

JONES Lucy (UK)

The Internationalisation of fashion education: cultural exchange, and future fashion designers - paper

The accessibility of 'other' cultures has become easier, through international travel, the WWW, and television documentaries, and the study of other culture's dress has been scrutinised by many contemporary academics, anthropologists, explorers, and futurologists. The fashion industry has been international for decades, fashion and textile designers in the West have blatantly pillaged and mimicked other cultures' dress for ideas and inspiration for well over a century.

Designers from non- European countries aspire to and take inspiration from high profile branded European labels, all the time struggling with the lack of their buying public. They explore international markets, and exporting becomes a necessity for survival. Important European buyers have therefore become influential in dictating their market needs and desires to the smaller design labels, contradicting cultural and social exchange. As Art can be purchased on-line, doing away with conventional gallery space, fashion and art have become internationalised, with European and American branded manufacturers of high street fashion opening their doors in a range of countries across South East Asia and Australia. The social and cultural exchange that this proliferates is exemplified in products, designed in one country, manufactured in another, and retailed in them all, very feasible.

Along with these issues the Internationalisation of fashion design education is discussed, using the results of a recent data collection mission which encompassed Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia, Singapore and Australia, which located Internationalism in fashion design education, three case studies will be exemplified.

The paper discusses globalisation in the fashion industry, and internationalism in education. It suggests that internationalism in fashion design education will bring increased awareness and knowledge of other cultures and their interface with the fashion industry, it argues that cultural exchange works positively for future fashion designers, (as shown in the case studies), exchange will result not in an homogenised fashion (design) industry, but one that is more individual, inclusive, and intelligent.

Currently, Lecturer in Critical and Theoretical Studies specialising in Fashion and Dress, in the School of Art and Design, The University of Salford UK. The current post has been held for five years, previously teaching design practice on the BA Fashion Design course at the same institution. Her Phd research subject is focussing on the Internationalisation of HE Fashion Design Education.
