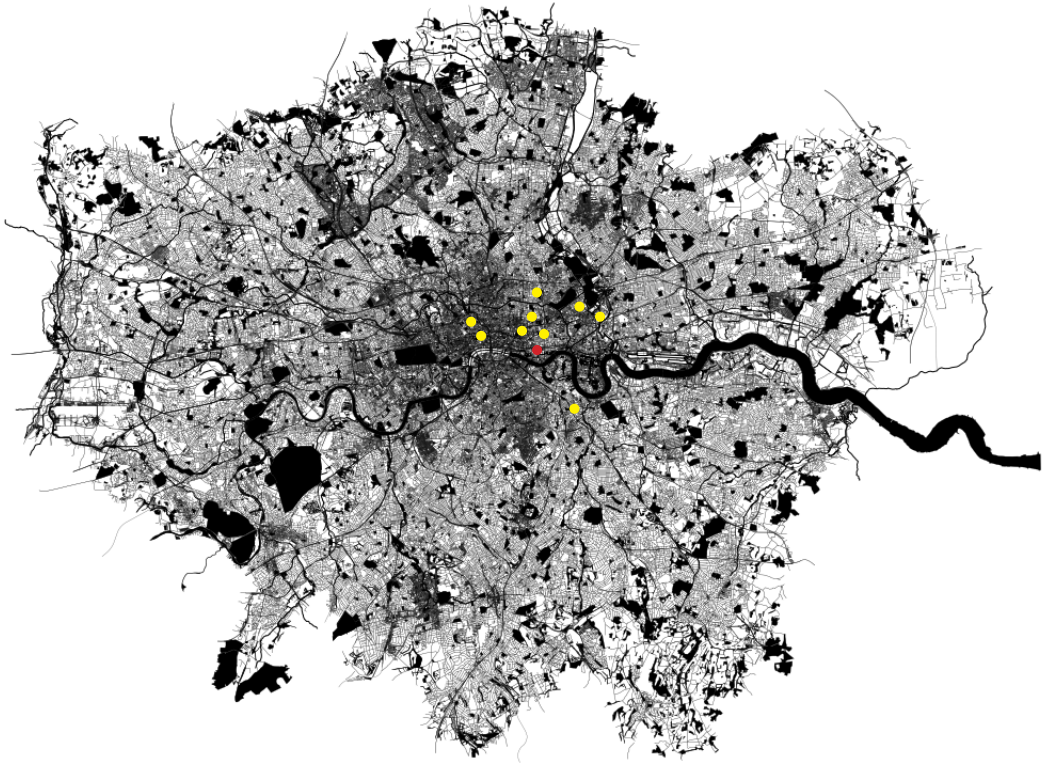




LONDON
METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY
THE CASS

Fabric of the City



Exhibition
Private View:
6 - 8pm, 9 July 2015

Opening Times:
12 - 4pm, 10 - 31 July 2015
12 - 7pm, 16 & 23 July 2015

Introduction

The Cass, London Metropolitan University presents Fabric of the City, a major contemporary textile and fashion Exhibition, celebrating the legacy of the Huguenot Weavers in Spitalfields, coinciding with the Huguenots of Spitalfields Festival, taking place during the summer across London.

Cass lecturer, and curator, Gina Pierce, invited leading East London based textile and fashion designers to respond to the rich heritage of the Huguenots silk weavers that made Spitalfields a leading textile centre in the 17th Century.

With first-hand access to archive material from the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Museum of London, the designers have crafted unique exhibits, carrying the legacy of the Huguenot Weavers to their contemporary practices - from the choice of materials to the use of cutting-edge techniques – in a display that celebrates the skills and creativity in fashion and textile design of East London, as well as the continued influence of the Huguenots on the textile courses run by the Cass. The level of design, and the range of techniques, skills and innovation on show are testament to the creativity still going on today. The social mix, the frenzy of activity, and the heritage of the area, continue to inspire a new generation of amazing design talent.

Lisa Bloomer

www.cockpitarts.com

Linen and Silk

An exploration of fibre, colour and pattern, inspired by an 18th-century Huguenot-woven silk dress (lined with linen cloth).

At least three generations of my mother’s family – the Raineys – were weavers in Milford, Northern Ireland.

My father’s family – the Bloomers – grew flax on the old linen railway route from Belfast to Dublin.

“After the manner of the Irish in dealing with these foreign names, René became Rainey and Bulmer to Bloomer.”

The Huguenot Settlements in Ireland, Grace Lawless Lee

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Jane Bowler

www.janebowler.co.uk

Woven Copper Dress, Jane Bowler AW15
(with thanks to Reagan Rockers and Yasmin Falahat)
Plastic Crochet Dress, Jane Bowler AW15
(in Collaboration with Heather Orr)

The new Jane Bowler AW15 collection was inspired by the exquisite craftsmanship of the Huguenots weavers.

