

# Colour me Pink! Being inspired by the Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage Project

Thursday 06<sup>th</sup> February 2025 – 10.00am BST





# Welcome and housekeeping

## Welcome and thanks for joining us!

This is a friendly and open space where your contributions are valued and respected.

We encourage you to ask questions, share ideas, experiences, and resources.

If you have a question, please:

- Use the chat feature



### Hi, from the team

#### Lisa Moore – lmoore3@uca.ac.uk

Project Manager (Copyright & Rights) | Colourful Heritage Project Copyright & Compliance Manager | University for the Creative Arts

#### Ellen Brown - ebrown4@uca.ac.uk

Project Manager (Outreach & Education) | Colourful Heritage Project Learning Development Tutor | University for the Creative Arts

#### Marie-Therese - marie-therese.gramstadt@uca.ac.uk

Project Officer/Cataloguer | Colourful Heritage Project

#### Alex Bell - alexander.bell@uca.ac.uk

Liaison Librarian (Fashion, Textiles & Creative Business) | University for the Creative Arts

### Webinar Agenda

10:00-10:15 - **Welcome and Introduction to Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage project** - Ellen Brown, Project Manager (Outreach & Education)

10:15-10:30 - **The Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection** - Marie-Therese Gramstadt, Project Officer/Cataloguer

10:30-10:40 - **Copyright and your Rights to use The Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection** - Lisa Moore, Project Manager (Copyright & Rights)

10:40-11:00 - **Visual Literacy and 'Slow Looking' at The Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection** - Alexander Bell, Liaison Librarian, School of Fashion

11:00-11:15 – Questions / reflection from speakers



# Welcome and Introduction to Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage project – Ellen Brown, Project Manager (Outreach & Education)

Zamoh Chooles' Coloneful Heritage

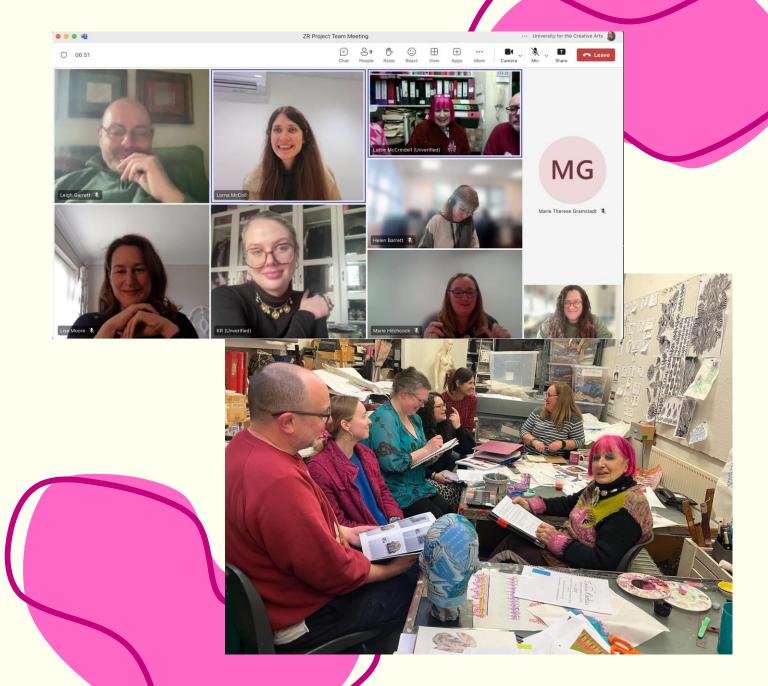




When: March 2024 – September 2025

#### Deliverables:

- Digitisation of 150 pieces from Zandra Rhodes' collections, including 50 accessories
- Creation of a more accessible digital archive
- Interviews with 6 key figures in Rhodes' career
- Employability & training: internships x5
- Outreach: 10x workshops with disadvantaged and/or non-traditional learners across Medway, where Zandra grew up
- CPD for teachers across Medway & Kent



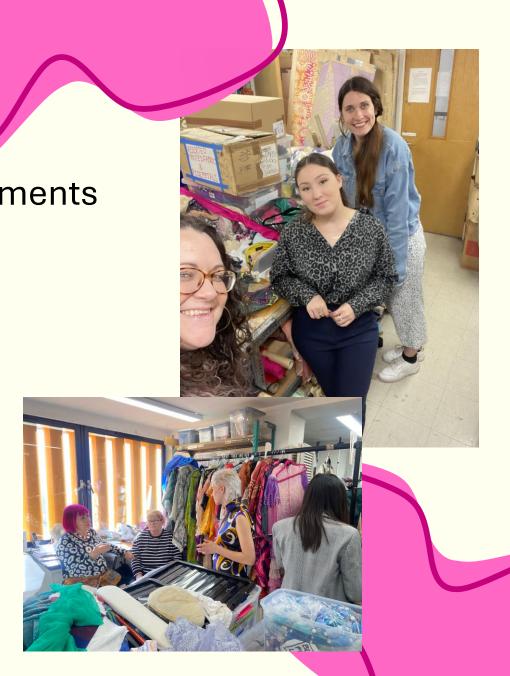






## Prep and Shoot days

- 220 hours of mending and prepping garments
- 8560 stitched replaced
- 195 hours of ironing
- 192 sequins restored
- [what felt like] 3.2 million beads added
- 912 photographs
  - 105 garments
  - 53 accessories



### Interviews

- Capturing oral histories gives a deeper more personal connection.
- An added a layer of depth that provides context.















# **Employability**



- Interns x5
- 5 Heritage advisors
- 2 photographers
- 2 learning specialists
- 1 film crew



### Outreach

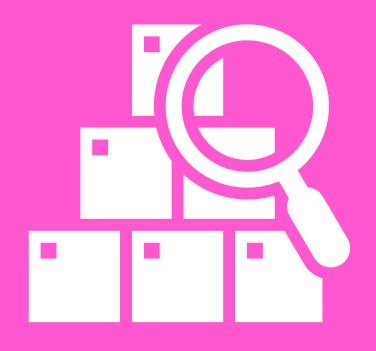
#### Who:

10 schools/colleges across Medway

#### What:

- Fully funded creative workshops
- Co-creation of a creative community: students and schools will connect prior to the workshop day via our Instagram channel @colourfulheritage to share work and learn from each other while exploring what heritage means to them.
- **Free project sketchbooks:** a lovely hot pink sketchbook (inspired by Zandra's hair!) for each student participating.
- Hands-On Learning: 5x workshops, from drawing and zine-making to screen printing.
- An experience of Higher Education: students will get to meet student ambassadors, explore the campus and use our professional standard equipment and spaces.
- Inspiration from Zandra Rhodes' Legacy: Students will connect with the legendary designer herself and her work while learning how design can reflect both personal and cultural heritage.
- Exhibition Opportunity: the project will end with an exhibition at Nucleus Arts in Chatham, celebrated with a private view for everyone involved and Zandra herself.





# The Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection - Marie-Therese Gramstadt, Project Officer/Cataloguer





- Available in VADS since 2013: https://vads.ac.uk
- Visual Arts Data Service was founded in 1997 at University for the Creative Arts, as a data centre providing advice and receiving digital outputs via the AHRC
- New CONTENTdm (OCLC) system in 2020
- National Lottery Heritage Fund project 2024-25





- Founded by Dame Zandra Rhodes in 2020
- Director: Piers Atkinson
- Student project uncovered hidden gems; lookbook

https://zandrarhodescharitable foundation.org/the-library/



#### 1. Zandra's first collection



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Zandra Rhodes Style Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 16

Zandra Rhodes **Textile Design Bible** 

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Bible 15

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Title

Over 140,000 images from over 300 art and c

Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

Collection Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection

Designer Zandra Rhodes (British, born 1940)

Season Autumn/Winter 1971

Description Hat formed from layers of ivory wool underfelt w

printed and appliquéd on top and pinked edges

Place of Origin

Objects

Main Fabric wool underfe

**Techniques** appliquéd

pinked edges

Textile Print Design Name Button Flower

Colourway ivory printed with yellow, red, blue

Keywords zig-zag, buttons, flowers, pop art

Notes Accession number: ZR/2024/H1. Modelled by Zi

photographed by Bishin Jumonji for the Japane magazine Anan (The Art of Zandra Rhodes, p. 76 73; 50 Fabulous Years in Fashion, p. 33). Worn v

(71/19) known as the Dinosaur coat.

