald H. Bainton Prize and the only early modern book shortlisted among six final entries for the 2011 Cundill Prize, the largest non-fiction prize for history in the world.
- B. Ulinka Rublack, 'Matter in the Material Renaissance', *Past & Present*, May 2013, 41-85.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Prof Rublack's research for *Dressing Up* led to her pioneering collaboration with the Olivier Award winning historical dressmaker Jennifer Tiramani to re-create the dress worn by Schwarz at the Augsburg Imperial Diet in 1530. Tiramani was director of theatre design at the Globe 1997-2005 and has most recently created the clothes for productions of *Anna Bolena* (Metropolitan Opera, NY 2011) as well as Globe, Apollo Theatre and Broadway productions of *Richard III* and *Twelfth Night*, (2012-3). The re-created dress was completed in September 2012.

Tiramani writes: "[Rublack's] chapter 'Looking at the Self' had a major impact on my understanding of Schwarz's approach to clothing and the importance attributed to his style of dress. Although I had seen black and white versions of the watercolours, I had no idea of the vivid colours he wore and I had never been able to read about him in English before." Tiramani sourced alum-tawed deerskin for the Schwarz hose, as Rublack's research showed that he wore leather. Once she had started to work with the unique properties of the skin she decided to use it on three outfits in the Globe/Apollo and Broadway productions of *Twelfth Night* (Winter/Spring season 2013). Rublack and Tiramani met a total of twelve times in London. Rublack's research enabled Tiramani to develop a methodology for reconstructing and understanding the material nature of periods of dress where very few actual garments survive. On 19 October 2012, Tiramani launched the School of Historical Dress at the Society of Antiquaries in London, in the presence of the School's patrons Vivienne Westwood, Roy Strong and Mark Rylance. Tiramani introduced the Schwarz project to the audience as it exemplified the School's aims to "encourage new research into historical dress and introduce students to the tools needed for this, such as how to study an object, to identify its materials, cut, construction and historical context." As a direct result of the knowledge gained by Tiramani through Rublack's book and during the course of the Schwarz project, the School of Historical Dress now runs courses on sixteenth-century men's European dress and can teach the techniques explored during the making of the outfit (**ref 10**). This research has prompted several makers (shoemaker Sarah Juniper, capper Rachel Frost, leatherworker Carl Robinson, shirt-maker Alice Gordon) who re-create garments for the theatre, cinema and historical re-enactments to innovate new models. The outfit was filmed on a model by the BBC and for a YouTube video (**ref 1, 2**). Through its dissemination and impact on costume design, the project helps to re-create a different and more richly imaginative as well as accurate engagement with the look of the past and meaning of dress in history.

Rublack's research has, moreover, inspired fashion designer Isabella Newell and artist Maisie Broadhead to create a series of outfits and photographs re-staging Schwarz's life which closely draws on Rublack's research in *Dressing Up*. Newell and Broadhead would not otherwise been able to read about Schwarz, and their work highlights the signal capacity of male dress to express feeling rather than function as a mere tool of power-dressing and professional achievement. Broadhead is an object and image-maker, who explores where these elements meet. Often her images recreate historical paintings with contemporary filters, which allow for new narratives and create a new context for the three dimensional pieces. Broadhead completed her MA at the Royal College of Art in 2009, has been selected for this year's Jerwood Makers Open show of emerging applied artists and was included in the National Gallery of London's first photography show *Seduced By Art: Photography Past and Present* and the Design Museum's first major Jewellery exhibition *Unexpected Pleasures*, both in 2012. Newell received first class honours in Fashion Design at Central Saint Martins (BA), interned for year at the prestigious fashion house Balenciaga

in Paris, and is currently working for Burberry, London.

Rublack had a total of ten meetings with Broadhead and Newell. The collaboration explored what it meant for a Renaissance man to express his emotions, values and ambitions through the way he looked, and what this fascination with looking the part imply for young men in our contemporary world. The outcome is a series of five outfits with five corresponding images. The images explore the progression and evolution of the way a man clothes himself. Image details are drawn from Broadhead and Newell's personal observations and reflections on London culture. The collaboration has been documented on a tumblr blog since May 2013 (ref 5).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Denise Winterman, BBC News Website Feature June 2013 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22766029>), on *The First Book of Fashion*, 500,000 page views, shared 5,334 times (BBC figures). Several translations into world languages, including Spanish, featuring a separate analysis piece by Rublack and drawing on her research in *Dressing Up* for the whole article: Ulinka Rublack, 'Schwarz and the Democracy of Fashion', *BBC News Magazine*, 9 June 2013. This item was taken up in numerous blogs on the web
2. YouTube video *The First Book of Fashion* (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91hysO_suRo) about Rublack on her research and Tiramani on the reconstruction, launched on 1 May 2013, 11,500 views by 30 September 2013, also taken up by Vimeo.com.
3. Cambridge University Website article on Rublack's research and the reconstruction, launched 1 May 2013, shared 2051 times, tweeted 253 times, taken up as top item on website medievalists.net (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/features/the-first-book-of-fashion>).
4. Res Obscura Blog, 'A Renaissance Merchant's Clothing', 25/7/2011, 252 followers, (<http://resobscura.blogspot.co.uk/2011/07/renaissance-merchants-life-in-clothing.html>)
5. Maisie Broadhead, Isabella Newell, Ulinka Rublack, <http://thefirstbookoffashion.tumblr.com/>, a blog which records the visual research as well as making of the clothes and photography from May 2013-August 2013 and is shared in wider creative communities.
6. Marina Warner, 'The Labile Self', Review of *Dressing Up*, *LRB*, 5 January 2012, pp.8-9: <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v34/n01/marina-warner/the-labile-self>
7. Kathryn Hughes, Review of *Dressing Up*, *Guardian*, 21 May 2011, p.9: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/may/21/dressing-cultural-identity-rublack-review>
8. Rublack's *History Today* article 'The Birth of Power Dressing', Jan. 2011 (<http://www.historytoday.com/ulinka-rublack/renaissance-fashion-birth-power-dressing>), was second among that year's top articles and linked to Sheila Corr, 'Renaissance Fashion in Pictures', *History Today*, 17 Dec 2011 (<http://www.historytoday.com/blog/pictures-or-conversations/sheila-corr/renaissance-fashion-pictures>).
9. Audiences at public lectures in the US (<http://fni.ucr.edu/Conference2012/Program2012.pdf>), (<http://events.unc.edu/event/bettie-allison-rand-lectures-in-art-ulinka-rublack-university-of-cambridge/>); at the German Historical Institute in London, (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/from-buskins-to-brothel-creepers-our-love-affair-with-shoes>); the first Gender & History public lecture in Glasgow; in Cambridge, covered by a live tweet (<http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events/2408/>); jointly with Jenny Tiramani at the V&A in London on 3 June 2013 (http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/ghcc/research/luxury/activities/luxury-va_event_july_2013-v6_2/production-of-luxury_programme.pdf), tweeted by Glenn Adamson, head of research at the V&A (<https://twitter.com/GlennAdamson/status/353161323464507393>); Public lecture, Hay Festival, Oxfam Stage (250 seats), 1 June 2011, one of the Daily Telegraph's Top Picks of the Day (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/hay-festival/8537887/Hay-Festival-2011-The-Telegraphs-top-picks-of-the-day-on-Thursday-2-June.html>)
10. <http://theschoolofhistoricaldress.org.uk/>, courses on The Cut & Construction of Men's

Doublets, The Cut of Men's Hose.