

## **CLIFTON-CUNNINGHAM Alana (Aus)**

### ***Trompe l'oeil: an investigation of traditional and digital textile applications in the creation of illusion - paper***

**Key words:** Trompe l'oeil, surrealism, illusion, knitting, fashion, textiles, digital.

#### **Trompe l'oeil - n**

a technique used in realistic paintings to trick the eye, especially through the use of perspective to create an illusion of three-dimensionality

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The word trompe l'oeil literally means, "to trick the eye". This method of illusion was originally associated with painting, but the technique has been adopted by fashion and textile designers and utilised within garment design to deceive viewers. The illusion is created through a two dimensional object that has been printed or embellished with such realistic detail, that the item appears to have three-dimensional qualities.

This paper will explore the diversity of traditional textiles applications such as knitting, beading and applique that have been historically associated with this delusional technique, and how digital technology has been adopted by contemporary fashion and textile designers to propel trompe l'oeil to a new level with infinite design solutions.

The paper will investigate designers such as Elsa Schiaparelli and her utilisation of trompe l'oeil / traditional textiles in many of her garments such as the knitted *Bow Sweater* and also her collaboration with Salvador Dali, on projects such as the printed *Tear-Illusion* dress. Contemporary designers will also be explored such as Maison Martin Margiela and Issey Miyake with their use of digital printing to produce deceptive knitted garments that allude to form on the body.

Alana Clifton - Cunningham is a full-time academic within the Fashion and Textile Design program at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her area of research is avant-garde knitwear design that explores unconventional materials, mixed media and form. Alana is currently enrolled in the Master of Design program at COFA (University of New South Wales) and is currently exploring theories relating to knitting, and questions whether contemporary knitwear design is fashion or art.

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