

**ICOM COSTUME Annual Conference 2023**  
**Edinburgh, UK**  
**ABSTRACTS**

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September**  
**French Institute of Scotland**

**Invisible Men in Black**

***Professor Andrew Groves and Dr Danielle Sprecher, Westminster Menswear Archive, University of Westminster***

In 2019 the Westminster Menswear Archive staged *Invisible Men: An Anthology from the Westminster Menswear Archive* in London. To date this is the United Kingdom's largest exhibition dedicated to menswear. Divided into twelve thematic line-ups of thirteen garments, the exhibition featured two sections devoted entirely to black clothing. The first, Black Jackets, examined tailoring's pervasiveness as a defining feature of 20th-century menswear. It featured thirteen seemingly identical black jackets created between 1928 and 2010; upon closer inspection, however, each garment revealed its own unique characteristics and relationship to men's fashion. This section was mirrored later in the exhibition by thirteen black garments produced between 1997 and 2001 by the Italian menswear brand C.P. Company as part of their Urban Protection range. Each of these garments were made of the same industrial quality black nylon giving them visual uniformity but featured different configurations of transformability and hidden technology, such as voice recorders, smog masks, gas readers, and noise-cancelling headphones. At the time of production, these garments were viewed as embodying a utopian vision of the future in which wearable technology would augment the human body to withstand the challenges of the modern metropolis.

This paper examines the rationale behind presenting two sections devoted to black garments, and how the decision to mirror these two sections within the exhibition allowed the curators to interrogate assumptions about the use of black within menswear by comparing and contrasting its use within traditional tailoring and contemporary technical outerwear.

**Professor Andrew Groves, University of Westminster**

Andrew Groves is Professor of Fashion Design at the University of Westminster and the director of the Westminster Menswear Archive, which he founded in 2016. It is the world's only public menswear archive, establishing a space where students, academics, and designers in industry are co-located to conduct object-based research. It houses over 2,000 examples of some of the most significant menswear garments from the last 250 years, including designer fashion, streetwear, everyday dress, sportswear, workwear, and uniforms. In 2019, Groves co-curated *Invisible Men: An Anthology* from the Westminster Menswear Archive, the United Kingdom's largest menswear exhibition to date. He is the Principal Investigator of the AHRC-funded Locating Menswear network.

**Dr Danielle Sprecher, University of Westminster**

Dr Danielle Sprecher is the curator of the Westminster Menswear Archive at the University of Westminster, London. She is a historian whose research focuses on the history of British menswear and men's fashion, exploring the industry from design to production and final consumption. As a curator, she has worked with several historical dress collections across the United Kingdom. In 2019, Sprecher co-curated *Invisible Men: An Anthology from the Westminster Menswear Archive*.

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September**  
**National Museums Scotland**

**Panel 1 – Black in a social context, part I**

**Change of a black dress. The reliability of a 17th-century doll as a source for dress history**  
***Marjolein Homan Free, University of Amsterdam***

The Nijenburg, an estate near Heiloo, The Netherlands, houses a unique collection of miniatures dating from the 16th century to the 19th century. Conservation of this collection began in 2011. One of the more complex objects to conserve was a dolls house doll depicting an older woman with a spindle, the ‘spinster’, probably made during the second half of the 17th century. She is dressed in a fashion popular around the first quarter of the 17th century; she is wearing a black *vlieger* (open overdress), a black skirt with a velvet trim, white satin sleeves and bodice and a white cap and apron. Her black silk clothing was extraordinarily fragile and degraded, partly due to the dyeing process.

Before starting treatment, the art historical context and function of these miniatures and specifically the dress of the doll was researched. Why was the ‘spinster’ luxuriously dressed, and what did the black in her outfit signify? Another question to be answered for conservation purposes was centred around the original length of her *vlieger*. The *vlieger* ended at the knees in 2011. Due to the fragile condition of the silk, it was unclear if this was the original length or if it was the result of the degradation of the black silk. These miniatures can be a valuable source of information on dress from a period where precious little textile evidence is still in existence. However, their reliability as a source should also be questioned due to their function, production and the condition of the material.

Ten years after conservation, the treatment is revisited; how is the conservation holding up? Would different choices be made in hindsight? One of the goals of treatment was documentation and conservation of information. Was this goal achieved? How reliable are these miniatures as a source of dress history? How is their dress to be interpreted, especially in light of the extensive damage to the black silk?

**To wear or not to wear: black masks and luxury shopping in 17th-century England**  
**Juliet Huang, University of Maryland**

This paper examines issues relating to women's self-fashioning through the deployment of black half masks in 17th-century England. Costume historians have examined the use of masks in theatrical settings such as in courtly masques, but here I consider the everyday fashion of wearing black half masks from the perspective of consumer culture in London. Bringing together visual, textual, archival, and surviving material evidence, this paper first traces the evolving form, function, and perception of the black mask starting from the second half of the 16th century and then focuses on the problematisation of women wearing black half masks in public in the mid-17th century. Wenceslaus Hollar's depictions of the black half mask in *Winter* and his still lifes featuring fashion accessories are given special consideration, because they flesh out an understanding of black half masks as commodities when London grew to be a centre of luxury consumption in the first half of the 17th century. Of particular interest is the colour black. This paper argues that the blackness of the half mask trod the fine line between social distinction and incognito, prudence and impudence, liberty and libertine. The multiplicity of meanings of the black half mask went hand in hand with the anxiety about female agency, as women across social classes were able to conceal, reveal, and even reshape their identity through consumable black masks from the urban marketplace.



Wenceslaus Hollar, *Winter*, 1643-44  
Etching, 26x18 cm  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

**Why Black? Examples from the National Museum in Krakow collections (19th-20th century)**  
*Joanna Regina Kowalska, The National Museum in Krakow*

There could be many motivations behind the choice of black in clothing, depending on the time of creation, designation or personality of the owner. Case studies of several examples (both costume and iconographic) from the collection of the National Museum in Krakow will help to better understand the function of black in fashion, also due to the stories which are hidden behind the objects. Black had patriotic connotations during the period of national mourning after 1861. It was also willingly chosen by the Krakow's burghers, as modest and practical, which is visible when we look inside the wardrobes of Krakow citizens. This modesty could be quite expensive when we consider a black Worth dress belonging to a certain princess...

Due to its "modesty" black was strongly associated with education, as in the dress chosen for the doctoral exam just after the Great War. During the interwar period, the modest elegance of afternoon black dresses contrasted with the sensuality of night gowns, while in the 1960s, "sensual" black could just become "sexy". The analysis of certain objects always offers the opportunity of a deeper understanding of the motivations of our ancestors.

