

NOVEMBER 19, 2006–MARCH 5, 2007 | MOCA GRAND AVENUE

SKIN+BONES

PARALLEL PRACTICES IN FASHION AND ARCHITECTURE



Shigeru Ban Architects, Curtain Wall House, Tokyo, 1995

In recent years, connections between fashion and architecture have become increasingly apparent. *Skin + Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture* examines shared strategies and techniques of the two disciplines, highlighting common ground and suggesting potential for the future development of each, including new design processes, fabrication methods, and aesthetic directions.

Both garments and buildings protect and shelter the body while providing a means to express identity. While the earliest examples of clothing and buildings were not “designed” but rather devised out of necessity, contemporary practitioners in both fields have continued to address the human imperative for shelter in ingenious ways. Viktor & Rolf took a conceptual approach with their Russian Doll collection (autumn/winter 1999–2000), which consists of nine garments that, during the runway show, were



Hussein Chalayan, Convertible Skirt/Table from Afterwords collection, autumn/winter 2000–01

gradually layered on the body of a single model. The first garment is a simple unornamented dress woven from coarse fibers upon which the designers added the other garments until, at the end of the show, the model was enclosed—almost hidden—inside an enveloping cloak, similar to the way the smallest Russian doll is nested in her bigger sisters’ bodies. Architect Shigeru Ban addressed the necessity of shelter in his Curtain Wall House (Tokyo, 1993–95), which plays on the idea of glass curtain-wall construction by featuring an enormous fabric curtain as the exterior surface of the building to provide the residents with shelter and privacy. More recently, Ban made use of inexpensive paper tubes to create both high-end architecture and temporary housing. His Paper Emergency Shelters (1995–99) consist of easily assembled paper-tube structures covered with the blankets issued to Rwandan refugees by the United Nations.

The work of particular designers can sometimes reveal a great deal about personal, religious, or cultural identity. Chalayan's *Afterwords* collection (autumn/winter 2000–01) explores his own experiences as a Turkish Cypriot living in London and his identification with the refugees of the then-current Balkan conflict. The transformation of furniture into dresses, carrying cases, and a skirt suggests the necessity of leaving one's home in a hurry with nothing but the clothes on one's back. Chalayan's *Between* collection (spring/summer 1998) examines how the traditional burka worn by some Islamic women can both reveal and conceal aspects of a woman's identity. Architect Jean Nouvel's Arab World Institute in Paris (1981–87) serves as a hinge between two cultures and two histories. The building's dramatic perforated south façade incorporates elements that refer to Arab culture and architecture, while its reflective north façade mirrors the surrounding Parisian cityscape.

Another common thread running through fashion and architecture is the use of geometry to generate form. Preston Scott Cohen's work with descriptive and projective geometry enables him to employ forms such as the torus to create unusual spatial effects in



Preston Scott Cohen, digital rendering of Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, 2003–projected 2008



Yeohlee Teng, *Catenary Harness Dress*, autumn/winter 2006–07

his buildings. SANAA used geometry in a more straightforward way to generate the circular building they designed for the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan (1999–2004). While the perimeter of the building is a simple circle, its interior spaces are complex due to the careful arrangement of geometric shapes used to house the individual galleries. Peter Eisenman experimented with the convoluted twist and continuous form of the Möbius strip to generate his Max Reinhardt House (unbuilt, 1992–93), while J. Meejin Yoon employed the same shape to create an unusual dress (2005) that loops over and around the body. In most fashion design, rigid geometrical forms appear less often since conventional garments are made of multiple pieces of fabric that are cut and assembled to complement and conform to the shape of the body. However, explorations with geometry appear frequently in the practices of both Yeohlee Teng and Isabel Toledo. While Teng's garments may be assembled from fabric cut into circles, squares, or ellipses, when they are worn gravity and draping make their geometry invisible. Toledo's *Packing Dress* (spring/summer 1988), when laid flat, takes the shape of a circle, but when draped on the body its shape is less rational and more organic.

Practitioners of each discipline share common design processes, frequently exploring preliminary ideas through sketching. Narciso Rodriguez fills many sketchbooks each year with drawings and notes with which he communicates ideas to his patternmakers and sewers. He also places great emphasis on working with a fit model, spending hours making minute adjustments to achieve a precise fit. Similarly, architects begin with sketches and then construct study models from paper, cardboard, wood, or other materials to explore building variations. Frank Gehry regularly uses materials on hand—a rumpled pillowcase, a crinkled paper bag, a crumpled piece of velvet—to assist in communicating concepts to colleagues. The final drawings and patterns used to construct a finished building or garment are often computer-generated.



Isabel Toledo, Packing Dress, spring/summer 1988

Since both architecture and fashion are essentially constructed from flat two-dimensional materials, it is not surprising that practitioners in each field find inspiration in the other's techniques, forms, and surfaces. In recent years, architects have adopted techniques such as printing, pleating, folding, draping, and weaving to develop more complex exterior surfaces, or skins, for their buildings, while fashion designers have looked to architecture for ways to construct clothes with greater volume and

inherent structural integrity. The translation of drapery folds into a rigid building skin is seen in Office dA's Zahedi House (unbuilt, 1998), which features a taut surface of corrugated metal that is distorted and manipulated into gentle curtain-like folds on one façade. The play with volume can be seen in Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles (1987–2003), in which a skin of stainless-steel panels creates expressive curved forms, and in Rei Kawakubo's Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body collection (spring/summer 1997), which features exaggeratedly mutated forms achieved by padding garments in unexpected places. While these techniques are often used by architects to create greater visual interest on a building's exterior and to manipulate the volumetric forms of the interior, in the case of Winka Dubbeldam/Archi-Tectonics's Greenwich Street Project in New York (2000–04), the folded glass façade was also developed as a way to meet the practical requirements of the city's strict setback laws.

Designers in both fields have recently begun to develop structural skins that incorporate the bones, or structure, into the surface of a building or a garment. Toyo Ito's Tod's Omotesando Building (2002–04) and Mikimoto Ginza 2 (2004–05) in Tokyo feature glass and concrete skins that join structure and façade in a single surface to create a distinctive and elegant overall pattern. A-POC (A Piece of Cloth) is a revolutionary industrial process and product created by fashion designer Miyake Issey and design engineer Fujiwara Dai that is a means for producing seamless garments, complete pieces of clothing that do not require sewing.

The blurring of boundaries between fashion and architecture has led to the development of hybrid practices. Elena Manferdini employs architectural processes by using three-dimensional rendering software originally developed for animation and architectural applications to design one-of-a-kind garments. Her clothing is then fabricated using machining software that laser-cuts a garment's individual pieces as well as its decorative surface pattern. Peter Testa and Devyn Weiser conduct extensive research to develop buildings utilizing synthetic textiles, which can be constructed with traditional textile techniques such as braiding, weaving,



Toyo Ito, Tod's Omotesando Building, Tokyo, 2002–04

and knitting. These examples show the ongoing exchange between fashion and architecture and emphasize how the two practices can draw on and influence each other.

Much of the work in *Skin + Bones* challenges conventional ways of thinking about architecture and fashion, revealing the potential that can be gained from an ongoing dialogue between the two disciplines. Inspired by the rich array of work on view, new generations of designers in both fields are sure to develop even more ingenious ways of adapting and adopting forms and strategies from each other that will transform the very nature of buildings and clothes.

SHIGERU BAN
HUSSEIN CHALAYAN
PRESTON SCOTT COHEN
COMME DES GARÇONS
NEIL M. DENARI ARCHITECTS
DILLER SCOFIDIO + RENFRO
WINKA DUBBELDAM / ARCHI-TECTONICS
EISENMAN ARCHITECTS
ALBER ELBAZ FOR LANVIN
FOREIGN OFFICE ARCHITECTS
FUTURE SYSTEMS
FRANK GEHRY
TESS GIBERSON
ZAHA HADID
HERZOG & DE MEURON
YOSHIKI HISHINUMA
TOYO ITO
JAKOB + MACFARLANE
GREG LYNN FORM
ELENA MANFARDINI
MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA
ALEXANDER MCQUEEN
MIRALLES TAGLIABUE / EMBT
MIYAKE ISSEY
MORPHOSIS
NEUTELINGS RIEDIJK
JEAN NOUVEL
OFFICE DA
OMA / REM KOOLHAAS
NARCISO RODRIGUEZ
RALPH RUCCI
SANAA
NANNI STRADA
YEOHLEE TENG
TESTA & WEISER
OLIVIER THEYSKENS
ISABEL TOLEDO
BERNARD TSCHUMI
DRIES VAN NOTEN
VIKTOR & ROLF
JUNYA WATANABE
VIVIENNE WESTWOOD
WILKINSON EYRE
YOHJI YAMAMOTO
J. MEEJIN YOON / MY STUDIO

RELATED EVENTS

MOCA ART TALKS

PRESENTED BY GALLERY C

These informal discussions—free with museum admission and open to the public—take place in the exhibition's galleries at MOCA Grand Avenue unless otherwise noted.

INFO 213/621-1745 or education@moca.org

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 3pm

Isabel and Ruben Toledo,

fashion designer and artist

MOCA GRAND AVENUE, AHMANSON AUDITORIUM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 6:30pm

Yeohlee Teng, fashion designer, YEOHLEE

MOCA GRAND AVENUE, AHMANSON AUDITORIUM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 6:30pm

Brooke Hodge, curator of *Skin + Bones* and

MOCA curator of architecture and design

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 3pm

Elena Manfredini, designer,

Atelier Manfredini

MOCA GRAND AVENUE, AHMANSON AUDITORIUM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 6:30pm

J. Meejin Yoon, architect,

Höweler + Yoon Architecture/MY Studio

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 3pm

Neil Denari, architect,

Neil M. Denari Architects

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 6:30pm

Peter Testa and Devyn Weiser,

architects, Testa & Weiser

MOCA Art Talks Presented by Gallery C is made possible by
The Times Mirror Foundation Endowment and Gallery C.

CLASSES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 10am–4pm

Fashion 101

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Explore the history and basic concepts of high fashion from 1980 to the present in this special one-day course offered in conjunction with *Skin + Bones*.

\$65 MOCA members; \$75 nonmembers

INFO 213/621-1745 or education@moca.org

SATURDAYS, JANUARY 27 and

FEBRUARY 3, 10am–12:30pm;

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 10am–4pm

Architecture 101

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Using the architectural projects in *Skin + Bones* as a point of departure, this course will explore concepts such as volume, skin, and tectonic strategies. The third meeting will be an all-day field trip to local projects by some of the architects featured in the exhibition.

Instructor: Dana Hutt, architectural historian and director of architectural documentation and special projects at

Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California

\$130 MOCA members; \$150 nonmembers

INFO 213/621-1745 or education@moca.org

DEMONSTRATION AND WORKSHOPS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1:30pm

Dress Draping Demonstration

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Watch a design unfold before your eyes as **Dianne Graebner**, costumer at the Center Theatre Group, demonstrates the creative process of dress draping.

INFO 213/621-1745 or education@moca.org

FREE with museum admission

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 10am–4pm

Shifting Forms: Radical and Practical Clothing and Patternmaking Workshop

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

In this one-day workshop—offered in conjunction with *Skin + Bones*—students will experiment with lines, extractions, and insertions to investigate how flat forms, such as fabric and paper, ultimately become the fashionable ensembles on the runways in New York, Paris, and Milan.

Instructors: Honey Jernquist and Lucy Karanfilian,

San Francisco-based designers who have shown their shoes, street wear, and children's clothing as Phobos and Deimos and Little Lizards

\$40 MOCA members; \$55 nonmembers

INFO 213/621-1745 or education@moca.org

RELATED EVENTS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 10am–4pm

Architectural Model-Making Workshop

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

In conjunction with *Skin + Bones*, MOCA offers a one-day demonstration and hands-on session exploring the basic aspects of model-making, including working with different scales and materials, site orientation, and more.

Instructor: Elinor Nissley, architect,

Barbara Bestor Architecture

\$40 MOCA members; \$55 nonmembers

INFO 213/621-1745 or education@moca.org

EVENTS FOR FAMILIES

INFO 213/621-1712 or carias@moca.org

FREE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1–3:30pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

What happens when flat lines, shapes, and patterns come to life as 3-D forms? Explore *Skin + Bones*, then unleash your creativity in this workshop led by artist/educator John Ildefonso.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 1–3:30pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Design a building you can wear! Set, costume, and puppet designer Lynn Jeffries leads an amazing hat-making workshop inspired by *Skin + Bones*.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1–3:30pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

What fabulous wearable sculptures can you create with a grab bag of unusual materials? Get inspired by the incredible innovations in *Skin + Bones* and high-energy costume designer Ann Closs-Farley.

TEENS OF CONTEMPORARY ART (TOCA) EVENTS

INFO 213/633-5310 or dgray@moca.org

FREE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 3–5pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Create your own quick, avant-garde costume with costume designer Ann Closs-Farley.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 3–5pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Build your own fantasy structure inspired by *Skin + Bones* in this model-making workshop.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 3–5pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Experiment with texture, fabric, and surface manipulation with fashion designer Carol Young.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 7–10pm

MOCA GRAND AVENUE

Explore *Skin + Bones* at MOCA's highly anticipated **Teen Night**—an evening exclusively for teens, featuring live entertainment, a student art exhibition, refreshments, and more. Get involved with TOCA to help plan this special night or to show your own art. Call 213/633-5310 for more information.

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COVER (L–R): Shigeru Ban Architects, Curtain Wall House, Tokyo, 1995, photo © Hiroyuki Hirai; Hussein Chalayan, Convertible Skirt/Table from Afterwords collection, autumn/winter 2000–01, photo © Chris Moore, courtesy of Hussein Chalayan

INSIDE (L–R): Preston Scott Cohen, digital rendering of Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, 2003—projected 2008; Yeohlee Teng, Catenary Harness Dress, autumn/winter 2006–07, photo by William Palmer; Isabel Toledo, Packing Dress, spring/summer 1988, photo by William Palmer; Toyo Ito, Tod's Omotesando Building, Tokyo, 2002–04, photo © Hisao Suzuki