Zandra Rhodes' Personal Collection Location

Copyright C Zandra Rhodes 2024.

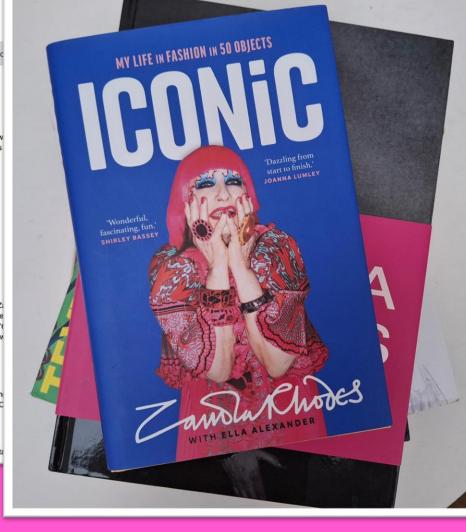
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**Fashion Collection** Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage

Funder Digitisation funded by the National Lottery Herita



# Inspiration

Different ways to use **VADS** for inspiration

# 1. Books & Videos

Looking for inspiration – try searching for:

The Art of Zandra Rhodes

Lifelong Love Affair



### https://vads.ac.uk

Advanced Search

Over 140,000 images from over 300 art and design collections in the UK, free for use in education









Search for...



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Collections



About





WELCOME

DRESSES

DRAWINGS

ASK ZANDRA

TUTORIALS

ABOUT

#### Ask Zandra

Learn about the inspiration and stories behind the designer's favourite garments, in the following 21 video interviews and texts.

#### Jump to video

View the videos with captions on UCA's Panopto service

#### Tag Cloud

archives Australia Ayers
Rock Aztec buttons catwalk
shows chain stitch Chinese
dragons circles digitisation
dinosaurs Egyptian
Elizabethan embroidery
ethnic costume everyday
objects feathers flowers
found objects headdresses
hippies Indian

inspiration knitting
Medieval Mexico Museum of
the American Indian

museums Native
Americans New York
Porcupine quillwork previous
designs punk royal wedding
safety pins shawls shells
sombreros stars tassels tears
techniques temples Toile
de Jouy travel Uluru

#### 1. Zandra's first collection



The inspiration for Zandra Rhodes's first collection, <u>The Knitted Circle</u> in 1969, came from her childhood experiences of knitting, as well as from knitting with friends whilst on holiday in Wales, and also from the knitted textiles that she had seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Zandra Rhodes often refers to the inspiration of her mother who was a Senior Lecturer in the Fashion Department at Medway College of Design (now the Rochester campus of the <u>University for the Creative Arts</u>). In the video she talks about looking through her mother's sewing books and being inspired by the embroidery technique of chain stitch. From this she developed her textile print design 'Knitted Circle', which gave its name to her first collection, with the printed effect of chain stitch and knitting.

WELCOME

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ASK ZANDRA

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archives Australia Ayers Rock Aztec buttons catwalk shows chain stitch Chinese dragons circles digitisation dinosaurs Egyptian Elizabethan embroidery ethnic costume everyday objects feathers flowers found objects headdresses hippies Indian

inspiration knitting Medieval Mexico Museum of the American Indian

museums Native Americans New York Porcupine guillwork previous designs punk royal wedding safety pins shawls shells sombreros stars tassels tears techniques temples Toile de Jouy travel Uluru

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Panopto Q Search in folder "Zandra Rhodes Project Videos"...

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#### Zandra Rhodes Project Videos C





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Z01. Zandra's first collection Zandra Rhodes Project Videos



Z02: Circular garments Zandra Rhodes Project Videos



Z03. The Ukraine and 'Chevron Shawl' collection Zandra Rhodes Project Videos



Z04. New York and 'Indian Feathers' collection Zandra Rhodes Project Videos

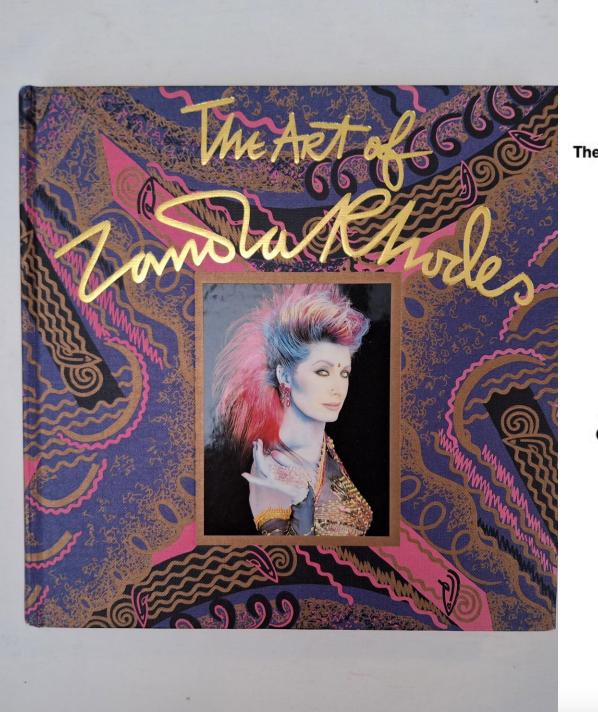


Z05. Inspiration from museums Zandra Rhodes Project Videos



Z06. The Button Flower print Zandra Rhodes Project Videos

Zandra Rhodes videos on Panopto











The Mount Olympus Collection

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The Lily Collection

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The Chinese Collection



Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 

The Shell Collection The African Collection











The Shell Collection

The Mexican Collections

The Shell Collection

The African Collection







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The Ukraine and 'Chevron Shawl'

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Collections

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The Mexican

The Chinese Collection

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Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

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New York and 'Indian Feathers'

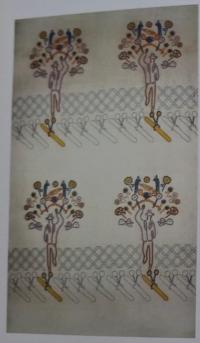
The Shell Collection

The Shell Collection

The Knitted Circle







61 Left Mr Man, three-colour print on white rayon crepe. Syliva Ayton and Zandra Rhodes, 1968. 62 Right Mr Man, three-

Rhodes, 1988.

2 Right Mr Man, threecolour print on pink rayon
orepe, Sylvia Ayton and
crepe, Sylvia Ayton and
2 Randra Rhodes, 1988.

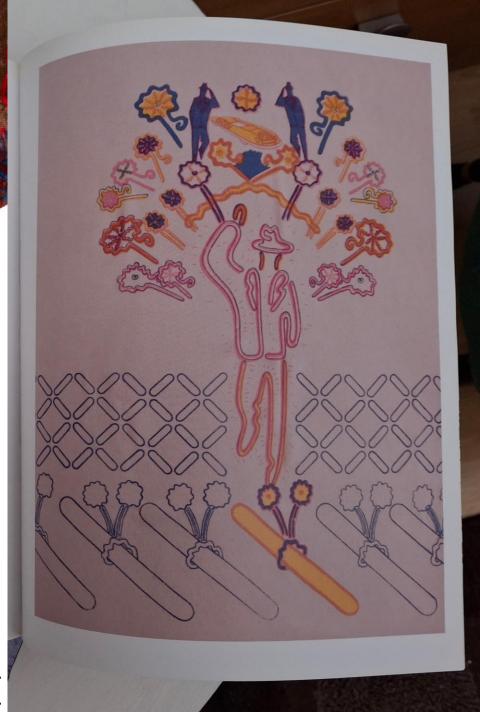
Mr Man was inspired by the
rainbow-coloured man on
the OMO soap packaging
and the famous Las Vegas
cowboy in neon lights.
The print was used for
sleeves on a multi-print
dress, on a sude jacket
dress, on a sude packet
dress, on a sude packet
by Vanessa Redgrave in
British Vogue, June 1988.