**Balenciaga in black & more about the Dutch black fashion connection**  
***Madelif Hohé, Kunstmuseum Den Haag, the Hague, the Netherlands***

In Fall 2022/2023, Kunstmuseum Den Haag in the Netherlands hosted the exhibition *Balenciaga in Black*, an exhibition initiated by curator Véronique Belloir of Palais Galliera in Paris, and on view at Musée Bourdelle in Paris (2017) and in 2019 at the Kimbell Art Museum (USA). It was the first time that this many designs by Cristóbal Balenciaga had been on display in the Netherlands.

Balenciaga's choice of black was indisputably related to the strong tradition of black in Spanish fashion and to the sense of Spanish identity and independence that this colour symbolised in the 19th century, when Spain had regained its independence from the French. But in other respects, too, black has a long history and profound connection with Spanish fashion, from a symbol of Catholic piety and a dominant feature of traditional Spanish dress to the austere black embroidery favoured by the Habsburg rulers and their court. Balenciaga's Spanish soul is abundantly evident in his most restrained creations, which reflect the intensity of the light, the folklore and the traditions of his homeland.

As the colour black plays an important role in Dutch fashion history and is connected with the Spanish court and rulers over 17th-century Netherlands, this was a reason to aim for this exhibition to come to the Netherlands. This lecture will focus on how the black of Balenciaga is connected to the use of black in 17th century Netherlands and how this is reflected in Dutch portraiture.

It is not the first time that we have presented fashions on a colour scheme at Kunstmuseum Den Haag. Other examples include an 18th century exhibition (1995) on Dutch fashions in blue (and yes, there is a connection there with the use of black!), or concerning all blacks inspired by Chanel's little black dress (2013), or a room full of Hubert de Givenchy's cocktail dresses (2016). More recently, the exhibition *Fashions in Colour* (2020) explained the use and meaning of colour in fashions not only through different times, but different cultures as well, finishing with the example of a spectacular 19th century Dutch bride's dress in black, worn (unexpectedly!) by a pregnant lady.



Balenciaga in Black, Kunstmuseum Den Haag 2022



A room full of Chanel inspired little black dresses, Kunstmuseum Den Haag 2013



Cocktail dresses in black by Hubert de Givenchy, Kunstmuseum Den Haag 2016



Fashion in Colour, Kunstmuseum Den Haag 2020



Bride in black, 1889, Kunstmuseum Den Haag

## **From All the Colours to Black: Introduction of Black Colour into the Serbian 19th Century National Costume**

***Draginja Maskareli, Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade and Jelena Sekulović, Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade***

The 19th century in Serbia witnessed major changes in all spheres and the transition from a feudal to a capitalist society. The uprisings against centuries-long Ottoman rule (1804, 1815), led to two sultan's hatt-i sharifs (1830, 1833), the establishment of the autonomous Principality of Serbia, and the state's full independence, confirmed at the Congress of Berlin (1878). In this period, the clothes also underwent the transition from the Ottoman-Balkan dress to the European dress style, including the construction of the Serbian national costume.

While Serbian 19th-century national costume was created by selecting characteristic garments from the dress inventory of the urban population living in formerly Ottoman cities, the influences of European dress on its formation were significant. Among them, we can single out the colour of women's dress used during particular rituals, like mourning and weddings. Under European influence, the distinctive Ottoman-influenced colourfulness disappeared, so the dress worn during the mourning period became dark or black, while the dress worn by the bride at the wedding became white. The preserved visual sources, dating from the late 1830s onwards, show us examples of these changes, while the woman in a late 19th-century photograph, which is preserved in the collection of the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, wears a plain black Serbian national costume.

Although the colour disappeared from the costume worn on particular occasions, the headgear preserved its traditional red colour. Different variations of women's caps worn as a part of the national costume, like fez and *tepeluk*, remained red, no matter whether they were combined with black mourning or white wedding clothes. Therefore, we also asked ourselves if and when the colour disappeared from the headgear. The answer is provided by a black cap – *tepeluk* from the second half of the 19th century, preserved in the collection of the Museum of Applied Art in Belgrade.

Based on the preserved sources, this paper aims to examine the introduction of black colour into women's national costume in Serbia, as well as its use within European-influenced dress etiquette.



## Panel 2 - Black in a social context, part II

### **Transition from life filled with colours to absence of colours (black): a joyous journey to coming-of-age**

***Akhilesh Kumar, Delhi Skill & Entrepreneurship University and Muthu Kumar Veilumuthu***

The use of colours is an ubiquitous aspect of human culture, with various symbolic meanings and emotional associations attached to different colours. Colours are used to convey emotions, aesthetics and cultural significance in various aspects of life, including Art, Fashion, Design, and Rituals. However, the transition from a vibrant life filled with colours to an absence of colours, particularly black, can mark a significant coming of age experience for individuals in different cultures and contexts.

As kids, we all loved the vibrancy of colours during the day filled with joy, such as a rainbow, but night has always been symbolic of fear and evil in most cultures of the world. As we grow older, in the process of adjustment of oneself as a human, we start to understand the darkness of the world and try to fit our self into the world system by knowing its various aspects.

