

Guest Editorial Special Edition 'Creative Cut' The International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education

The call for papers for this special edition 'Creative Cut' evolved from a peer reviewed paper entitled 'Insufficient Allure: The luxury and cost of creative pattern cutting' published in 'The International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education' in 2010. The paper built upon a limited amount of enquiry (British Fashion Council 2000, Fischer 2008, Joseph-Armstrong 2008). It suggests that the role of the creative pattern cutter is an interpretation of the designer's vision and therefore equitable with the position of the fashion designer, in terms of esteem and remuneration. The text and photographed garments from the paper were curated in an exhibition at Huddersfield Art Gallery, UK, in April 2012. Reviewed by international fashion journalist Brenda Polen, the exhibition provided a critical appraisal of the pattern cutter's position as integral to creative design through its emphasis upon clothing compositions that show complex pattern cuts placed onto the body to create accentuated, original forms. This exhibition has now been acquired by Armley Industrial Museum, Leeds Museums and Galleries, UK and will form part of the 'Behind the Seams' exhibition, which celebrates skills within the fashion industry. Two further projects emerged from this. The first was an international peer-reviewed conference: 'The First International Symposium for Creative Pattern Cutting'. This was held at the University of Huddersfield in the UK on 6th and 7th February 2013 and attracted over 160 international delegates from over twenty countries including India, USA, and much of Europe. It included 30 paper presentations from leading researchers and practitioners on aspects of creative pattern cutting. All the delegates felt it provided an excellent forum to discuss ideas and issues relating to creative cut. In the plenary session closing the conference the general consensus was that it become a bi-annual event. The second is this special edition 'Creative Cut' which publishes selected papers, presented at the conference. The conference and the special edition are highly significant to the fashion industry as both are potentially the first global initiatives to emphasise contemporary research into creative pattern cutting. The themes of the conference evolved into four definitive streams, which investigated digital-technology, eco-sustainable, pedagogical and fashioned approaches to creative cutting. The impact of the conference and journal is highlighted in peer-review feedback from the international review panel, delegates and presenters who described it as an exciting, timely and welcome event, extremely important to the fashion industry.

The papers published here demonstrate some of the ideas discussed in the conference. They explore different perceptions of creative cut and how the level of craftsmanship in the pattern cutter can be the source of creativity whether it is through traditional or digital approaches. They also go some way to emphasise how we shouldn't underestimate tacit knowledge and the making process as a form of enquiry. This is important in the drive to heighten awareness of fashion practice as a viable academic research topic. There is a strong divide between scholars/research professionals and practitioners. There is suspicion within both

camps: the practitioner would question the credibility of the scholar who writes about fashion yet has little experience in designing and making clothes. Likewise, the scholar is suspicious of the practitioner who attempts to write and theorize about clothes. The papers in 'Creative Cut' base their understanding on evidence from observation, participation and investigation of pattern cutting practice, pattern cutters at work and interviews with pattern cutters. The different methodological approaches have added credibility with fashion educators and the wider design industry because the research results have been arrived at from practical experience. I hope you enjoy reading through 'Creative Cut'.

References;

Inspirational Pattern Cutting (2000) Directed by British Fashion Council. UK: British Fashion Council.

Fischer, A. (2009) *Basics Fashion Design, Construction*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Joseph-Armstrong, H. (2006) *Pattern Making for Fashion Design*. New York: Pearson Education.

I would like to thank the editorial panel for all their hard work and commitment reviewing the manuscripts and the abstracts;

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