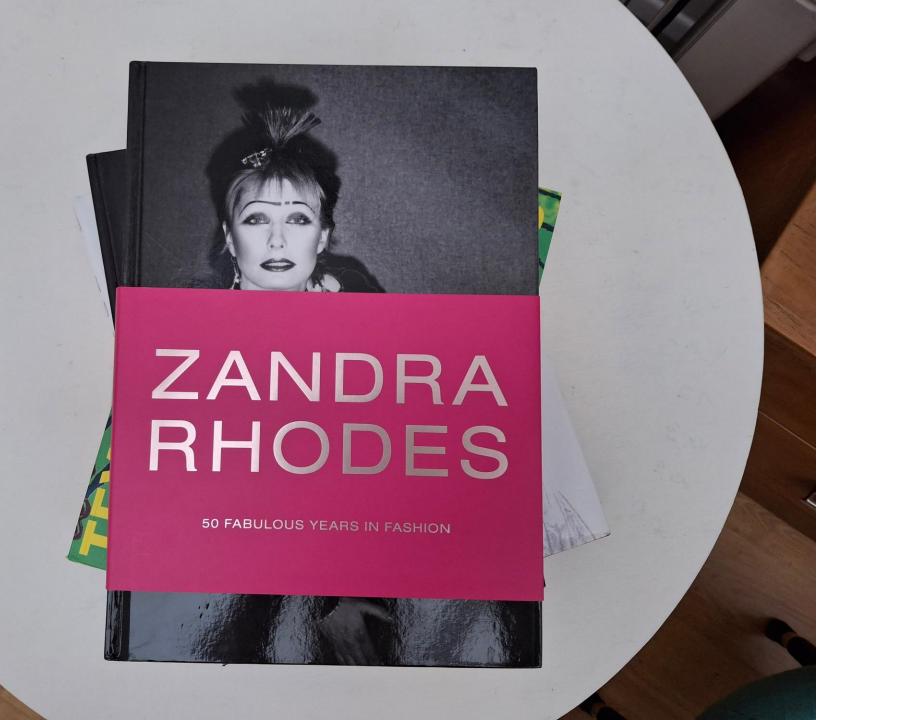


Mr Man, 1968











# ZAN RHO

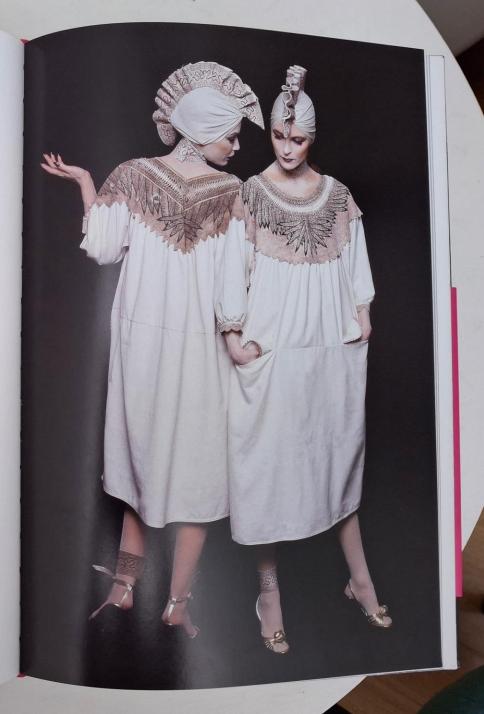
50 FABULOUS YEA



Spring/Summer 1983, 'Mount Olympus' collection. Close-up of suede bodice with pinked edges, punched and printed with Indian Circle' design, style 83/59

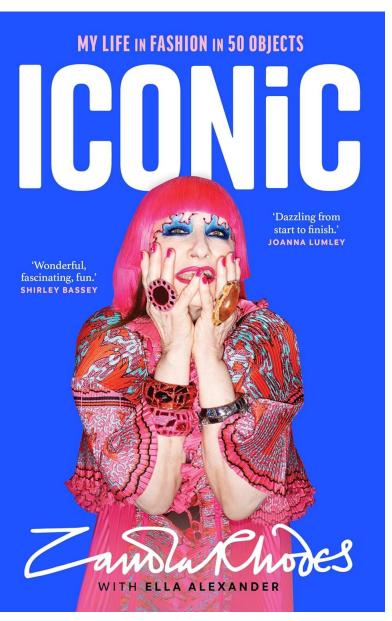
todels wearing raw silk dresses with suede bodices from the Mount Olympus' collection, backstage at the Spring/Summer 1983 fashion show Hats Stephen Jones

ZANDRA RHODES: 50 FABULOUS YEARS IN FASHION











© Zandra Rhodes 2024. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.

# 2. Lists & Hyperlinks

Fashion Collection, Objects, Textile Print Design Name, Main Fabric, Techniques



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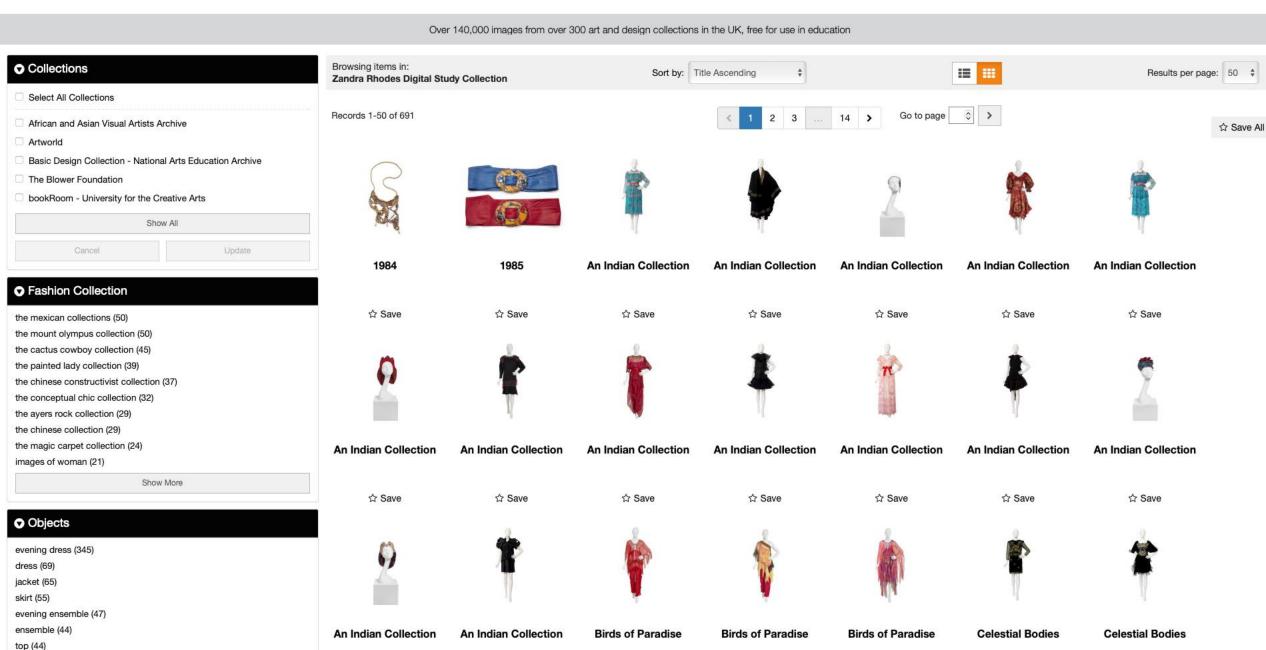


About



kaftan (35)

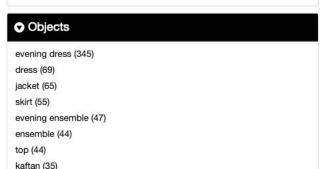
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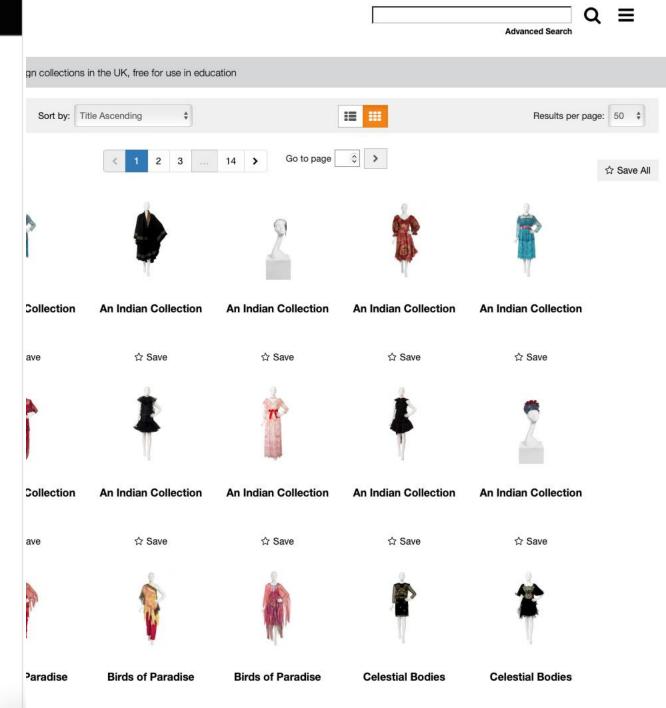
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# the mexican collections (50) the mount olympus collection (50) the cactus cowboy collection (45) the painted lady collection (39) the chinese constructivist collection (37) the conceptual chic collection (32) the ayers rock collection (29) the chinese collection (29) the magic carpet collection (24) images of woman (21)



#### ▼ Fashion Collection

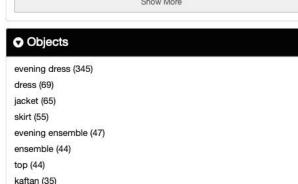
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#### Fashion Collection

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the knitted circle (7)

the venetian pallazzo collection (7)

#### Objects evening dress (345) dress (69) jacket (65) skirt (55) evening ensemble (47) ensemble (44) top (44) kaftan (35) trousers (23) coat (19) headpiece (15) blouse (11) headdress (8) evening top (7) hat (7) turban (7) tunic (6) wedding dress (5) cloak (4) earrings (4) headband (4)

mask (4)

cape (3)

snood (3)

stole (3)

jumpsuit (3)

bloomers (2)





#### Textile Print Design Name

lily (reverse) (19)

mexican fan (17)

field of lilies (16)

sparkle (15)

lace mountain (14)

magic heads (13)

punk broderie (13)

button flower (10)

frilly circle (9)

mexican turnaround (12)

mexican dinner plates (9)

cactus everywhere (8)

feather and triangle (8)

knitted circle (8)

mexican border (8)

a field of poems (7)

spinifix border (8)

manhattan (13)

indian border stripe (17)

spinifix landscape (16)

indian feather sunspray (15)

Collections

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#### Fashion Collection

the mexican collections (50)

the mount olympus collection (50) the cactus cowboy collection (45)

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the conceptual chic collection (32)

the ayers rock collection (29)

the chinese collection (29)

the magic carpet collection (24) buttons and bows godets (8)

images of woman (21)

Show More

#### Objects

evening dress (345)

dress (69)

jacket (65)

skirt (55)

evening ensemble (47)

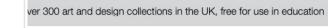
top (44) kaftan (35)

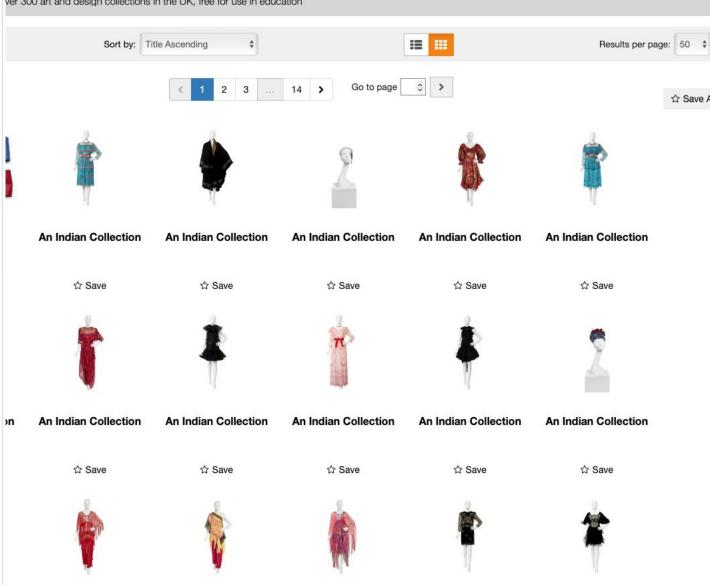
ensemble (44)



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**Birds of Paradise** 

Celestial Bodies

**Celestial Bodies** 

Birds of Paradise

Birds of Paradise

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#### Textile Print Design Name

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feather and triangle (8)

knitted circle (8)

mexican border (8)

spinifix border (8)

a field of poems (7)

#### Main Fabric

silk chiffon (342)

rayon jersey (76)

acetate satin (27)

silk georgette (26)

silk crepe de chine (20)

alcantara ultra suede (17)

wool felt (15)

satin (12)

habotai silk (9)

rayon satin (9)

silk organza (8)

silk satin (6)

gold lurex (5)

Birds of Paradise

resin (5)

n



Birds of Paradise



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**Birds of Paradise** 



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the mexican collections (50) the mount olympus collection (50)

the cactus cowboy collection (45)

Cancel

the painted lady collection (39)

the chinese constructivist collection (37)

the conceptual chic collection (32)

the ayers rock collection (29)

the chinese collection (29)

the magic carpet collection (24) images of woman (21)

Show More

#### Objects

evening dress (345)

dress (69) jacket (65)

skirt (55)

evening ensemble (47) ensemble (44)

top (44)

kaftan (35)



Collections

Artworld

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rayon satin (9)

silk organza (8)

silk satin (6)

gold lurex (5)

resin (5)

n



Birds of Paradise



Birds of Paradise



rainbowed (12) formed (10) smocked (10) devore (7) sculpted (7) digitally printed (6) fishing line hem (6) mixed media (5) mosaic (5) bias cut (4) **Birds of Paradise** guipure lace (4)

Techniques

screen printed (513)

hand beaded (355)

ornamented (147)

satin stitched (77)

lettuce hem (75)

top-stitched (71)

pleated (70)

quilted (22)

punched (14)

appliqued (42)

embroidered (36)

pinked edges (26)

hand rolled hem (238)

baby overlocked hem (79)

#### Fashion Collection

the mexican collections (50) the mount olympus collection (50)

Cancel

the cactus cowboy collection (45)

the painted lady collection (39)

the chinese constructivist collection (37)

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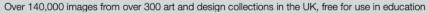
evening ensemble (47) ensemble (44)

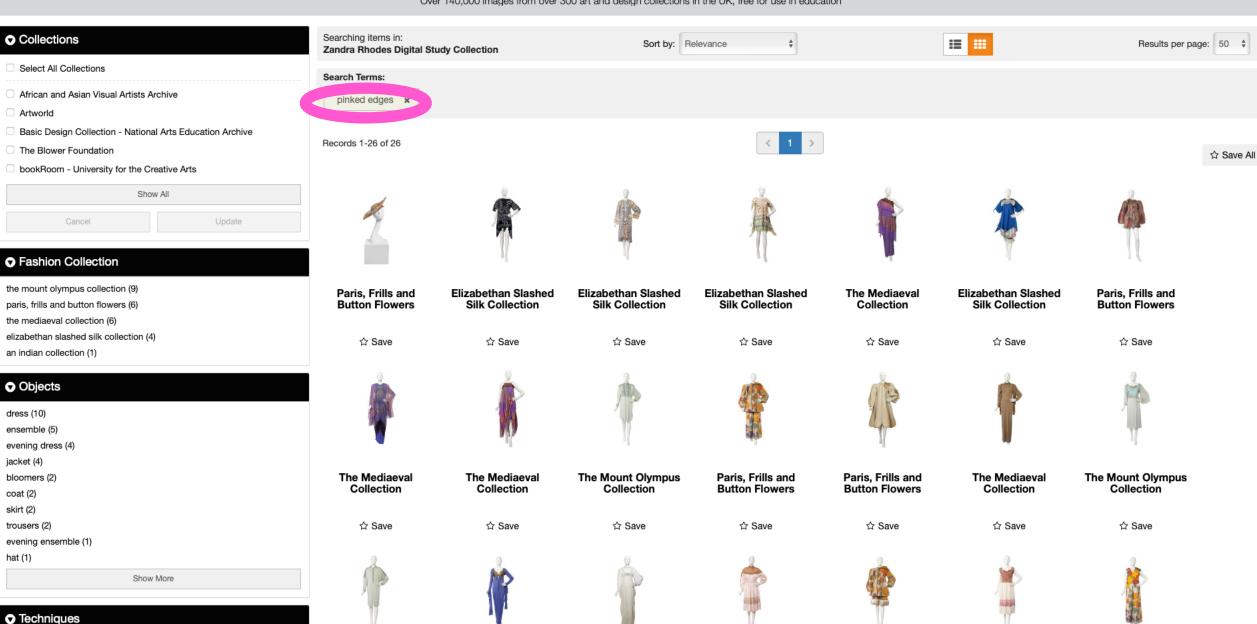
top (44)

kaftan (35)



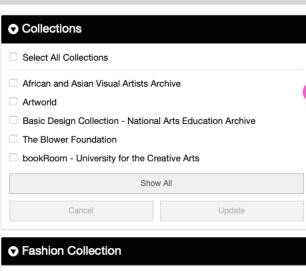
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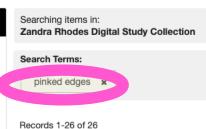
#### Over 140,000 images



the mount olympus collection (9) paris, frills and button flowers (6) the mediaeval collection (6) elizabethan slashed silk collection (4) an indian collection (1)

#### Objects

dress (10) ensemble (5) evening dress (4) jacket (4) bloomers (2) coat (2) skirt (2) trousers (2) evening ensemble (1) hat (1) Show More







Paris, Frills and Button Flowers	Elizabethan ( Silk Collec	
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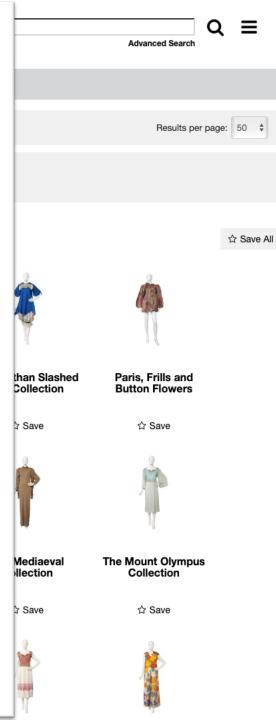


The Mediaeval	The Medi
Collection	Collect
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#### Over 140,000 images from over 300 art and design collections in the UK,

Paris, Frills and Button Flowers Title

Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection Collection

Designer Zandra Rhodes (British, born 1940)

Autumn/Winter 1971 Season

Description Hat formed from layers of ivory wool underfelt with Button Flower screen-

printed and appliquéd on top and pinked edges around the brim.

Place of Origin London

Objects hat

Main Fabric wool underfelt

screen printed Techniques

appliquéd pinked edges formed

Textile Print Design Name Button Flower

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Keywords zig-zag, buttons, flowers, pop art

Notes Accession number: ZR/2024/H1. Modelled by Zandra Rhodes and

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(71/19) known as the Dinosaur coat.

Zandra Rhodes' Personal Collection Location

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Fashion Collection Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

Project Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage

Funder Digitisation funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



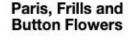






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Paris, Frills and

**Button Flowers** 

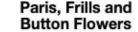
#### Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers**

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#### Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers**

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Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 



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Techniques screen printed

appliquéd pinked edges formed

**Textile Print Design Name** Button Flower

ivory printed with yellow, red, blue Colourway

Keywords zig-zag, buttons, flowers, pop art

Notes Accession number: ZR/2024/H1. Modelled by Zandra Rhodes and

> photographed by Bishin Jumonji for the Japanese womens' lifestyle magazine Anan (The Art of Zandra Rhodes, p. 76; Lifelong Love Affair p. 73; 50 Fabulous Years in Fashion, p. 33). Worn with Butterfly No. 57

(71/19) known as the Dinosaur coat.

Zandra Rhodes' Personal Collection Location

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Fashion Collection Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

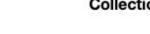
Project Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage

Funder Digitisation funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.





☆ Save





Temples and

☆ Save

Lotuses



The Chinese Collection

☆ Save



The Chinese Collection

☆ Save



The Shell Collection

☆ Save



The Magic Carpet Collection

☆ Save

Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 

☆ Save





Over 140,000 images from over 300 art and design collections in the UK,

Title Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection Collection

Zandra Rhodes (British, born 1940) Designer

Autumn/Winter 1971 Season

Description Hat formed from layers of ivory wool underfelt with Button Flower screen-

printed and appliquéd on top and pinked edges around the brim.

Place of Origin London

Objects hat

wool underfelt Main Fabric

Techniques screen printed

> appliquéd pinked edges

formed

Textile Print Design Name Button Flower

ivory printed with yellow, red, blue Colourway

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**Fashion Collection** Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

Project Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage

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#### Search Terms:

wool underfelt x

Records 1-4 of 4







The Fulham Road

**Clothes Shop** 

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Paris,	<b>Frills</b>	and
Butto	n Flov	vers

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Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 

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Paris, Frills and

**Button Flowers** 

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Records 1-4 of 4



Title

#### Over 140,000 images from over 300 art and design collections in the UK,

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Fashion Collection Paris, Frills and Button Flowers

Project Zandra Rhodes' Colourful Heritage

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Paris, Frills and

**Button Flowers** 

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Paris, Frills and Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers Button Flowers** 









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Paris, Frills and

**Button Flowers** 

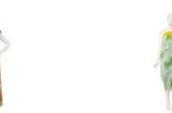
The Fantastic Flower

Garden



Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 





Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 





Paris, Frills and **Button Flowers** 





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The Striped Whirlwind!







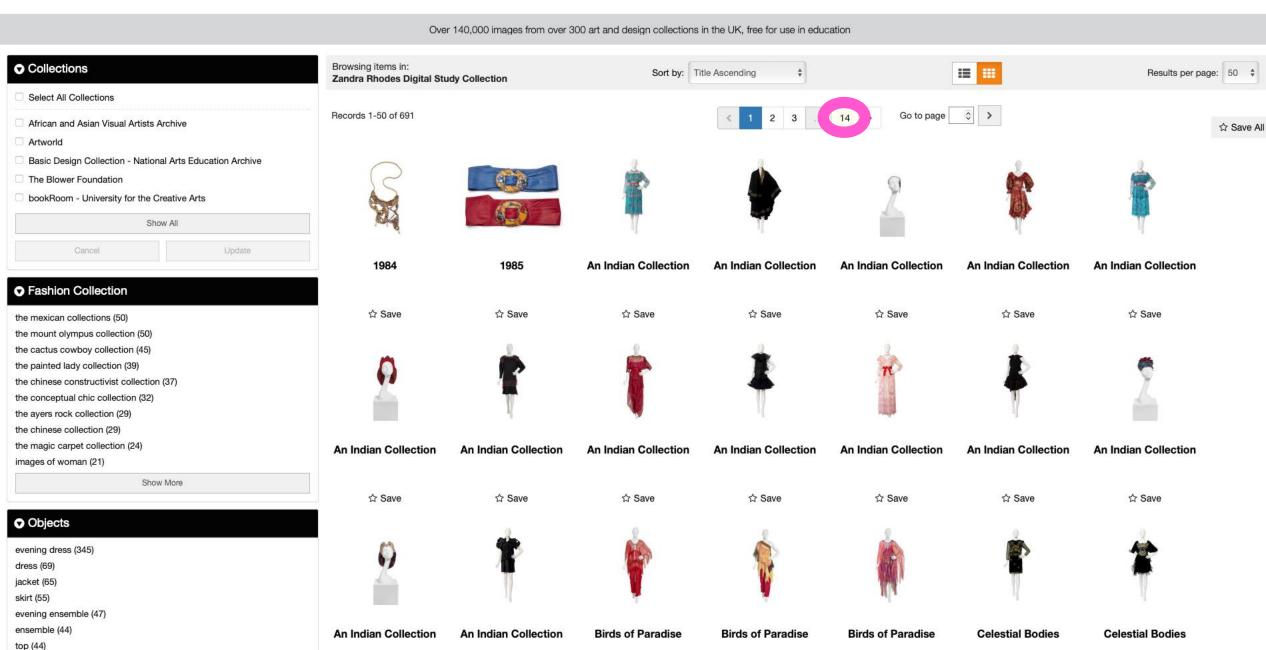
## 3. Textile Design & Style Bibles

Updated Textile Design Bible and 17 Style Bibles



kaftan (35)

**Advanced Search** 









Zandra Rhodes Style

Bible 02

☆ Save



Zandra Rhodes Style

Bible 03

☆ Save



Zandra Rhodes Style Bible - Catalogue of Possessions

☆ Save

Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 01

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Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 04

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Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 05

Bible 06

Zandra Rhodes Style

Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 07

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Zandra Rhodes Style

Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 09 Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 10 Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 11

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Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 12 Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 13

Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 14

Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 15 Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 16 Zandra Rhodes Textile Design Bible

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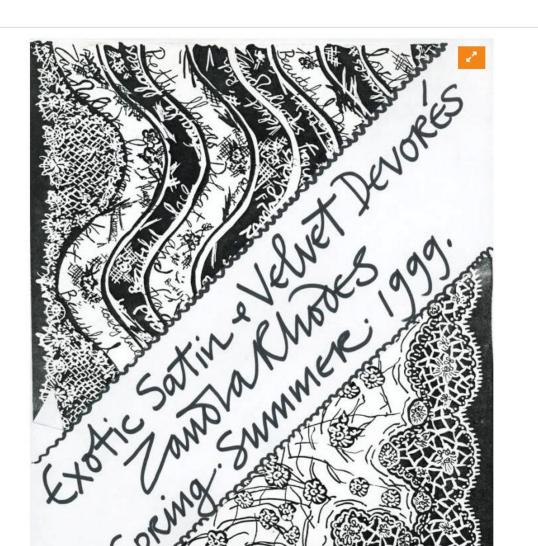


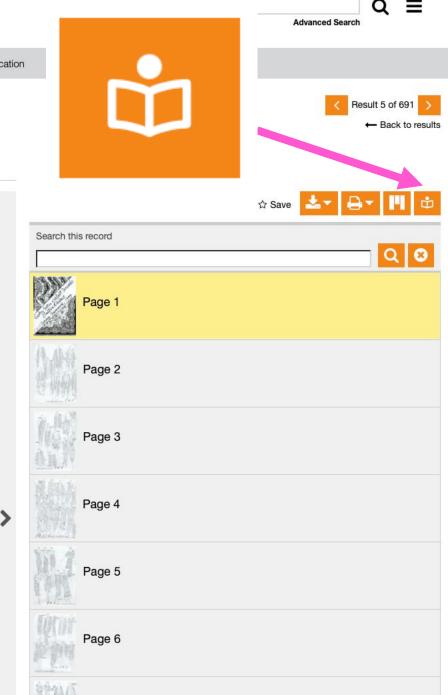
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Home > Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection > Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 13

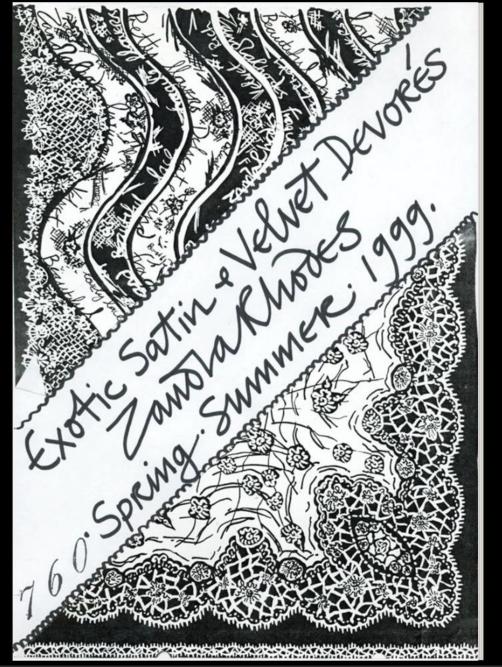
#### Zandra Rhodes Style Bible 13

02\_00416step1











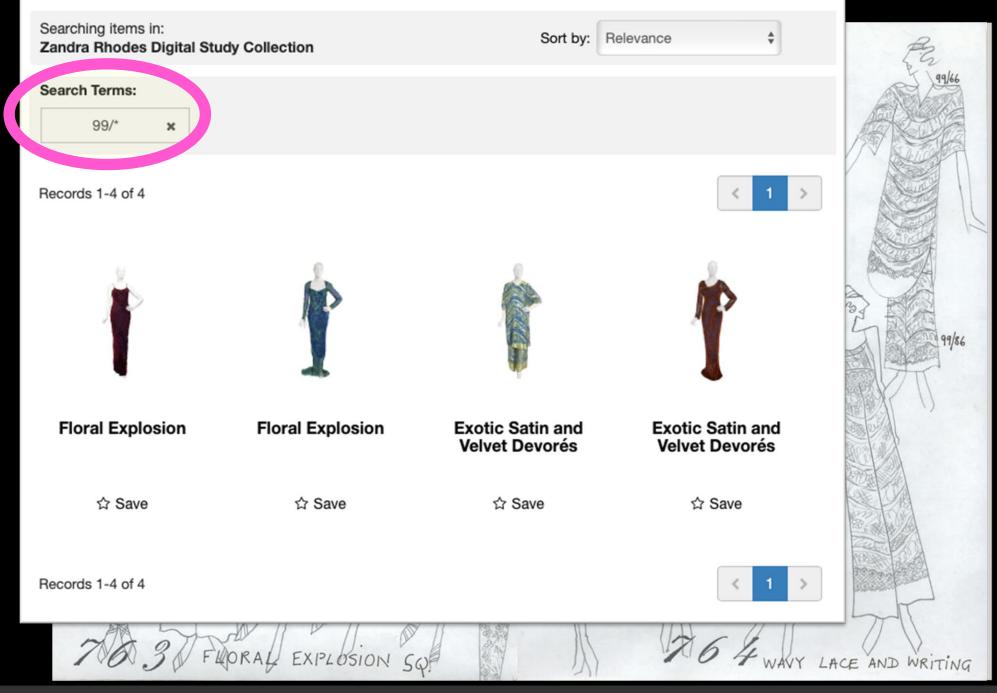












## Collecting Zandra Rhodes Images in VADS

Videos by Amy Robinson, Digital Curation Manager:

- You can collect images on VADS with & without logging-in:
   Video on How to Save Images (1 minute 44 seconds)
- You can also compare multiple VADS images with multiple images from other IIIF\* collections:

Video on Using Mirador Image Viewer (2 minutes 44 seconds)

\*International Image Interoperability Framework

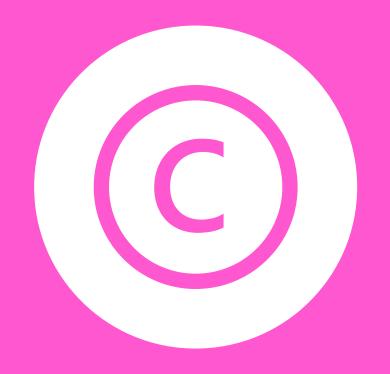
## VADS Image Credits

- Silk chiffon dress, known as "the dress", The Shell Collection, Autumn/Winter 1973, Style Number 73/44, by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2012. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- Corset worn by Diana Ross, The Renaissance/Gold Collection, Autumn/Winter 1981, Style Numbers 81/130 (top) and 81/186P (skirt), by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2012. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- Detail of Mr Man print, The Neo Fantasy Look, Autumn/Winter 1993, <u>Style Number 93/575</u>, by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2024. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- The Mount Olympus Collection, Spring/Summer 1983, <u>Style Number 83/59</u>, by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2012. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- Turban by Stephen Jones with textile design by Zandra Rhodes, The Mount Olympus Collection, Spring/Summer 1983. © Zandra Rhodes 2024.
- Freddie Mercury tried on this women's bridal top that inspired a cape for the stage, The Lily Collection, Autumn/Winter 1972, Style Number 72/45, by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2024. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- Worn by Diana, Princess of Wales for a State Banquet in Kyoto, Japan, May 1986, India Revisited, Autumn/Winter 1985, Style Number 85/54, by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2024. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- Hat by Zandra Rhodes, Paris, Frills and Button Flowers, Autumn/Winter 1971. © Zandra Rhodes 2024. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.
- Zandra Rhodes' Style Bible Number 13, pages 760, 763 and 764. © Zandra Rhodes 2012.
- Exotic Satin and Velvet Devorés, Spring/Summer 1999, <u>Style Number 99/135</u>, by Zandra Rhodes. © Zandra Rhodes 2024. Mannequin courtesy of Rootstein.



### #ThanksToYou

https://mylibrary.uca.ac.uk/colourfulheritage-people



# Copyright and your Rights to use The Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection –

Lisa Moore, Project Manager (Copyright & Rights)

# Images of Garments and Drawings

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Learning Teaching Research

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1982 by Zandra Rhodes © VADS, 2012.



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The Creative Commons (CC) Certificate program for Open Culture / GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives and museums).





# Images of Garments and Drawings

The **CC BY-NC-SA** licence allows the images to be shared, copied, adapted and built on **non-commercially**. You need to credit Zandra Rhodes as the original creator. Any adapted work(s) would be shared under identical licence terms.

#### Credit:

[title of image] by [name of source/creator of image] © [source] [year]

Desert Queen, Style number 02/82, Autumn/Winter 2002 by Zandra Rhodes © VADS 2024.



# Interviews with Zandra Rhodes and Colleagues

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Zandra Rhodes, 2024. From Printed Textiles to Fashion. Colourful Heritage Project, UCA.

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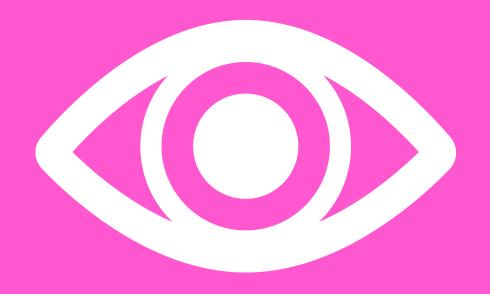
Interview with Zandra Rhodes



Interview with Piers Atkinson



Interview with Stephen Jones



# Visual Literacy and 'Slow Looking' at The Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection –

Alex Bell, Liaison Librarian, School of Fashion



Describe it in the comments...

## 'Sunset Coral'

## -WGSN key colour for S/S 2025

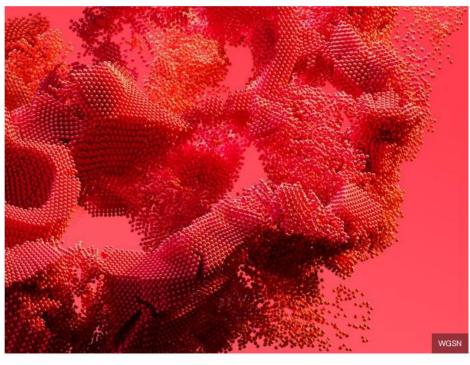












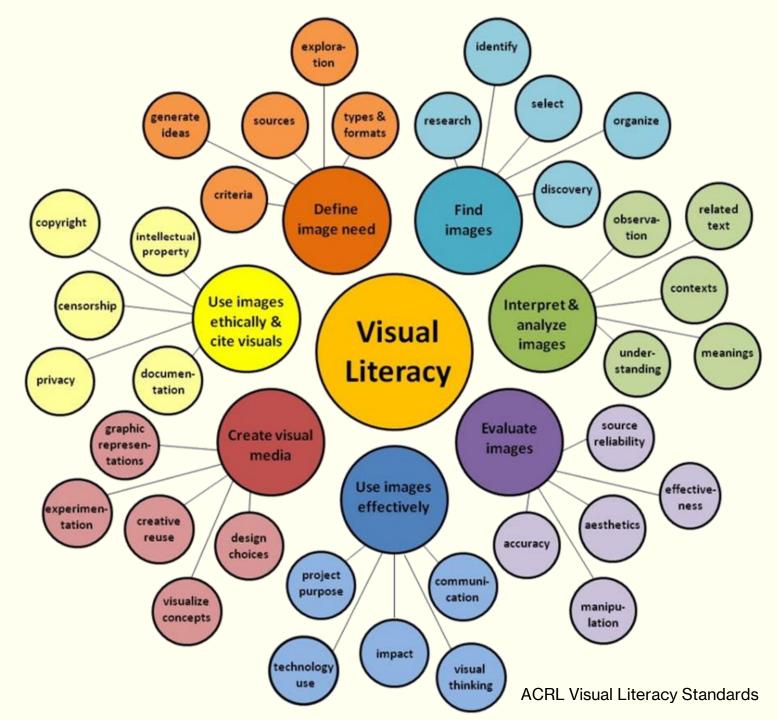
#### Colour evolution

Pink Punch S/S 23 Ocean Coral S/S 24 Sunset Coral S/S 25

## **Visual Literacy**

"Visual literacy is a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluating, use, and create images and visual media" (Brown et al, 2016)

It enables a learner to understand and analyse the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components of images.



# What does it mean to be visually literate?

Can read visual sources with comprehension, analyse their purpose and structure, and appreciate their meaning.

Can identify and understand a wide variety of different visual sources or mediums (photograph, painting, sculpture, garment, film...).

The ability to think deeply about a visual source, it's purpose and authenticity.

Knowing how to connect visual sources with text and other types of information. (Newman and Ogle, 2019:3-4)





# Slow approaches to develop visual literacy skills

### Exploration, play, experimentation, inspiration, serendipity...

Fashion students conduct research from eclectic and often abstract sources...



#### Fashion designers are...

"obsessive collectors, always on the hunt for new and exciting things to inspire them. So, the need to gather and source material in the creative process is essential for feeding the imagination."

Creative research...

"can be conducted at any time and involves observing the world, collecting and recording objects, images and ideas."

(Sorger & Seivewright, 2021; Mbeledogu, 2022)



UCA BA Fashion Atelier & Tailoring

## From Algorithm to inspiration

A lot of the content fashion students consume online is filtered through algorithms, determining how information and images are ranked, selected, and recommended to them, influencing perceptions, choices, and beliefs (Chayka, 2024).

"People's daily interactions with algorithms affect how they learn from others, with negative consequences, including social misconceptions, conflict, and the spread of misinformation" (Brady cited in USP, 2024).





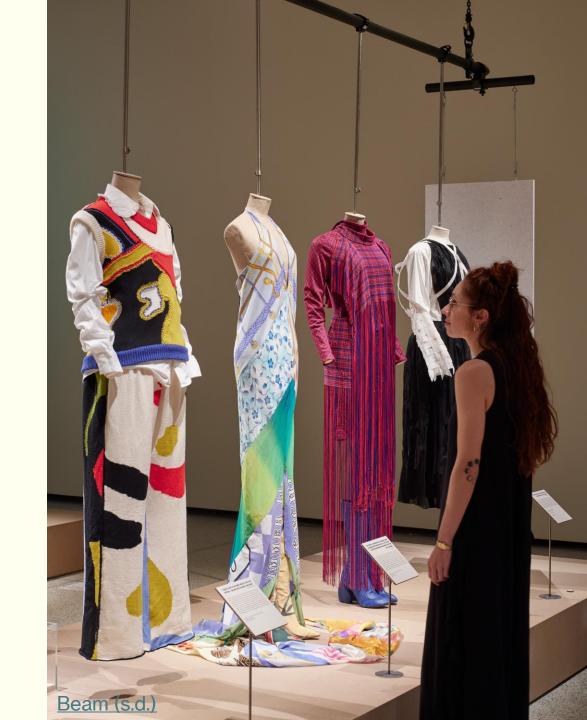
## Slow looking

It is an approach based on the idea that, if we really want to get to know or understand visual sources, we need to spend time with them.

'Slow looking' is simply the art of learning through observing information more carefully - taking a moment longer to look at the visual world.

It's all too easy to brush off an artwork, image, or design with 'I just don't get it'! If you ask yourself to stay a little longer, look a little harder whilst thinking about all the questions you have about it; you might ultimately get more out of the experience and discover something new (Brown, 2019).

It's about you and the image, allowing yourself time to make your own discoveries and form a more personal connection (Tate, s.d.).



- 1. Slow looking is an important counterbalance to the natural human tendency towards fast looking.
- 2. Slow looking tends to be under emphasised in general education.
- 3. Looking closely is a shared human value.

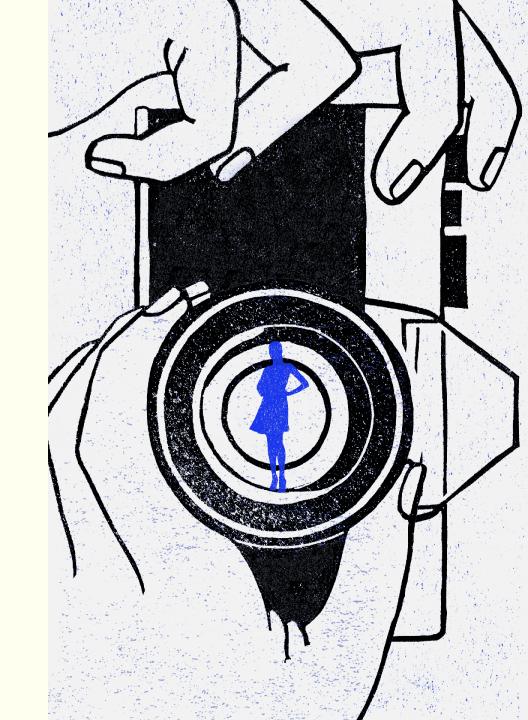
(Tishman, 2018)



# 'Dress detective'... a *slow approach* to viewing fashion

"Before commencing an examination of a dress artifact, the researcher must resolve to be mindful and present. Specifically, the 'dress detective' should pause, turn off other distractions, and mentally commit to slow down.

Fixing the gaze on the garment and considering every small detail, seeing each and every feature with intention" (Mida and Kim, 2015:33).



## Slow looking activity...

#### Step 1: Initial Impressions

**Look at the image:** What is the first thing

that catches your eye?

Describe: What colours, shapes, and

textures do you see?





## Slow looking activity...

#### Step 2: Detailed Observation

**Describe the silhouette:** Is it fitted, flowing, or structured?

What kind of fabric do you imagine it's made of? How does it look and feel?

**Notice the details:** closures, embellishments, seam finishes. What do they tell you?

Are there any patterns or motifs? What do you notice about them?

What do you notice about the setting, place, or context? Where would this garment be worn? What does the background suggest?

What objects do you see? Accessories, surrounding items - how do they contribute to the overall picture?

**How is the image composed?** Consider angles, focus, cropping - what is emphasised?





## Slow looking activity...

#### **Step 3: Textual Clues**

Read any accompanying text from the collection. (Catalogue records, designer notes, exhibition info, etc.)

**Discuss: Did the text change your perception?** Did it confirm your observations or offer new insights?



https://vads.ac.uk/digital/collection/ZR/id/5864/rec/1

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#### Step 4: Interpretation & Meaning

What meanings are conveyed by the garment's features? Think about symbolism, cultural references, and personal expression.

**How do design choices contribute to the meaning?** Cut, fabric, colour - how
do they all work together?

Why might the garment have been created? Who was the intended audience? Think about the designer's inspiration and the intended wearer.

How does this garment function? Is it practical, decorative, ceremonial, or a combination?

**How was the garment made?** Consider techniques, craftsmanship, and potential challenges.

What is this garment "about"? Summarise the key themes and ideas it conveys.

## Step 5: Reflection & Discussion

What did you learn from this slow looking activity?

Did you notice details you would have missed before?

How did different perspectives enrich your understanding of the garments?

## Slow looking garment analysis 5-step activity

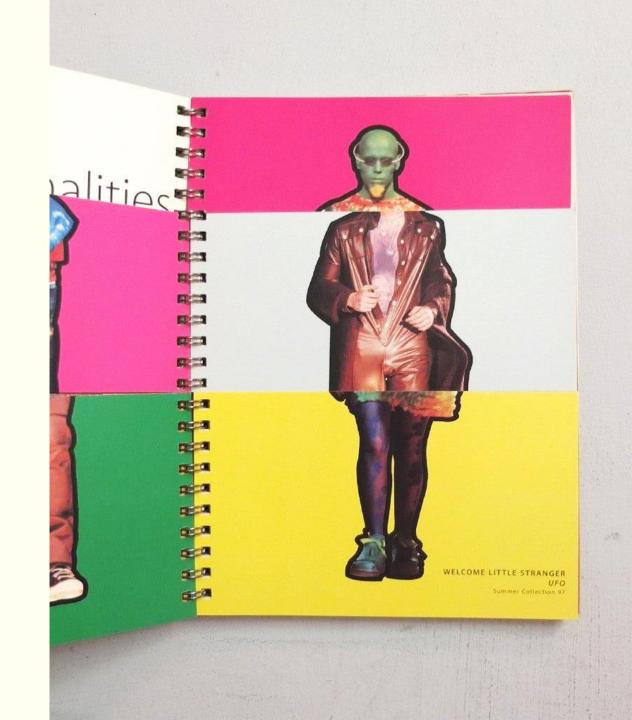
## Interpreting and analysing images – a 5-step approach



## Idea! Create your own Zandra Rhodes lookbook...

Take inspiration from the artist book by Belgium designer, Walter Van Beirendonck. 'Mutilate' documents more than a decade of the designers' collection through a spiral bound book of 'picture consequences'. Head, body, and legs can be arranged to create a unique shape and design, becoming a novel form of visual communication.

Why not try it with the Zandra Rhodes digital collection? Get students to create their own version of Beirendonck's fashion picture consequences!



## Slower learning approaches can help to...

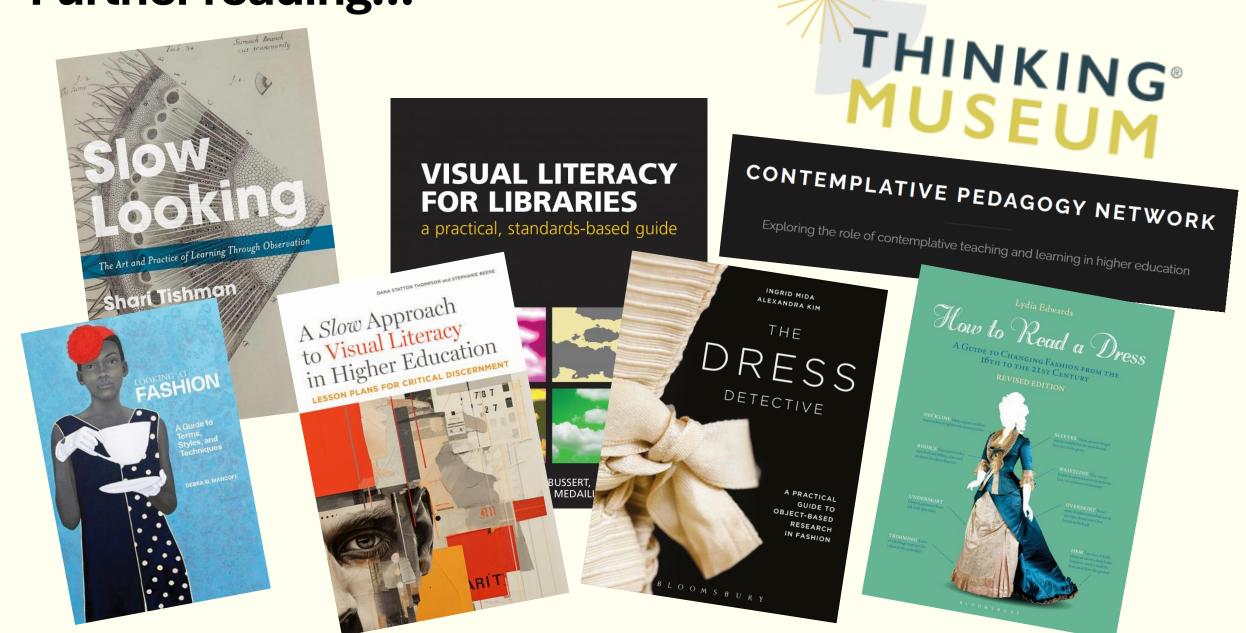
Facilitate an open space for students to create new ideas or practices and evaluate visual sources, exploring their potential to challenge existing historical, social and cultural ideas.

Create an active learning environment where students have open discussion about points of difference and similarity between what they see and what they understand. Socially constructed learning that happens through small groups of varying experiences – building empathy and understanding.

Look closely and carefully, helping to unravel the complexity of fashion and how we encounter visual sources. It can build connections allowing students to see things from multiple perspectives beyond their own experiences (Brown, 2020).



## Further reading...



## Thank you – any questions?

Stay connected with the project and the team...

Instagram – @colourfulheritage

Website - https://mylibrary.uca.ac.uk/colourfulheritage

Contact - colourfulheritage@uca.ac.uk