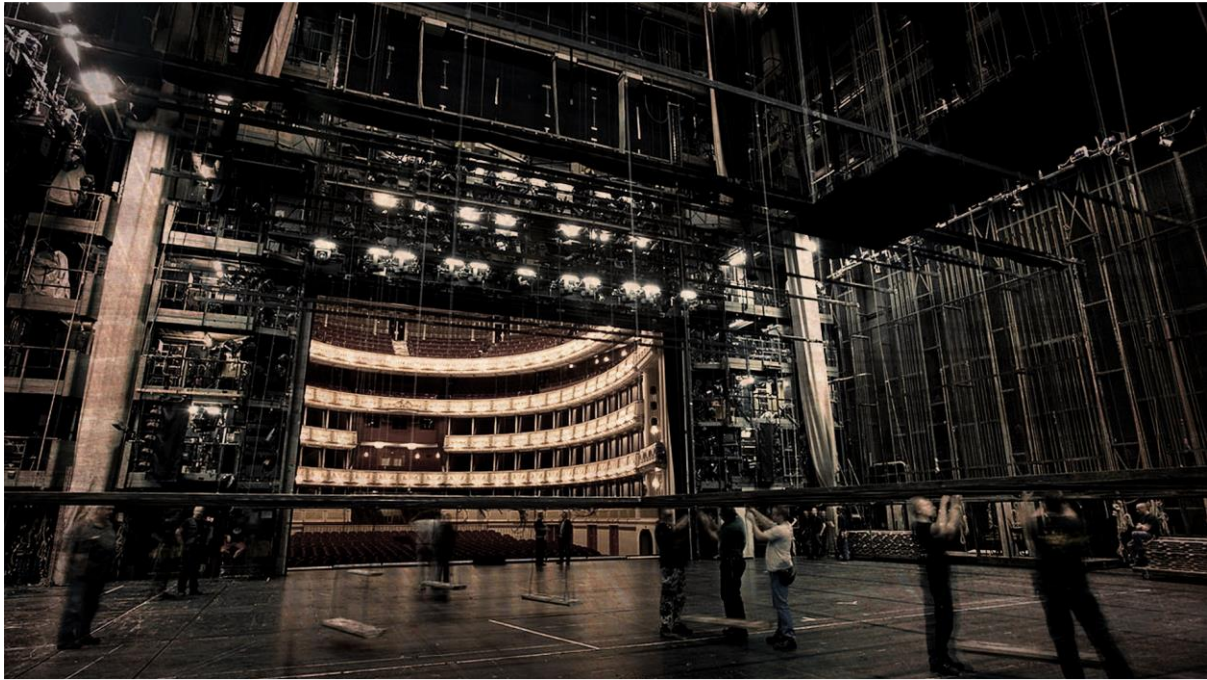
This research paper explores –

- The theme of the transition from life with colours to the absence of colours, specifically black, as a coming-of-age experience
- How the shift from a colourful world to the darkness of black is perceived, experienced, and interpreted in Indian culture
- The psychological and emotional aspects of this transition, including the symbolism and meanings associated with black, the emotional impact of the absence of colours, and the cognitive processes involved in perceiving and interpreting black as an absence of colour
- The potential implications of this transition on individual and societal levels, including how it may influence identity formation, self-expression, and social interactions.

It also addresses the role of personal and cultural factors in shaping the perception and interpretation of this transition, and how it may vary in Indian cultures and religions.

*Keywords: Psychology of Black, Emotional Aspects of Black, Symbolism & Meanings Associated with Black in Indian Culture.*

**Black backstage. Black as sample.**  
*Dorothea Nicolai, Nicolai Costumes*



There is a lot of use of black on stage. Apart from being a decisive statement for designing costumes, black is also used in a “kabuki effect”: applied where the spectator should not be distracted. Backstage, almost everything is painted black to absorb the light. In the costume shop you refer to a black costume as “black as sample” when choosing the fabric. There is also a list of details in costume hidden in black, so as not to disturb the illusion and appearance. This paper seeks to highlight the use of black for theatre costumes – the visible and the invisible black.

## **Striking black: uses and meanings in sport**

***Patricia Reymond, Olympic Museum, Lausanne, Switzerland***

The yellow jersey, the man in black, the Reds, de Oranje, gli Azzuri, the All Blacks... Colours play an important role in sport. Their regulated use enables competitors to distinguish between their teammates and opponents, at a glance, on the field of play. For spectators, it is a question of being able to identify their own athletes, but also recognising themselves as supporters of the same team. This cohesion function is so important that teams often take their nicknames from the colours they wear. One of the most studied cases is the colour black, which is closely associated with the New Zealand national identity.

While black was often adopted for early sportswear because it was cheap, non-transparent and easy to care for, it remains a popular colour for today's sport designers. Although black is said to be the absence of colour, it is one from a cultural perspective. Culturally, it has a range of sometimes contradictory meanings. It can be a symbol of simplicity or high-tech innovation, austerity or elegance, authority or rebellion. All of these nuances have purposely been used in sports clothing.

Sports psychologists have studied how colours can impact athletes, judges and spectators, thus influencing the results. The impact of black on sports psychology was investigated in a seminal paper on the US National Football League by Mark. G. Frank and Thomas Gilovich in 1988. The study pointed out that football teams wearing black uniforms were penalised by referees more often than other teams. Since then, several studies have confirmed the findings in other disciplines, but some have invalidated its results, or placed them in a specific socio-cultural context.

This presentation will explore the several uses and meanings of black in physical activity and show how these have evolved over time. It will examine in particular the case of fencing, where black was present at the beginning of codified sporting competitions but disappeared over time, to be almost exclusively replaced by white. The presentation will also outline what impact it can have on athletes to wear such a striking colour in a predominately white-clothing sport like tennis.

**Visible/Invisible: protection and healing in the urban landscape**

***D. Denenge Duyst-Akpem, Associate Professor, Adj., School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA***

“Visible/Invisible: Protection and Healing in the Urban Landscape” addresses the colour black through the lens of Blackness as a space of both invisibility and hypervisibility and as racial signifier, cultural affiliation, and aesthetic universe, highlighting conceptual and physical Afro-Futurist methodologies of protection for marginalized peoples through pattern and symbol in garment design. Understanding the body as a site of activation, “Visible/Invisible” offers an expanded framework for conceptualizing Blackness and the colour black enacted as soft power in fashion and design.

The Osanyin Commemorative Portrait Series of 2014 NEH Fellows of the Institute of Black Aesthetics and Sacred Systems was created within Emory University gardens, Atlanta, inspired by Yoruba *orisa* Osanyin, god of healing and forest wisdom, often depicted as half tree, half human, for commemoration of the historic institute along with companion leaf drawings used for textiles as part of the Camo Coat Collection launched with monograph *AFRIFUTURI 02022020*. Since the pandemic, we have lost three members, further underscoring the importance of the Black archive.

This paper draws from global fashion histories and contemporary works which investigate states of being “dark matter” (Sheree René Thomas), both visible and invisible, and code-switching as survival strategies within African Diasporic traditions. Social and environmental concerns are addressed, inspired by legendary Chicago artist collective AFRICOBRA co-founder Jae Jarrell’s 1970 *Revolutionary Suit*, and considering what it means to survive and thrive in the 21st century. Traditions including Fulani *hatumere* “magic square” embroidered into West African *baban riga* gowns, leather medicine packets attached to *batakari* shirts, and Arabic script that forms an inscribed barrier against harm, highlight this historical function of textile in Black world. Visual connections of military dazzle camouflage to my people’s Tiv *a’nger* (“ahn-gair”), a black-and-white striped honorary Nigerian loom-woven textile with ties to Scottish tartan utilized in the Camo Coat Collection.

## **Panel 3 - Black in a spiritual context**

### **Le Noir, une couleur ecclésiastique ?**

*Bernard Berthod, Curator, Musée de Fourvière, Lyon*

Quelle est l'origine du vêtement noir que portent les ecclésiastiques chrétiens, catholique et des diverses Eglises réformées et orthodoxes ? comment et quand les clercs qui portaient aux premiers siècles de notre ère un vêtement blanc, ont endossé ensuite un vêtement sombre puis noir ? quelles sont les règles qui régissent ce costume ? quelles sont les exceptions ? Autant de questions auxquelles nous tenterons de répondre.