The copper dress was constructed using hand cut plastic multiples in combination with soft metallic strips which are hand woven throughout the garment, allowing the material to grow over the body of its wearer.

This woven element was also carried forward in Bowler’s plastic crochet dress, which was made in collaboration with knitwear designer, Heather Orr. Woven imagery and surface texture are embedded into the surface of the plastic to create an imprint of the Huguenot past.

The collection continues to push Bowler’s fascination towards material innovation, process and craftsmanship by combining traditional techniques with a modern twist.

Karen Coughlan

Gin Drinking Gloves

These bespoke gloves feature imagery based on gin botanicals and Hogarth’s Gin Lane etching, showing the unfortunate fate of the street babies. The handmade gloves, with metal work embroidery, are inspired by the Fanshawe Dress on view at the Museum of London.

Ann Fanshawe, wore a magnificent dress of Spitalfields silk to a ball celebrating her father becoming Lord Mayor. Her father, Crisp Gascoyne, was a master brewer based in the City of London, whose trade is reflected in the weave of the fabric which features bales, anchors, barley and hops.

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CuteCircuit

www.cutecircuit.com

The K-Dress

BRINGING THE FUTURE TO FASHION. The K-Dress is the ready to wear version of the dress that CuteCircuit’s design duo Francesca Rosella and Ryan Genz designed for Katy Perry to wear at the MET Gala.

The delicate pleated silk chiffon seamlessly merges with the micro-lighting smart textile to create a magical garment that can change colour controlled by an iPhone App.

CuteCircuit is a fashion brand and a pioneer in the field of wearable technology. Founded over a decade ago, CuteCircuit sparked the fashion and technology revolution through the introduction of ground breaking designs and concepts that merge the worlds of fashion, design and telecommunication.

CuteCircuit introduced internet connected clothing and touch (haptic) telecommunication with products such as the Hug Shirt in 2002 (awarded by Time magazine as one of the Best Inventions of the Year in 2006). The Galaxy Dress introduced in 2008 (part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago) remains today the world’s largest wearable luminous display, a magical garment. Social media connected clothing such as the world’s first haute couture Twitter Dress was introduced in 2012.

CuteCircuit became the first fashion label to put wearable technology on the red carpet when Katy Perry wore their gown to the Met Gala in 2010, and the same year CuteCircuit introduced the first line of technologically advanced ready-to-wear at Selfridges in London. The latest collection presented on schedule at New York Fashion week introduces haute couture and ready-to-wear fashions that can be controlled via smartphone app to allow the wearer to change the colour and functionality of their garments at the touch of a button.

**Barley Massey
Fabrications**
www.fabrications1.co.uk

East Ends (Community Threads)

When I first came to Hackney to live in the late 90's, it felt like a special place. I could sense the creativity and textile heritage embedded in the area. Through my own textile practise, I wanted to draw strength from those roots but grow branches with relevance to the social and environmental challenges our society faces.

My practise has always had a multi stranded approach. I consider myself a 'professional textile upcycler' (of materials and philosophically as an approach to life!)

In 1997 I discovered Broadway Market. At that time many of the old shops were empty and in a bad state of disrepair. The council was encouraging local artists and business to take on the shops to re energise them, which is what I did!

'Fabrications' opened in the summer of 2000 after much negotiations, toil and skill swapping! Since then the space has evolved into a buzzing, creative hub (shop, studio & classroom) with the aim of weaving the threads of creativity, community and sustainability.

It has been an honour to be invited to be a part of the 'Fabric of the City' exhibition as it has given me the opportunity to research and uncover stories about the Huguenot weavers that resided and worked in the East End, near to where I am now and to try and connect with them.

My piece is homage to their weaving community, uniting their time with my own, history and the present moment. A series of weaving bobbins with handmade upcycled threads wait to be picked up and discovered and woven into life's beautiful living tapestry.

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**Flora Mclean
House of Flora**
www.houseofflora.net

Vine Party Hat

I was inspired by the colour and graphic of the woven textile of the 17th century party dress. We looked at the fabric under the microscope to see the also most digital quality of weave. I have attempted to get the twill surface on the plastic hat and to suggest lifting the plant life/vine pattern up on to her head. The threads were added to suggest the woven 3D construction of the fabric under the microscope and the holes cut through to reference the punch cards from the Jacquard loom.

