

## PRESS RELEASE

# TRANSFASHIONAL

Experimental fashion in the context of contemporary art

Artists & designers:

*Manora Auersperg, Anna-Sophie Berger, Martin Bergström, Linnea Bågander, Christina Dörfler-Raab, Afra Kirchdorfer, Kate Langrish-Smith, Maximilian Mauracher, Janusz Noniewicz, Dominika Wirkowska, Wojciech Małolepszy, Robert Pludra, Fashion and Product Design departments of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Minna Palmqvist, Ana Rajčević, Lara Torres*

*Curated by: Dobrila Denegri*

Can fashion and art respond to current social, economic, cultural and environmental urgencies and shape new paradigmatic positions? *Transfashional* explores the ways in which artists and fashion designers are engaging and contributing to these questions.

*Transfashional* was conceived as exhibition-in-progress which began with a series of discursive sessions which included renowned designer Hussein Chalayan, curators José Teunissen (Arnhem Fashion Biennial) and Susanne Neuburger (mumok – Museum Moderner Kunst Wien) as well as emerging creatives whose practice is situated between fashion and art. Fostering collaborative and experimental work in each of previous exhibitions in London, Warsaw and Vienna, *Transfashional* evolved through a series of new productions which aimed to re-define fashion beyond its conventional notions. This same direction will be further explored through the upcoming exhibition at Kalmar konstmuseum which, especially for this occasion, will present three daring Swedish fashion designers: Linnea Bågander, Martin Bergström and Minna Palmqvist.

As this emerging generation of artists and designers reflect on the world around them, they highlight the need for a profound revision of the processes of production and social relations that derive from them. They turn away from the fashion industry and its super-accelerated rhythms of production. Their quest for alternatives drives and inspires new productions – not of goods but of ideas. Indeed, more than wearable and functional, many of these works are critical, engaged and conceptual, and can be seen as symbols and symptoms of the present *zeitgeist*.

Through their works Lara Torres and Anna Sophie Berger explore the critical agency of fashion commenting on the process of overproduction and overconsumption. In the attempt to move beyond these mechanisms typical for the mainstream fashion system, designers Afra Kirchdorfer and Minna Palmqvist, are revisiting the very process of creation of garments, reflecting upon the body beyond fashion's standards and beauty imperatives. Body is central also to Linnea Bågander, Ana Rajčević and Kate Langrish-Smith, whose researches tend to raise questions of wearability and functionality of garments and adornments. Through their works they play with conventional notions of bodily morphology and experiment with performative and choreographic elements in order to trace new forms that redesign the boundaries of fashion and how we define it. Among numerous ways to define fashion, one of the most basic ones is still built on the relation and interplay between the body and the

fabrics that enfold it. Materiality of the fabric, its texture and surface are important parts of the research of Manora Auersperg, Christina Dörfler-Raab and Martin Bergström. Each of them, in a very singular way works with the qualities of surface, colour and pattern, using innovative or even unorthodox ways to weave, dye and create pattern-motives. Maximilian Mauracher also works with patterns, developing within this project *NOUS001* - a machine capable of learning and associative reasoning, which evolved from its initial stage when it was randomly collecting visual data to the final one where its neuronal network became capable of generating pattern and textile sketches. Especially for the exhibition at Kalmar konstmuseum, he has collaborated with Designarkivet in Nybro, sampling some of the patterns and pattern-sketches belonging to its collection, reprocessing them in new and unedited forms. A group of young Polish designers together with their professors Janusz Noniewicz, Dominika Wirkowska, Wojciech Małolepszy and Robert Pludra from Warsaw Art Academy realised collective work which combines elements of fashion, design, music, film which were generated through a year-long seminar dedicated to the question of being active or passive, both as a citizen and as a creative person, in relation to one's social, political and cultural surrounding.

*Transfashional* was first presented at the Austrian Cultural Forum in London, and then in the larger form in the Centre of Contemporary Art Zamek Ujazdowski in Warsaw and at the MQ - Museums-Quartier in Vienna. It was organised by the University of Applied Arts Vienna in collaboration with Austrian Cultural Forum Warsaw, London College of Fashion and the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and with the support of the Federal Ministry for Arts and Culture, Constitution and Media, Austria, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria and Embassy of Austria in Stockholm.

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