## **The Chilean mantle: tradition in black**

***Isabel Alvarado, Museo Histórico Nacional***

The mantle or cloak is a garment of universal use and was also common in America, where it was part of the costumes of the native peoples and was also brought by the Spaniards as a complement to their clothing. The cloak was an essential piece of women's attire in Chile during the colonial period, maintaining its popularity throughout the 19th century without distinction of social class and where it acquires a particular way of wearing it that makes it known as the "Chilean mantle".

As an inheritance from Moorish Spain, its use was directly linked to the veiling of the face and body. This cloak would later evolve into the garment known as the "Chilean mantle" or "mass mantle" and was in use until around 1920. At the beginning of the 19th century, women who went to mass would cover their heads with a mantilla, usually black, made of lace or doilies, or with the "manto criollo". According to some researchers, Chilean women attended religious festivals with remarkable punctuality, largely out of devotion and a little out of curiosity.

This custom, so deeply rooted in the dress of Chilean women, has one of its origins in a typical character who wears the black cloak in a particular way: it is the "tapada"; this woman when she wears the mantle does so covering her head and leaving only one eye visible. The "tapadas" were first seen in Peru and then in Chile and were especially popular at the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century.

Later the mantles would be worn in a different way in our country, which would give way to the so-called "Chilean mantle", a type of black shawl, very sober, which was widely used by women to attend mass and/or as a mourning garment, where they had to cover their heads with shawls and black clothes when they went to church. Women wore it covering their body and head, so that it was tight around the neck where it was fastened with a pin.

**'Their robes are most often black' - the colour black in Christian women's religious garments, from the origins to the 18th century**

***Sara Paci Piccolo, Fashion Institute of Technology, Florence/New York***

In the common imagination, the robes of Christian clergymen, religious men and women are often black, but their study suggests a different and diverse reality depending on traditions, countries, and religious orders. The use of black robes, although very widespread, was not the only solution adopted and the choice of this colour did not always have the same motivations.

Which women's orders chose black as the colour of their gowns and why? And how many are in comparison to the choice of other colours, such as white, blue, or brown? Are there any colours that are missing? A study of women's orders until just before the 18th-century Enlightenment reform reveals that the colour black may have had precise symbolic indications but also may have been chosen by convention, practicality, and/or tradition. Moreover, it was not the only colour to express similar meanings.

The symbolism of black in the Christian religious sphere has ancient motivations rooted in the pre-Christian world, particularly the Roman world, to which are added the reflections of the Church Fathers, the social customs of the secular world, but also medieval achievements in the field of dyeing materials and the cost of textiles throughout time. Some religious orders change their colour choices over time, sometimes without apparent logical reasons; however, the analysis of these choices is always consistent with certain underlying principles, both spiritual and pragmatic.

## Panel 4 - Collections, Exhibitions & Displays

### **Black – how it became the favourite colour of fashion. Planning an exhibition in the Budapest History Museum**

*Dr Judit Szatmári, Budapest History Museum*

Black had a lot of meanings and different styles throughout the history of fashion, since its appearance in the 15th century in the court of Burgundy. During the 19th century it was the colour of men's fashion and the colour of mourning. But around 1870, black dresses had begun to appear on more and more young and fashionable ladies, who were definitely not in mourning. At the turn of the century, the peak of the Parisian haute couture industry, it was one of the most fashionable colours, especially for evening dresses. The black lace dresses were often worn with white or ivory underdresses, similar to the "naked dresses" of the 21st century. This change was for many reasons: Lily Langtry, the mistress of Prince Edward, the slender silhouette of the Art Nouveau style and the contrast of white skin of young girls and the darkest colour, among others.

At the beginning of the 20th century, other aspects started to strengthen. Women aspired to men's positions in life: they wanted to study, move, work and travel. They needed similar dresses to men when they reached their positions and participated in similar activities. Female fashion designers like Jeanne Paquin quickly realised how practical a simple black dress or a suit with white shirt can be for a working woman. She travelled to America to showcase her 1913 collection where she realised how many women were employed who needed simple dresses for the whole day. The "little black dress" was born before WWI, but it became more widely used both as mourning dresses and working costumes during the war. After the war, black embodied everything that was important for women: strength, power, dandy style, simplicity, and free movement.

The occasions which require special dresses disappeared towards the end of the 20th century. Nowadays, black is the most secure choice for every occasion: being part of the crowd and being stylish at the same time.

The textile collection of the Budapest History Museum owns a lot of black dresses, coats, capes and accessories. In the next few years, I intend to organize an exhibition about the history of black fashion. It will be the opposite of my former exhibition about shine, the tool of extravagancy and sensation (2019).



**Black is not always the same black. A short parade of various black costumes from four centuries in the castle wardrobe at Český Krumlov and other aristocratic houses in the South Bohemia**  
*Kateřina Cichrová and Milena Hajná, National Heritage Institute, Czech Republic*

This case study presents part of the results of the first year of a project concentrated on study and analysis of the large collection of costumes saved in aristocratic houses in the South Bohemia (above all belonging originally to the family of Eggenbergs, Schwarzenbergs, Lords of Hradec and Czernins) under the administration of the Czech National Heritage Institute.

The main topic of this study is concentrated on comparison of methods of dyeing of selected object with their social status and function. Was the quality of used pigments always in accordance with the social importance of costumes? What was the proportion of local and imported pigments on different types of fabrics? Analyses of colourants, together with archive and iconographic research, were carried out on examples representing various periods and functions of clothes: noble clothing, clothes of the imperial ambassador and his servants, theatre costumes, ceremonial burial items, etc. Analysed samples are compared with historic recipes for dyeing, published in the 18th century.

Examples of luxurious and prestigious objects are the helmet, covered with silk velvet, used by the funeral ceremony of Zacharius of Hradec (1526–1589) and garments made for the diplomatic ceremonial procession of Johann Anton of Eggenberg at Rome in 1638. Both his suit (unfortunately only the cape survived) and liveries of guards are made of silk velvet.

More modest examples are provided by the large collection of the castle theatre and masquerade wardrobe of the Schwarzenberg family from the second and the last third of the 18th century. The black colour is really shining on twin suits made of fine woollen cloth (these costumes ought to be used for Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*), while the simple large cape and two costumes of wizards are made of thick linen cloth.

The last example is the dress of Theresia of Schwarzenberg, born in Trauttmannsdorf (1870–1945), made in Vienna of silk satin with very rich embroidery and decorative glass beads, worn by the Princess in the first decade of the 20th century. Commentary on all selected objects will be accompanied by comprehensive images which document all the important details.

**Kateřina Cichrová**

Curator of collections of House Open to Public, South and West Bohemia, National Heritage Institute, Czech Republic

**Milena Hajná**

National Heritage Institute, Czech Republic

NPÚ, ú.p.s. České Budějovice, nám. Přemysla Otakara II.34, České Budějovice, Czech Republic

**Dark and romantic goths – documentation of contemporary culture**  
***Mari Lind, Museum Milavida & Amuri Museum of Historic Housing***

In the West, black is mostly thought of as the colour of death, darkness, and gloom. The colour is also associated with elegance and mystery, or with the forces of darkness and evil. In politics, black has been used as a symbol of fascism and anarchism. In contrast - timeless and elegant black is one of the most used colours in the fashion industry, a strong trend and the colour of formal wear.

**What is Gothic and what is not?**

Black was brought to rock music by the punks in the 1970s, and their legacy was continued especially by heavy metal bands and goths. Goth subculture has its roots in 18th and 19th century Gothic style and its ideology. In the 21st century, the goths are united by music, dark aesthetics, and club culture.

Subcultures are tribes of the modern world that offer peer support and opportunities to share social, worldview and aesthetic needs. Drawing the line between different subcultures is often difficult. It is jokingly said that a genuine goth denies being a goth even on her deathbed. The Gothic style of dressing can also be very diverse: Victorian, historical romantic, gothic punk, industrial, cyber and fetish sub-styles are separable. In Finnish clubs they are all manifested at the same time in perfect harmony.

**Goth culture documentation project 2010**

In Finland, goth has always been a very small subculture, but it has been there since the 1980s and deserves its place as an object of research as well as any current community. Tampere Historical Museums regularly organizes various documentation projects. The purpose is to document a limited phenomenon by interviewing, photographing, and collecting images, items, and archival material. In 2010, the theme was goth culture in Tampere.

This presentation outlines what the goth subculture looked like to the researchers in 2010, how the work was carried out and what kind of materials the museum acquired, paying particular attention to the clothes and accessories that came into the collection.

**'Black in Fashion'**

**Theo Tyson, Penny Vinik Curator of Fashion Arts, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts, United States**

**Black [in] Fashion: The Colour, The Culture** (working title) is an original exhibition conceptualized to interpret and unpack black as a colour, a culture, a construct, and a global diasporic community. Through the universal language of clothing and dress, it explores the breadth and depth of black as a colour and Blackness as a kaleidoscopic identity in fashion. The exhibition encourages a sartorial and communal celebration of our similarities rather than our differences, inviting visitors to rethink wardrobes and ways of seeing not just clothes, but their connections to them through the lens of black and Blackness.

*The Colour* | French historian Michel Pastoureau writes, "Colour is a cultural construct. It's society that gives colour its meaning." And we have given BLACK tremendous meaning. Black and Blackness, and its counter of anti-blackness in society reveals itself in self-fashioning. It is a powerful colour with many cultural associations. Dressing all in black is often a sophisticated, elegant, and restrained fashion statement, yet even so, the historical associations of black with evil, death, eroticism, piety, and Puritanism remain. In the past, black was predominantly worn by mourners grieving the death of a loved one, though poets, priests, artists, and intellectuals also donned the sombre colour to set themselves apart. Black denoted wealth too, as the dye required to create it was very expensive until cheaper dyes were developed in Victorian times. *"Without black, no color has any depth."* - Amy Grant

*The Culture* | Just as Black people are not monolithic, the human connection to the colour is also varied – especially in fashion. The intent is to truly explode and explore the infinite liminality of Blackness - and the people that create the culture that is so readily received with voracious ambipathy. The exhibition disrupts the canonical view of fine art by reclaiming the space of erasure and erasing the "redlining" of Black and diasporic artists in museum institutions. The exhibition doesn't reduce its participants to their race, ethnicity, class, gender, or identity; simultaneously, it doesn't shy away from their biographies - their humanity and personhood are first and foremost. It seeks to look at the artistry of an artist from their gaze; beyond constructs, restrictions, or limitations attributed to an identity that should not supersede their ability in their chosen mediums of expression. By not othering Black American, diasporic, and African-American designers with an exhibition of only their designs or voices or being of only one genre, **Black [in] Fashion** tells an intentionally inclusive fashion history that foregrounds these artists alongside their white counterparts who cull their creativity and culture for inspiration and appropriation.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September**  
**National Museums Scotland**

## **Panel 5 - Ceremonial Black: Weddings & Mourning, part I**

**Black for marriage and mourning in Friesland, Netherlands**  
***Gieneke Arnolli, former curator Fries Museum Leeuwarden***

As a child, I always wondered why my mother was married in 1951 in a grey woollen suit and not in a white dress. I later understood that she followed the tradition in the north of the Netherlands.

On 10 May 1877, Trijntje Halbesma ( 1850-1942) married Adriaan Jaarsma (1845-1920) in this fashionable black dress. It was her second marriage since she had been widowed at the age of 23. But this was not the only reason why she wore black at her wedding. From the 18th Century until World War II, it was simply the custom for rural brides in the North of the Netherlands to be married in black. This way, they started off their married life with a dress that could be worn for formal occasions and funerals and which usually would be a lifetime investment. What's more, black had become a fashionable colour at the end of the 19th Century. During this period, a bonnet by the name of *toque* came into fashion. This bonnet was highly ornamented with artificial flowers and ostrich plumes and became an integral part of Frisian traditional costume until 1930.

Writer Ramalho Ortigão, who had come from Portugal to the Netherlands in 1883 to see the World Exhibition in Amsterdam also made a trip to Friesland. About Friesland he wrote: "Even the most humble Frisian woman walks very tall, with head erect and seriously. She appears to have the natural majesty of a princess... Her smooth, black, close-fitting clothing as the perfect accessory to her aristocratic, beautiful figure." The Frisian women he described were dressed in the very latest fashion, combined with traditional headgear.

My paper will feature these and other black wedding costumes from the collection of the Fries Museum | Frisian Museum, Leeuwarden, province of Friesland, the Netherlands.

**A bride all in black: the meaning of black in Alsatian regional dress**  
*Sara Hume, Kent State University Museum*

For her wedding in 1908, Marie-Catherine Ernst dressed head-to-toe in black. She was from the area known as the Pays de Hanau in Alsace, on the French-German border. In striking defiance of the conventional association between white and weddings in European cultures, weddings and marriage are often signalled with the colour black in Alsace. To trace this curious association, it is important to understand the roots of the region's distinctive dress, which lie in its religious makeup. The coexistence of Catholic and Protestant communities in this border region has resulted in the proliferation of distinctive dress for special occasions such as weddings.