House of Harlot
www.houseofharlot.com

Latex Garment Design Specialists

House of Harlot is a small company of skilled artisans making clothing and accessories in exotic fabrics, mostly natural latex. We specialise in making to a very high standard for a wide variety of clients. We make for Fetishists, Fashion and Film. Our signature pieces are skintight highly glossed one-piece catsuits with a great degree of complexity of manufacture. All our garments are glued, not stitched, and require technical expertise to make. All House of Harlot artisans are trained in-house, often but not exclusively recruited from a fashion background.

We draw inspiration from classic corsetry and tailoring, science fiction and fetish fantasy, Manga and Film Noir. Our designs are often classic and classy, not over embellished, but exploring complex pattern cutting and construction techniques to achieve form fitting and flattering silhouettes for both women and men.

House of Harlot was founded by Robin Archer in 1992, and at that time was a purely custom-made project. Now, House of Harlot sells its designs all over the world to a myriad of private clients. We work with high-end designer brands on their catwalk collections. Marc Jacobs, Louis Vuitton, Balenciaga, Christian Dior and many others have all had latex garments made at House of Harlot. Stars of the music industry wear our designs in their music videos and stage shows. From Beyoncé to the Glyndebourne Opera, Christina Aguilera and Lady Gaga, all have worn latex made at House of Harlot. We recently supplied nearly fifty catsuits for the cast of the Wachowskis' film Jupiter Ascending, and are currently working on a range of provocative uniforms for a private airline's flight staff.

Based in Princelet Street, E1, just east of Brick Lane and Spitalfields, House of Harlot are proud to perpetuate the skilled trade of bespoke garment making long practiced in this neighbourhood.

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James Hunting
www.jameshunting.com

Revisiting the Past

Similar to woven cloth, cities are multi layered and intricate structures. The pieces explore integration, difference, and beauty. Using the act of repetitive stitch to mirror the repetition of the act of weaving, layers of decorative images echo the complexity of the Spitalfield silk. Images, messages and meanings form part of the daily urban existence, accessible to some, indecipherable to others, and can provide a sense of membership and badges of identity.

Rebecca Hoyes

Clouds and a Few Satin Flounces

These designs were inspired by the sample books of the 18th Century silk weavers of Spitalfields.

One particular book, "Clouds and a Few Satin Flounces" 1792-94 contains samples of the textile Manufacturer Batchelor, Ham and Perigal.

I was seduced by the clear, bright, almost synthetic-feeling colours caught on the pages of the sample books and by the minute, detailed geometric patterning and subtle colour gradations.

The arrangement of snips, strips, samples and ribbons juxtaposed with multiple patterns, large and small, inspired new graphic layouts and gave the opportunity to create an uncompromising contemporary aesthetic.

A fascination with archives and how the past and tradition can inform an aesthetic relevant to today, informs much of my work. Colour is also integral to my design process and was a subject of much curiosity in the 18th Century. Pigments and dyes were traded, theories around colour and light proliferated, and secret colour recipes and dye techniques were created. The plant-based dyes of madder, saffron and logwood were important trade goods in the economies of Asia and Europe. In this collection, these dyes have been reinterpreted, woven patterns adapted and reassembled to create a collection of contemporary graphic print designs.

Rebecca Hoyes is an established surface pattern designer and colourist specialising in textiles. She describes herself as a design and trend explorer, creating modern aesthetics that reflect her curiosity for materials and processes through a meeting of traditional and contemporary craft techniques.

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Rentaro Nishimura

www.rentaro.co.uk

Flora

Emulating the delicate qualities of historical floral weave, this garment brings the past and present together by utilizing the digital technologies of CAD and 3D printers.

The repeat component is produced by the 3D Printer and assembled on a mannequin using plastic rivets. The combination of flexible polyurethane components, and pivoting rivets, allows the garment to move on the body. The form, made up of hundreds of modular units, creates a three-dimensional geometry on the surface of the body.

The angulation of the geometry captures light to reveal a subtle interplay between light and dark to beautifully reflect the environment in which it is worn. The sheen of the material gives a quality of intricate bead and sequin work.

Gina Pierce

www.ginapiercedesign.co.uk

Revelation

Can we see the other side please? Our refrain to the patient curators at the Museum of London and the V & A Clothworkers Archive when we visited to see the Spitalfields Silks. The fabrics stun us with the intensity of colour, the riot of pattern and bling of precious metals. We are inspired by the intricacies of the weave techniques, but what we really want to know is how the underside looks- to explore 'the backend', to demand that the fabric gives up its secrets.

Here we find the precise pattern dissolves into a random landscape that appears to our contemporary eyes to have the appeal of an abstract painting. Into this confusion of thread particular recognisable images can be identified. Other areas have lost any resemblance to the pattern and become a blur of colour. Here and there, the precious metals are glimpsed, showing the economic use of threads that would have cost more than the weaver would have been paid.

