



This is a Leeds Arts University Repository copy of: Two Christian Dior Dresses at the Museum

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Abstract

The artefact is a mixed media painting on paper, documenting two Christian Dior dresses curated on Mannequins. The Opera Bouffe (1956) and slender evening dress (1952) shown at the worldwide touring exhibition 'Christian Dior. Designer of Dreams' The painting responds to the curation of a historical fashion exhibition.

Research Process: Research was undertaken during a visit to the exhibition at the V&A Museum London in 2019 and from various archives to gather enough research to enable some accuracy when painting the silhouette, colour and silk fabric. This line of enquiry was revisited in 2023. The piece is built up through various layers of paint. The process film records the first layer of the artefact; the evolving signature 1950's silhouettes, much like pattern cutting construction lines.

Research Insights: Major fashion exhibitions are usually recorded through photography for museum archives, online resources, catalogues and to advertise the exhibition to the public.

The piece offers an alternative way of responding to fashion exhibitions. Painting historical fashion displayed in the museum through a contemporary lens explores an alternative perspective on documentary fashion artistry.

Representing two dresses displayed on mannequins rather than inhabited by a body encourages the viewer to imagine the potential wearer, to connect to the time in history when the dresses were made and appreciate some of the presence of historical Haute Couture garments.

Dissemination: The work was exhibited during an exhibition held at Institute Marangoni Paris 27th -30th September 2023. The artefact was published in the book *The Fible 4 V.04. FIDA Worldwide* page 61.

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