The most iconic element of the region's regional dress is the enormous bow the women wear on their head. However, the style of dress with the large headbow originates from a small part of Alsace outside of Strasbourg where the colour of the bow signals religious affiliation as well as marital status. Black bows were worn by Protestant women of all ages and by married Catholic women. In contrast brightly coloured or patterned bows were worn exclusively by unmarried Catholic women. People may speculate that the black bow worn by young Protestants in the most familiar version of Alsatian dress was evidence of the greater sobriety of their religious teachings. However, unmarried Protestant women in the very north of Alsace wore red bows on their bonnets. In fact, there was little direct connection between religious teaching and bow colour. The ways that costume marked religious difference varied based on local practice rather than doctrine. This paper will explore how religious observance has shaped regional dress and how distinctive rural dress practices developed in proximity to very different fashions in France.



Figure 1 Wedding dress of Marie-Catherine Ernst, Alsace, 1908. Private collection.

## **Brides in black**

***Anni Shepherd, University of Turku***

White has become the most popular colour for wedding dresses across most of Europe and has been a favourite choice for many brides since the mid-19th century. Wearing a black wedding dress is seen as an unusual choice today, but from the late 18th to the early 20th century black wedding dresses were the norm for peasant women in several parts of Finland.

This paper explores the cultural heritage of black bridalwear and sheds light on the lesser-known traditional wedding fashions of Finnish brides. I will cover the following questions: why did black wedding dresses become a part of traditional wedding attire for peasant women in different parts of Finland? When did the tradition start? What was the design of the traditional wedding dress based on?

Finland's cultural heritage is directly tied to its rich history of textiles and dress. Textiles played an important part in the lives of peasant women who frequently wore clothing made from homespun textiles made by their own hands. Bridalwear forms an integral part of this heritage and investigating the history of black wedding dresses unveils an exciting and fascinating part of Finland's cultural traditions.



A bride from Väyri, Western Finland in her traditional black wedding dress, c 1876. Finnish Heritage Agency.

**A black maternity/ wedding gown**  
*Tirza Westland, Kunstmuseum Den Haag*



L: <https://www.kunstmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/japon-47?origin=gm>

R: *Different gown (circa 1890) from the same donation, also made and worn by Leonarda Veenendaal.*

When this black gown was donated to the fashion and costume department of the Kunstmuseum The Hague in 1978, it was noted that it was a wedding gown. Although today we associate wedding dresses with the colour white, in the 19th century many people still married in colour, including black. This was much more economical because it allowed you to wear the gown more often. When this gown was dressed for an exhibition in 2014, it was discovered that there was a lot of extra space on the belly: this was a maternity gown. From then on it was assumed that it was a wedding gown that was later altered into a maternity gown, which is certainly not unusual.

During a recent study, however, we found out that the gown does not show any signs of alteration: the gown was made as a maternity gown. This meant that either the gown was not a wedding gown or that the bride was pregnant on her wedding day. An archival record provided the solution: the bride was indeed pregnant at the time of the wedding. The bride was Leonarda Veenendaal; she married George Nicolaus Frederik Schenck on 28 November 1889. A baby daughter was born on 2 March 1890. On her wedding day, Leonarda was almost six months pregnant.

The gown was probably made by Leonarda herself. Her marriage certificate states that she was a seamstress. She must have been an esteemed seamstress: not only is the gown very neatly made according to the latest fashion, but the fabric is also of a luxurious quality. She appears not to have worn the gown much – the gown is in a near perfect condition.

For a gown from this period, it is special that we know the wearer, and even more rare that we know the maker. Often, we only know this for gowns with a signature on the waistband and because of this, the work of many seamstresses remains anonymous. The social aspect of this story is also interesting. What did it mean for a woman in the 19th century to be pregnant on her wedding day? Did this affect her choice to wear black? To answer these questions, I will delve further into the context in which this dress was made as well as look into similar garments.

## **Panel 6 - Ceremonial Black: Weddings & Mourning, part II**

### **Black weddings, white mourning: black, and a little white, in Jewish ceremonial dress**

***Efrat Assaf-Shapira, Curator, The Mandel wing for Jewish Art and Life, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem***

A black wedding dress from Yemen, a black and white burial shroud from Germany, black stripes on menswear from Tunisia together with "black dressed" ceremonial objects from Central Asia symbolizing the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, black clothes as an imposed mark of Jewishness from Morocco, and black religious leaders' costumes from the Ottoman Empire as a symbol of high rank. From antiquity to the present, from childhood to old age, Jewish ceremonial dress presents many facets and interpretations of the colour black, many times in relation to white. My proposed paper will seek to look at items from the Israel Museum's extensive dress collection while focusing on the different interpretations accompanying the use of black among dress worn by Jews, manifesting the constant dialogue between life and death, pure and impure, ceremonial and mundane, destruction and redemption, submission and protest. My paper will also be relating to influences from the non-Jewish surrounding society and to traditional interpretations of the colour black which may be seen in Israeli fashion from mid-20th century to the present day, reflecting the complex tapestry and issues of Israeli society.



**The Widow of Balmoral: mourning tartans and Victorian chromophobia**

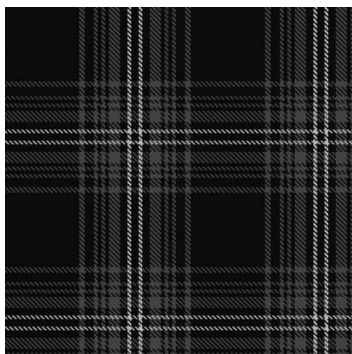
**Professor Jonathan Faiers, University of Southampton and Kirsty Hassard, V&A Dundee**

*This loathing of colour, this fear of corruption through colour, needs a name: chromophobia.*

David Batchelor *Chromophobia* 2000, p.22

Queen Victoria's seclusion in a state of perpetual mourning as the 'Widow of Balmoral' following the death of the Prince Consort in 1861, plunged the nation into black. Albert's death, as part of the widespread Victorian obsession with mortality and the public display of grief, acted as an accelerant to the already rapidly expanding 19th century textile and fashion industries. While much has been written concerning the commercial expedience of mourning dress, most notably Lou Taylor's seminal study of 1983, *Mourning Dress*, and the wider 19th century relationship to dressing in black as discussed by authors such as John Harvey *Men in Black* (1995), comparatively little research has been undertaken on so called 'funeral tartans' or 'mourning setts' as they are more commonly known. These monochromatic tartans, which typically supplement the brighter shades of a tartan for black, grey and white, were yet another example of the expansion of 19h century tartan manufacturing alongside the better known 'fancy' or 'dress' tartans.

This chromatic substitution of arguably some of the most colourful of world textiles (one only has to think of the vivid red, yellow and blue, of that most ubiquitous of tartans, Royal Stewart) for sombre black and grey is a remarkable testament to the power of black. This paper, presented by the curators of V&A Dundee's radical new exhibition *Tartan*, will utilise David Batchelor's concept of chromophobia and the phenomenon of tartan mourning setts to consider the contagion of colourlessness. Ostensibly an economically advantageous development, mourning tartans' sombre palette also signifies more complex narratives that the exhibition at V&A Dundee explores. Narratives of violence, oppression and denial, such as tartan's prohibition following Culloden, its association with Jacobite martyrdom and the branded bodies of the Atlantic slave trade, shadowy narratives of repression that lie amongst its colourful grids.



Mourning Stewart



Royal Stewart

**'Hungarian Mourning' – black as the colour of protest between 1849 and 1940**  
***Csilla Kollár, Curator of the Early Modern Textile Collection, Hungarian National Museum, Budapest***

Just like in other European countries, the colour of mourning has also been black since the 19th century in Hungary. The socially accepted customs and visual language of sorrow and loss acquired new connotations after the suppression of the 1848-1849 revolution and war for independence. Many had lost their loved ones in the fights or during the subsequent reprisals. Personal mourning soon merged with grief over the loss of the home country and the failure of the revolution. In the lack of the freedom of assembly, funerals became the politically tolerated occasions of common commemorations, silent protests and later events of national resistance. The great personalities of the nation were often accompanied on their last journey by crowds of tens of thousands of people. The national attire, which had already appeared before the revolution, was made of black silk or wool, and ornamented with black wool braid. Women added black headdresses and mourning jewellery as ceremonial accessories, expressing their loyalty to the nation. Since the Viennese court was also well aware of the colour's significance, they ordered all participants of public events connected to the visits of the young Emperor Franz Joseph in Hungary to wear the fine Hungarian ceremonial suite instead of the mourning garment.

Due to the Treaty of Trianon, following World War I, Hungary lost two thirds of its territory and more than half of its population. Hungarian-tailored black ceremonial attires reappeared in the mourning country. The Minister of Foreign Affairs expressly required the members of Hungarian diplomacy to wear the Hungarian black ensemble. Diplomats and politicians expressed their grief at Hungary's defeat by wearing mourning dresses again.

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September**  
**National Museums Scotland**

## **Panel 7 - Fashioning Identities**

**[Madame] Grès in Black**

***Anabela Becho, CIAUD – Centro de Investigação em Arquitetura, Urbanismo e Design (Research Center in Architecture, Urbanism and Design), Faculdade de Arquitectura, Universidade de Lisboa***

Although more associated with a neutral palette, composed of whites, beige, *poudré* and marble tones that refer directly to the stone (related to her sculptural archetype, the long, classically inspired, draped gowns), Madame Grès was a magnificent colourist. Her consistent body of work shows that she was not only interested in draping and pleating. For the French designer, couture was more than a *métier*: it was the pursuit of perfection, just as a painter pursues the perfect colour with his/her paintbrush. Demanding and sophisticated in the study of colour, the designer had the materials dyed to obtain exquisite tones: blood reds, poppy reds, burgundy, intense hazelnut, browns, and greens in all shades of nature, with a preference for the deep ones, scales of grey, singular blues and violets. In the 1960s and 1970s, bright, warm and intense yellows, fuchsia and purple. The deep and sophisticated shades of black - *encre de chine* black, coal-black, mute black - in addition to showing her mastery of cut, enhanced and marked the contrast with vivid colours, relying on the most avant-garde fabrics.

Through five case studies, dresses directly observed during the investigation belonging to the collections of the Palais Galliera Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris and the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York – the international museums that conserve in their collections the largest number of Alix and Grès models – we intend to show in this presentation that the study of black has a sharp place throughout the French couturier's six-decade career, from the bold models of the 1930s and 1940s, even assuming the form of a manifesto in the turning from Alix to Grès in 1942.

**Through a Champagne Glass Darkly: A Reflection of the Inimitable Nancy Cunard**  
*Caela Castillo, Independent Researcher*

Nancy Cunard (1896-1965) was a British socialite, writer, traveller, activist, and member of the literary and artistic circles of London and Paris after WWI. Many remember Nancy Cunard for the multitude of African ivory bracelets she wore, but her head-to-toe styling and documentation of her sartorial choices throughout her life and the subsequent media commentary on those choices shows a deeper relationship to her fashion sense than can be seen in the brief footnotes of existing scholarship.

For Cunard, the significance of the colour black is tied to many facets of her life. In her youth, she had a rebellious nature, one that clashed with her aristocratic parents. Although her love of fashion no doubt stemmed from her mother, which gave her the means to consume fashion effortlessly, that rebellious nature of hers prevailed. She stood out among the elite crowds of London and Paris when she wore emerging trends and started a few iconic trends of her own. For her, the act of wearing black was both a sophisticated and dramatic choice. Eventually, the significance of the colour black culminated in her controversial relationship with African American jazz musician Henry Crowder and the publication of her book *Negro: An Anthology* in the early 1930s.

Black is not just a colour or lack thereof but a common thread of Cunard's cultural, social, economic, and political identity. By examining her scrapbooks, diaries, letters, and photographs from the Nancy Cunard Collection at the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, as well as museum objects and fashion publications, this paper explores Nancy Cunard's relationship with dress and how it is wrapped up in all aspects of her being, as well as its impact on fashion and cultural history.

## How and why Johnny Cash became the man in black?

*Dr. Vicki L. Berger and Rebecca R. Akins*

*“Well, you wonder why I always dress in black  
Why you never see bright colors on my back...  
I wear the black for the poor and the beaten down  
Livin' in the hopeless, hungry side of town...  
Until things get brighter, I'm the Man in Black.”*

John R. Cash, 1971

Johnny Cash, (1932-2003) legendary and award-winning American country singer, songwriter, actor, author, and humanitarian, famously performed wearing all-black attire. While there are many—and often humorous—explanations for his sombre dress, Cash himself most often contended he did so symbolically as his social-justice protest against society's unfair treatment of many—especially those imprisoned. Throughout Cash's career and despite his persona as a “man of the people,” he dealt with several designers, one of whom was Nudie Cohn (1902-1984) who claimed to have first put Cash in black. Cohn was best known for flamboyant Western wear, and the “Nudie suit” became synonymous with the “rhinestone cowboy.” Nudie Cohn dressed other celebrities from Elvis to Elton. Manuel Cuevas (1933-) was head tailor, head designer, and eventually partner of Nudie's Rodeo Tailors. Cuevas was another acclaimed designer who often clothed Cash—and who also claimed to have been the one who put Cash in black. Cash wore boots and shoes crafted especially for him by Pasquale Di Fabrizio, Lucchese Boot Company, Mario Moreschi, T. O. Dey, Stacy Adams, and Acme Boots; his hats were custom blocked by Stetson Hats and Paris Hatter. Designers, authors, family members and friends have offered their opinions as to why Johnny Cash wore black. In *Cash*, his 1997 autobiography, Cash himself answers this question: “Why do you wear black?” Cash's answers were: first, as a symbol of rebellion against the social injustices of the time and, second, “I wore black because I liked it.”