The motivation behind the Exhibition was to celebrate the Huguenot Silks and to reveal their working processes, and this impetus continues in my design work for the show. To broadcast the achievements, I wanted to enlarge the scale. The creation of a rug allowed small details of the reverse sides of the fabrics to be explored at a much larger scale and also to use the skills of a contemporary weaver. The rug is woven in Nepal, by a community that continues a skilled craft tradition.

The fragility of the continuity of these skills, and the preciousness of the craft practitioner to this process, was emphasised when the tragic earthquake struck in Nepal. Thankfully the weavers were safe, but the rug was delayed.

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Lucy Rainbow

www.lucyrainbow.net

London Flowers

I was inspired by Anne Marie Garthwaite's design for a silk, in pencil, pen and ink, and watercolour on paper, 1727, no 40 in the V and A book, Spitalfields Silks.

I pictured her, drawing her designs, in her house in Princelet Street, particularly, these strange little blue flowers, which looked very contemporary and 3 dimensional and wondered how these flowers would look in a colour palette that reflected Spitalfields of today.

In addition, I have made my design using ink and felt tips, no computer, to reflect how Anne Marie's paper design were generated by hand.

Alison Willoughby

www.alisonwilloghby.com

Blanket One, Two and Three

One: collaboration between Beatrice Mayfield and Alison Willoughby, with special thanks to Elena and Chloe and interns from Chelsea College of Art UAL

Two: collaboration between Mary Ann Chatterton and Alison Willoughby

Three: Alison Willoughby

Textile designers Mary Ann Chatterton, Beatrice Mayfield & Alison Willoughby launch ABM, a collaborative label with a new collection of three blankets in response to the exhibition Fabric of the City. An exhibition inspired by the rich silk weaving history of the Huguenots and the fabrics of 17th Century silk weaving. Inspiration for the work comes from the reverse of silk samples seen in the v&a & museum of London archives. The silkfloats on the reverse, a bleed, an unfinished deconstructed smudge. And the French protestants, refugees, fleeing to different countries & cultures, precious skills and belongings travelled with them. The blankets are layers of wool, cashmere and silk, worked on technique by technique, multiple running stitch into chevrons, zig zag needlepunching, pom pom making and digital print.

Alison is Skirtgirl. Based in London, forever using the skirt, her canvas, vista, media since 2001, is a tube or cone shaped garment whatever discipline that may lie in. Function non-function, without the constraint of commercialism. Collaborating, selling and exhibiting. Clients have included Selfridges, The Fashion and Textiles Museum, The British Council and Liberty. Beatrice specialises in hand constructed, embellished and embroidered textiles. Using a range of traditional embroidery techniques, stitches and processes pieces incorporate a high level of craftsmanship with contemporary design. Mary Ann Chatterton is a textile designer, dyer and silkscreen printer. She uses heat press and embellishment techniques mainly working with natural fabrics. Colour and texture are the main thrust of her work often inspired by her collection of very old cloth with all its perfections. These pieces may be incorporated into her work. She teaches from her East London studio.

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Sam Wingate

www.wingateprint.com

Pocket Worship

The Huguenots had a significant impact on the landscape of Spitalfields, building places to live, work and worship. Leaving France to seek asylum in England, they took with them their religion and skills. The illustrations depict some of the buildings originally built by the Huguenots, which have been used as places of worship, either by them or by groups arriving to the area in later years. Screen printed on wood, they are all small enough to fit into a pocket, ready to pick up and carry with you, a symbol of the ambulatory nature of worship.

SYMPOSIUM

10 - 5pm, 14 July 2015
CE1 - 16, Central House, The CASS

Speakers

Olivia Horsfall Turner & Lina Hakim, Victoria & Albert Museum
Fabricating a Model for Textile Research: the VARI Pilot Project and the Leman Album

Debra Roberts, Leeds College of Art & Design
Upcycling in the 18th Century with Refashioned Garments

Gavin Fry, Brighton University
Stranger and Less Quantifiable Processes

Hannah Maughan and Sally-Ann Gill, Falmouth University
Making: Archives – an investigation into the creative use of archives within the University context

Avril Horsford, Independent Writer, Art and Culture
Wardrobe Malfunction: The cultural popularity of Crimplene and other synthetics fabrics in Caribbean migrant fashion in 1960s Britain

Hannah Lamb, Bradford College
Using Archives Creatively - Chance Encounters in the Archives

Claire Pajaczowska, Royal College of Art
Huguenots exiled from La Rochelle and the Revolution in Textile Thinking

Elli Michaela Young, PhD student, University of Brighton
Fashioning Jamaica 1950-1975

Charlotte Dew, Curator and Consultant
The Cutting Edge: Contemporary textile collaborations

For tickets go to:
fabricofthecity.eventbrite.co.uk

Thanks to:

