Costume and Research in Finland

National-level research seminar on Costume Design and related fields

A meeting of researchers based in Finland

Thursday, May 4th, 2017 at 9.15–18.00
Design Factory, Studio
Otaniemi Campus
Betonimiehenkuja 5, 02150 Espoo

Reviewers-Respondents

Aoife Monks, PhD
Reader in Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies
Department of Drama, School of English and Drama, Queen Mary, University of London

Peter McNeil, PhD
Professor of Design History
University of Technology Sydney, Australia
Finland Distinguished Professor (FiDiPro)
Department of Film, TV & Scenography
Aalto University

Sofia Pantouvaki, PhD
Professor of Costume Design for Theatre & Film
Department of Film, Television and Scenography
Aalto University
Seminar Chair

Programme

9:15–9:30 **Welcome & Introduction**

Session 1

Chair: Sofia Pantouvaki, Professor of Costume Design for Theatre & Film, Aalto University

9:30–10:00 **Tua Helve**, MA, Doctoral Candidate in Costume Design, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, Aalto University, FiDiPro *Costume Methodologies* project
The Notion of Friendship in the Costume–Choreography Union: a Case from Costume Design within 21st century Finnish Contemporary Dance

10:00–10:30 **Maarit Kalmakurki,** MA, Doctoral Candidate in Costume Design, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, Aalto University
Absence of a Physical Body in Costume Design for 3D-animation

10:30–11:00 **Jorge Sandoval**, MFA, Doctoral Candidate in Costume Design, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, Aalto University
The RuPaul Syndrome

11:00–11:30 **Coffee break**

Session 2

Chair: Joanna Weckman, Post-doctoral Researcher in Costume Design, Independent Scholar

11:30–12:00 **Heini Kiamiri**, MA, Doctoral Candidate in Scenography, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, Aalto University
Experiential Space. Creating Scenographic Interpretations through Children's World of Experience

12:00–12:30 **Kirsi Manninen**, MA, Doctoral Candidate in Costume Design, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, Aalto University
An Empathy–Oriented Drawing Method in Costume Sketching: Training Digital Drawing through Mindful Embodied Awareness

12:30–13:00 **Alexandra Ovtchinnikova**, MA, Doctoral Candidate in Costume Design, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, Aalto University
The Study of the Functions of Costume in the Cinema of the Soviet Poetic School (1960–1980)

13:00–14:00 **Lunch break**
(lunch offered at Antell restaurant Calori, Lämpömiehenkuja 2, Espoo)

Session 3

Chair: Peter McNeil, Professor of Design History, University of Technology Sydney

14:00–14:30 **Myrsini Pichou**, MSc/MA, Athens University History Museum and Independent Scholar, Greece
Performing in Confinement: the Theatrical Activity at Internment Camps of the Greek Civil War and the Costumes Created for It

14:30–15:00 **Phoenix Thomas**, PhD, Visiting Post-doctoral researcher in Costume Design, Aalto University and Independent Scholar, UK
Re-fashioning Research: Addressing Modes of Engagement in Costume Scholarship

15:00–15:30 **Suzanne Osmond**, PhD, Visiting Post-doctoral researcher in Costume Design, Aalto University and National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) Sydney,Australia

15:30–16:00 **Coffee break**

Session 4

Chair: Aoife Monks, Reader in Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies, Queen Mary, University of London

16:00–16:30 **Minna Kaipainen**, PhD, University Lecturer in Craft Studies/Textile Teacher Education, University of Eastern Finland
Making Historical Garment Research with Old Photos – Case Jean Sibelius

16:30–17:00 **Joanna Weckman**, DA, Post-doctoral Researcher in Costume Design, Independent Scholar, Finland
Presenting the Post-doctoral Research Project 'Costume in Close-up – Finnish Film Costume History 1960-1989'

17:00–17:30 **Johanna Oksanen**, PhD, Visiting Post-doctoral researcher in Costume Design, Aalto University and Independent Scholar, Finland
Actor's Breath Meets Mask (Can You Breathe Wearing a Mask?)

17:30–18:00 **Conclusions and Discussion**

Tua Helve
Doctoral Candidate
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

The Notion of Friendship in the Costume–Choreography Union: a Case from Costume Design within 21st Century Finnish Contemporary Dance

Contemporary choreography consists of bodies in time and space: these bodies require decisions on if, or how, to dress them. In these decisions lies the core of costume design for dance. Hence, the relationship between costume and choreography, and logically, costume designer and choreographer or other dance makers, appears substantial. This presentation investigates these relationships through selected design works from Finnish contemporary dance productions of the 21st century. The approach derives from an essay by the Italian contemporary philosopher Giorgio Agamben, *The Friend* (2009). Hence, these questions follow: are the costumes and choreography 'friends'? Are the costume designer and the choreographer 'friends'? And the researcher of this, can she become a 'friend' for the investigated? What are the benefits of 'friendship' within these interconnections? This work-in-progress aims at building a solid ground for a research article as part of the doctoral thesis *Costume design within Finnish contemporary dance 2000–2015: processes and outcomes*. The project seeks to contribute to the increasing body of research on the role, characteristics and conditions of collaboration within contemporary productions in the field of dance. Furthermore, both this presentation and the overall doctoral thesis project build on the conception of the intimate role of costume within choreography. Thus, they also argue for the mutual understanding between costume designer and choreographer as an indisputable asset within the performance making.

Biography
Tua Helve, MA, is a member of *Costume in Focus* and a doctoral candidate at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, currently employed in the frame of the *Costume Methodologies* research project. Beyond her doctoral thesis project, costume choices and design decisions within dance appeal to her more broadly; she lectures on this topic from various perspectives.

Notes

Maarit Kalmakurki
Doctoral Candidate
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

Absence of a Physical Body in Costume Design for 3D-animation

The topic of this paper derives from discussions with film costume designer Isis Mussenden, whom I have interviewed to collect data for my doctoral dissertation titled: *Costume Design, Process and Digitalization in 3D-animated Feature Films.* Mussenden faced a new challenge when she began her employment in the DreamWorks 3D-animated feature film production, *Shrek* (2001). During her previous work as designer of costumes for live-action films, she was used to collaborating with a director and interacting tightly with actors. In animation, one of the components of this collaboration was lacking, as the animated characters were not factual, to which Mussenden states: "Nothing underneath [the costume] exists". This paper discusses different elements involved in designing for non-physical characters. Furthermore, it examines some of the main themes included in costume design for 3D-animation.

Biography
Maarit Kalmakurki, MA, is a doctoral candidate at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, and a member of *Costume in Focus*. Since 2004, Maarit has designed costumes and sets for various theatre and opera productions in Finland. She has taught dress history, scenography, arts and fashion in Finland and in the US.

Notes

Session 1

Jorge Sandoval
Doctoral Candidate
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

The RuPaul Syndrome

Social media has brought to most societies new paradigms in the study of alternative theatrical spaces for the performance of the body. The internet has created a new type of space; one that has turned every spectator into a performer and a peeper whose desire to watch is as big and fulfilling as the act of performing her/his identity for an audience. My work aims to look closely at the performativity of the queered space of the costumed male body, and how this costumed body affects theatrical expressions of the everyday. The queered space created by the male costumed body in postings online in various platforms and inspired by TV shows such as *RuPaul's Drag Race*, has become part of the fabric of the mundane. It has also turned out to be an emblematic space for the queered embodied space that was traditionally viewed as a space for resistance. Drag outside the ambit of entertainment, and a theatrical expression of the mundane usually used as a strategy for resistance is no more a form of dissent. This presentation explores the question of performance and performativity of the carnivalesque queered body of drag queen expressions in the ambit of the everyday.

Biography
Jorge Sandoval holds an MFA in Theatre and Interdisciplinary Studies from The University of Regina in Canada and is currently a doctoral candidate at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, and a member of *Costume in Focus*. In 2015, Jorge joined the Faculty of the Theatre and Dramatic Arts Department at University of Lethbridge in Canada where he teaches and designs.

Notes

Heini Kiamiri
Doctoral Candidate
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

Experiential Space. Creating Scenographic Interpretations through Children's World of Experience

In this paper, I present my on-going research studying theatre for young audiences and concentrating on the issues of costume design in this field. This includes two aspects: first, I consider methods for designing costumes in collaboration with children. Second, I investigate issues for a designer to ponder during the design process.

In this practice-based research, I explore how daycare age children experience, interpret and implement scenographic phenomena. The data for the research is drawn from two main sources using a combined methodology. As one source, I collect data from a series of art-based workshops with and for children. In these, I use participant observation together with story-crafting, drama and visual-art based methods. As the other source, I collect data through auto-ethnography and audience reception from three scenographic artworks created for children. During this research process, I concentrate on observing how children deal with characters of their stories; their appearances, costumes and narrativity. In my research, I suggest that collaboration with children may concretely illuminate to a scenographer the children's way of treating the visuality of a story. This in turn enables a scenographer to implement children's world of experience into a tangible world of scenography.

Biography
Heini Kiamiri, MA, is a doctoral candidate at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, and a member of *Costume in Focus*. Her doctoral dissertation investigates young children's experience of scenography. Since 2001, Heini has worked widely in the fields of theatre, film and television in Finland designing sets and costumes; she has also taught scenography at Aalto University as a visiting lecturer.

Notes

Kirsi Manninen
Doctoral Candidate
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

An Empathy–Oriented Drawing Method in Costume Sketching: Training Digital Drawing through Mindful Embodied Awareness

Recently, costume designers have shown an increased interest in drawing costume sketches digitally. Costume sketching with a pencil on paper shifts to digital sketching. There has been no detailed investigation of the subject and little is known about the influence of sketching on touch screen while utilising devises, such as digital sketchbooks. The purpose of this research is to answer to the following main question: Will digital drawing on virtual paper enhance the creative group's internal communication and facilitate the sketching process of the costume designers? The study material is collected through auto ethnography and digital character drawing courses held by the researcher. It consists of digitally drawn costume sketches, time-lapse videos, teaching observations and interview surveys. In this paper, the in-depth study presents and discusses the findings related to the influence of the empathy–oriented drawing method to costume sketching. In the interviews, students were asked to write reflective comments about their feelings and experiences of the use of the empathy–oriented drawing method. Results of the interviews show that the students consider that the method effects positively on their costume sketching. Hence the findings of this study can be used to help developing teaching practices in the field of the costume design.

Biography
Kirsi Manninen, MA, is a doctoral candidate at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, and a member of *Costume in Focus*. Her topic is *Digital Drawing on Virtual Paper*. She specializes in costume design and rendering, and teaches digital drawing. In 2016, a Master thesis, entitled *Kirsi Manninen as a costume designer in Winter Circus*, was completed at the University of Helsinki.

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Alexandra Ovtchinnikova
Doctoral Candidate
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

The Study of the Functions of Costume in the Cinema of the Soviet Poetic School (1960–1980)

This research explores the functions of costume in the films of four directors of the Soviet Poetic School: Sergei Parajanov, Andrei Tarkovsky, Yuri Ilyenko and Tengiz Abuladze. It examines the ways in which costume contributes to the fabrication of the purely mental reconstruction of the mythical universe on the basis of a historical and ethnographic reality in their films. The research highlights the key learnings from a historically significant period in the Soviet cinema (the 1960s–1980s) which was often defined by a tendency to link national particularity with stylistic experimentation. The methods of the study are designed to provide valuable insights into the viability of the hybrid approach of art and practice in academia, and how these angles can be leveraged to expand and enhance future studies. By employing a set of methodologies that are both academically and artistically grounded, this study attempts to reflect upon the functions costume attains within the cinema of poetry.

Biography
Alexandra Ovtchinnikova, MA, is currently a doctoral candidate at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, and a member of *Costume in Focus*. She has diverse experience in production, design, styling and performance-related design. Her doctoral studies reflect her interests in the nature of poetic cinema and costume as one of its elements and development of new practice-based methodologies for researching costume design in film.

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Myrsini Pichou
Athens University History Museum and Independent Scholar, Greece

Performing in Confinement: The Theatrical Activity at Internment Camps of the Greek Civil War and the Costumes Created for It

Following the Second World War, Greece suffered a devastating Civil War which lasted from 1946 to 1949. During this period and the turbulent years that followed, thousands of men and women, suspects of leftist beliefs, anti-regime feelings or activity were imprisoned as political detainees and sent to internment camps in islands such as Chios, Yaros, Makronisos and Ai Stratis. There, they would suffer abuse and torture while they would try to survive extremely difficult living conditions. Despite the difficult circumstances, the detainees initiated a little-known theatrical activity during their internment. All kinds of plays, from ancient Greek tragedy to contemporary Greek and Western drama or comedy, were one-time performed by and for the exiles. Why were the detainees allowed by the camps' administration to produce and perform theatre? Who were the creators of these performances? What means did the detainees use for artistic expression through theatre? How did they construct the sets and costumes? What kind of impact did these performances have on the lives of the detainees? Today, few photographs, sketches, programmes and props from the performances survive in collections and together with the testimonies of former detainees shed light on this theatre practice. This paper, focused on the performances staged on the islands of Makronisos and Ai Stratis, will explore this activity and, in particular, aims to examine the various aspects related to the creation of costumes for this theatrical activity.

Biography
Myrsini Pichou works at the Athens University History Museum. She studied Theatre Studies (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) and completed the one-year Set and Costume Design course of the "Arhi" Drama School. She holds an M.Sc. in Cultural Organizations Management (Hellenic Open University) and an M.A. in the History of Art (Courtauld Institute of Art). She co-founded the *Dress and the Law* research project and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Hellenic Costume Society.

Notes

Session 3

Phoenix Thomas
Visiting Post-doctoral researcher
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

Re-Fashioning Research: Addressing Modes of Engagement in Costume Scholarship

As costume for performance begins to emerge in academia as a legitimate field of critical research, this post-doctoral research project reflects upon the socio-political factors which have contributed to a lack of scholarly engagement with these culturally significant practices up to this point in time. Stressing the importance of maintaining a critical awareness of the cultural context within which the field is situated, I will build upon the critiques and observations of many notable fashion scholars and cultural theorists to argue that, while dress and adornment have been discursively feminized, trivialized and fundamentally devalued in late-modern western society, this should be a key consideration in nurturing the nascent field of costume scholarship.

The research will posit that this recent history of our cultural landscape has resulted in the contemporary predominance of a performatively phobic dissociation between discourses of costume and fashion amongst practitioners and scholars alike. Following this argument, it will advocate for a critical awareness of scholarly prejudice in the field, and appeal for the development of a more integrated and reflexive approach which recognizes the wider relevance and potential application of critical discourse in the fields of both costume and fashion studies, for the benefit of our collective learning and development of our shared knowledge.

Biography
Phoenix Thomas, PhD, is a Queer costume artist and researcher specialising in issues of gender, identity and representation. Trained in Costume for Performance at London College of Fashion, Phoenix recently received a PhD in Queering Costume Design from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, and is now engaged as a Post-Doctoral Researcher in Costume Research Methodologies as part of the *Costume Methodologies* research project at Aalto University.

Notes

Session 3

Suzanne Osmond
Visiting Post-doctoral researcher
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY AND
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DRAMATIC ART (NIDA), SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Fitting Threads: Creativity and Collaboration

The iterative processes of 'fitting' any costume involves the resolving of diverse aesthetic, technical, representational, functional, logistical and narrative aspects of the costumed body in performance. The fitting room has been described variously as a classroom, a creative laboratory, a therapy zone and an intimate sacred space. The collaborative interaction that occurs between designer, draper/maker and performer in the fitting process remains largely unexplored. Yet it forms a vitally important function in the creative process, as the skills and expert knowledge of the performer meet those of the costume designer and the cutter or maker.

In this research project, I will use an action research methodology, integrating with a variety of research methods, primarily interviews, observations, personal reflection and qualitative analysis. I will consider interactions in costume fittings within a number of contexts and then analyse the various modes of communication and decision making that occur. The focus is on the intersection of language, material objects and spaces that constitute the creative processes of costume design. The paper will make a contribution to scholarship in the field by proposing a methodology for interrogating a specific aspect of the costume design process that draws on performance studies, design thinking and sociology.

Biography
Suzanne Osmond, PhD, is an academic and practising theatre professional who has been involved in diverse projects in theatre, live events and film as a costume supervisor, coordinator and production manager. Her teaching career spans over 25 years, and she has taught and developed design related course material for a variety of institutions. She led the development of the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Costume) at NIDA, the first higher degree in costume studies in Australia. She is currently Reviews Editor for the international peer reviewed journal *Studies in Costume and Performance* (Intellect). In 2018, Suzanne will commence as Associate Editor of the same journal.

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Minna Kaipainen
University Lecturer
CRAFT STUDIES, TEXTILE TEACHER EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

Making Historical Garment Research with Old Photographs – The Case of Jean Sibelius

Photographs are often used as historical evidence, e.g. to show the transformation of fashions. I have analysed the clothing of composer Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) through photographs, texts and real garments in order to interpret his style (Kaipainen 2017[1]). In this presentation, I will discuss the challenges of using old black and white photos as research material. This may be helpful to other garment and costume researchers.

In my analysis, I placed 220 photos from the internet and museum databases in chronological order and found out that the images of Sibelius were often undated, or the dates proved to be inaccurate. Comparison of changes of his clothing to current fashions was then difficult. The photographs were more or less staged, as Sibelius was posing for pictures, maybe in suits specially selected for the occasions. Nevertheless, I counted and sorted his garments, hats, ties and cigars from the pictures and analysed the fit of the suits. The different pocket styles helped to identify the amount of white suits of Sibelius. However, the colours were impossible and the details of the garments difficult to identify from old black and white, unsharpened images, and that nearly led to wrong conclusions. For that reason in this research, the object-based analysis of primary clothes was essential.

Biography
Minna Kaipainen, PhD, is University Lecturer in Craft Studies/Textile Teacher Education at the University of Eastern Finland. She is specialized in garment construction, clothing history and professional craft practice. After graduating from Kuopio Academy of Design, she has studied at the University of Helsinki (MA 1996, Licentiate 2000) and the University of Joensuu (PhD 2008, *Tailoring in Finland in the 1920s–1960s*).

[1] *Sibeliuksen puvut ja pukeutuminen*. Artefactum 8. http://artefacta.fi/tutkimus/artefactum/8

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Joanna Weckman
Post-doctoral Researcher in Costume Design, Independent Scholar, Finland

Presenting the Post-doctoral Research Project *Costume in Close-up – Finnish Film Costume History 1960–1989*

The post-doctoral research project *Lähikuvassa puku – suomalaisen elokuvapuvun historiaa 1960–1989* (*Costume in Close-up – Finnish film costume history 1960–1989*) was executed in co-operation with the National Audiovisual Institute (Kavi) and the Finnish Broadcasting Company (Yle) during four months in the winter of 2016–2017 with funding from the Wihuri Foundation. This project continues earlier research work examining the history of film costumes in Finland. It covers a period of thirty years: starting from the finishing years of the so-called golden age of the Finnish film at the beginning of the 1960s, through the difficult time in the 1970s and the early 1980s, until the slow rise of the Finnish film industry in the 1980s. The aims of this study were to create a general understanding of the people who worked with film costumes during this time, to locate extant film costumes from the era, largely missing from the National Audiovisual Institute museum collection, and thus build a substructure for a more detailed examination. In this presentation, the methods as well as the conclusions of this research project will be discussed.

Biography
Joanna Weckman, DA, is a researcher, curator, lecturer and costume designer. She has published several articles on the history of the costume design work and of costumes for the stage and film in Finland. She has been actively contributing to the *Costume in Focus* research group. Her latest works include curating the exhibition *Star Makers – the Golden Era of Finnish Cinema* in Turku, 2017.

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Johanna Oksanen
Visiting Post-doctoral researcher
DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND SCENOGRAPHY, AALTO UNIVERSITY

Actor's Breath Meets Mask (Can You Breathe Wearing a Mask?)

The aim of this practice-based artistic research project is to examine crocheted linen theatre masks from both artistic and functional perspectives. Two experimental theatre productions drawn together propose an integrated approach to practice-based, costume-led and craft-oriented artistic research.

This project can be seen not only as a chance to examine the art of craft or the masks in a theatrical context, verbalizing and visualizing the non-verbal, but also as a chance to discuss the artistic, practice-based research itself and possible ways of writing about it. Hence, the materials collected from two non-verbal mask theatre productions bring forth several intertwining, multifaceted themes that can be discussed and presented as results of this practice-based, artistic research.

The emerging themes can be grouped in two contexts. First, the concrete resources shape the overall context for the research and create the practical frame for the artistic productions. Second, within this outer context reside all the other processes that constitute the inner aspects, such as practitioners' personal experiences of these unique productions. In my presentation, I will concentrate on themes that seem to be found especially in these particular artistic productions included in this research project.

Biography
Johanna Oksanen, PhD, is currently affiliated as a Visiting Researcher at the Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography. Johanna works as freelance costume designer and as a teacher of clothing and craft techniques. She is a member of Theatre Tuike and has been actively contributing to the *Costume in Focus* research group.

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The seminar is organized by:

Costume in Focus
Research Group
Department of Film, Television, and Scenography
School of Arts, Design and Architecture
Aalto University

The seminar is part of the *Costume Methodologies* research project within the Finland Distinguished Professor Program (FiDiPro) funded by the Academy of Finland

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