**Halston in black: fashioning identity both on and off the runway**  
***Scott Schiavone, The Harris, Preston***

Roy Halston Frowick, the milliner, shot to fame in 1961 when Jacqueline Kennedy wore one of his hats to her husband, John F. Kennedy's, Presidential inauguration. Ten years later, Halston had established himself not only as America's premier fashion designer but also as a formidable fashion force through his unique personal style.

Whereas his contemporaries Bill Blass and Oscar de la Renta wore suits, Halston carefully curated his signature black turtleneck and black crepe pants, in various weights to suit the season. Halston's personal branding afforded him a subversive chicness but distinct presence and identity as a creative. Halston insisted all his staff wear black too. Apart from himself, no one should stand out or deflect attention from the client and his designs.

Through his design aesthetic, black also played a pivotal role. A great admirer of Cristóbal Balenciaga, whose signature colour was black, Halston used black as a foundation to create a strong line and promote his ethos of simplicity, elegance and intelligent dressing. From his made-to-order cashmeres to his beaded evening wear, Halston's use of black grounded his signature style with effortless wearability.

*Halston in Black: Fashioning Identity both on and off the Runway* will examine the duality of Halston's relationship with the colour black; firstly, how he used black to fashion an identity that set him apart from his contemporaries and secondly, his use of the colour as an aesthetic foundation. This paper will also draw upon the personal insight and first-hand experiences of Halston's model and muse Chris Royer, using examples from Chris' personal Halston archive including articles, images and garments.

## Panel 8 - Techniques of production

### **Black in Serbian traditional textile handiwork**

***Marina Cvetković, Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade***

Black is the only colour that was unequivocally defined in Serbian traditional culture. It had a negative association and was linked to uncertainty, the unknown, darkness, earth, death, to the chthonic world. In many Serbian religious beliefs, it had magical and protective powers. It was an attribute of certain mythical beings, but the black animals, objects and plants were used as magical props in ritual practice.

This black colour was widely represented in the Serbian traditional textile home industry. Many plants were used for dyeing wool: different parts of walnut tree, ash (*Fraxinus* sp.), oak, but also leaves of sourwood (*Ailanthus altissima* (Mill.)), twigs with leaves of jova tree (*L. Alnus glutinosa* (L.)), plum bark, gladezh (*Ononis spinosa* L), twigs with leaves and flowers of žešlja (*Acer tataricum*), red flowers of the vranilovka (*Origanum vulgare* L.). Catalysts, also often homemade, were added to these raw materials to fix the colour. Dyeing procedures were regulated by local rules. In order not to invoke dangerous chthonic beings, i.e., to prevent unwanted consequences and bad influences, traces of ritual anti-behaviour were recorded: black was dyed at night, in silence, and the dyeing was sometimes accompanied by telling lies.

The black colour was especially used in the dyeing of wool cloth sukno, used for making outer garments. In regions with developed sheep farming, trade in sukno was also developed. Finally, the use of black colour was also influenced by relevant law regulations during the Ottoman period, which forced this colour to be worn so the Christian population would be more visually distinguished from the Muslim population in the public sphere.

**‘A perfect black’: the art of dyeing wool in different shades of black with natural dyes**  
**Natalia Ortega Saez, University of Antwerp**

Black is a difficult, time-consuming, and labour-intensive colour to dye. The wide variety of ingredients and dye procedures are related to a palette of different hues and shades depending on the material to be dyed, the colorants, mordants, and the dyeing method.

While our current vocabulary for black tends to be rather limited, historical sources mention a rich variety of historic colour names. For example, ‘kastoorzwart’, ‘bleckzwart’, ‘zijdezwart’, ‘greinzwart’ and ‘fusteinzwart’ refer to different types of black hues and shades. The material to be dyed was sometimes reflected in the name of the black colour, for example *zijde zwart* (silk black), or *fusteyn zwart* (fustian black). Titles of historical recipes reveal that there were different shades of black and so recipe titles discuss *Een ander om swart te verwen* (‘To make another black’); or *Swert te maken op een ander manier* (‘To make black in a different manner’). Most recipes refer to a moment in which the textile is ‘black enough’ or claim to aspire to create a ‘perfect black’, leaving it an open question what it means for black to be perfect.

The main purpose of this research is to find out what the different colours/hues looked like. The intention is to visualize the rich colour terminology. This is done by unravelling and reconstructing a few historical recipes from among others: *Conste des Ververs*, 1619-1623, Leuven, Belgium. *Een cleyen verff-boecken*, 1638, Leeuwarden and the *De Wetenschap en[de] Manieren om alderhande Couleuren van Saij of Saijetten te Verwen*, 1635-1687.

By doing this, both the origins, the process of making and the partly forgotten sources of the dyeing techniques and ingredients are explored. Finally, by reconstructing the recipes, the rich colour terminology can be visualized.



**Black and More: the pattern books of the Neue Augsburger Kattunfabrik (NAK), Germany**  
*Dr Michaela Breil, Staatliches Textil- und Industriemuseum Augsburg*

In the second half of the 18th century, Augsburg developed into the most important centre of economically lucrative calico printing in southern Germany, driven by the increasing consumption of cotton fabrics refined in this way. In 1793, a new calico print shop began production under the name Schöppler & Hartmann. It was not until 200 years later that this calico print shop closed, operating under the name Neue Augsburger Kattunfabrik (NAK) since 1885. The NAK archive, unique in its unity, forms a central part of the museum's collection. The core of the NAK collection consists of 550 pattern books with an estimated 1.5 million patterns, which as national cultural assets are among the most valuable museum collections in the Federal Republic of Germany.

This article searches for traces of the colour black in NAK's pattern books. The first pattern book from 1792 is dominated by floral patterns on a black background. The deep black colour of the chintzes was obtained by dyeing with madder, a raw material imported to Augsburg from the Netherlands or Saxony. The quality of the dyeing depended on the quality of the raw fabric and the dyes. The letters of the company founders bear witness to the many factors that influenced the success of a good print. Other books contain mourning calicoes that were used for mourning clothes in the first half of the 20th century. Others imitate openwork lace by printing black patterns on white cotton fabric, which from a distance cannot be distinguished from real lace. Based on these examples, the article shows a small excerpt from the extensive work of a single calico printer, whose pattern books between 1792 and 1850 are now completely digitised and available for research on the internet.

ICOM Costume 2023 is supported by the French Institute of Scotland.