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Wearing Justice

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WEARING
JUSTICE

Perspectives from Kent State
Fashion School Faculty and Students

August 10, 2019 - May 31, 2020
Wearing Justice
Perspectives from Kent State Fashion School Faculty and Students

Kent State University Museum Stager and Blum Galleries
August 10, 2019 - May 31, 2020

The Kent State University Museum is proud to showcase the creative expressions of our Fashion School students and faculty as presented in the exhibition Wearing Justice. This year the Kent State University community is joining together to mark the 50th anniversary of the day that now lives in infamy: May 4, 1970.

Wearing Justice addresses social issues that continue to challenge us today. Some designers directly address the reverberations of May 4, while others focus on today’s global concerns from gun violence, to climate change, to corporate greed. The garments and textiles not only prod us into conversations about social activism, but also remind us of the power and deep significance carried by what we wear and how we wear it.

The exhibition was spearheaded by Dr. Kim Hahn, Interim Director of the Fashion School, through conversations with Fashion School faculty. Professors Chanjuan Chen and Sue Hershberger Yoder then took up the responsibilities of organizing the call for proposals, Professors Noël Palomo-Lovinski, Jihyun Kim and Lauren Copeland selected the student submissions and Juror Amanda Pecsenye, curator at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, selected the faculty work. I especially wish to thank Professors Hahn, Chen and Yoder for their commitment to this project and for always being such great partners. Many thanks to Chanjuan Chen who designed this catalogue. Thanks also go to the wonderful KSU Museum staff including Sara Hume, Curator; Joanne Fenn, Collections Manager; Jim Williams, Exhibition Designer; Todd Clark, Security Manager; Bianka Sinkfield, Administrative Assistant. Both the Fashion School and the KSU Museum deeply appreciate the support of the May 4, 50th Commemoration Fund, as well as the continued support and guidance of the Dean of the College of the Arts, Dr. John Crawford-Spinelli, Effie Tsengas, Communications and Marketing Director, and Brittani Peterson, Marketing Associate.

Sarah J. Rogers

Director

The Kent State University Museum is supported through a sustainability grant from The Ohio Arts Council. Kent State University, Kent State, and KSU are registered trademarks and may not be used without permission. Kent State University is committed to attaining excellence through the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body and work force.
4. Kennedy Brouillard & Eleonore Zurawski
“Dissent is Not a Crime,” 2019, L2019.39.3ab
Juror’s Statement

The arts have always been a means to navigate and explore the world around us, allowing the artist to express thoughts and process emotions and hopefully provide the audience with an opportunity for dialogue and catharsis. I enjoyed acting as a juror for Wearing Justice to see how the participants used the art of fashion design to create garments that fit the theme. The pieces I selected used technique and creativity to explore elements of social justice in garments that often provoked visceral, emotional responses from me, while still being aesthetically pleasing. I was particularly moved by those pieces that deal with the theme of May 4, 1970 at Kent State. I look forward to seeing the finished garments in person!

Amanda Pecsenye
curator at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

Amanda Pecsenye is a curator at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame; she has worked in various roles at the museum since starting there as an intern in 2001. She is a graduate of Bowling Green State University with a B.A. in Popular Culture. Pecsenye has a special interest in new wave music of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Her recent curatorial work includes Forever Warped: 25 Years of Vans Warped Tour and portions of 2019 Inductees and Garage Gear.
1. Joanne Arnett
“Ladylike Screaming,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
Fed up? Yeah, me too. I want to carry protest signs every day. Instead, I put those sentiments on the most ladylike garment I could think of so I can wear my protest.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.25ab
2. Joanne Arnett & Archana Mehta  
“No Comfort,” 2019

Artists’ statement:
This sweater displays a graph of mass shootings* in the U.S. since the Columbine massacre in 1999. Each year is one row and each death within that year is marked with ten stitches, creating a raised surface. School shootings are further represented by bows in that school’s colors and each bow represents a life lost. The garment consumes the wearer, spilling onto the ground, conveying the overwhelming sense of powerlessness felt in the fight to change the laws and systems that allow these events to occur. One word is continually repeated along the hem of the garment: Enough.

*five or more victims.
3. Victor Barratt-McCartney
“Digital Iconoclasm,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
This wearable textile incorporates multiple techniques, including Adire style resist dyeing (a tradition from southwestern Nigeria) and patchwork appliqué. It functions as a commemorative wall hanging or can be worn as a wrap skirt with a drawstring waist, accommodating many sizes. Digital Iconoclasm is a celebration of dissent and my rejection of art that exploits or sensationalizes. In an era when state violence and police militarization is normalized, May 4 serves as a constant reminder of the power of people organizing together and the global impact of the American imperialist state.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.2
Kennedy Brouillard & Eleonore Zurawski
“Dissent is Not a Crime,” 2019

Artists’ statement:
Kennedy Brouillard created this three-piece look using denim, faux leather, Supima cotton, and cotton jersey. The accompanying video by Eleonore Zurawski features clips from important protests throughout history and today. The denim side of the jacket is meant to be worn during a protest and the Supima cotton side can be worn as an everyday look. The jacket also features laser cutting done in the TechStyleLAB and the painting on the back refers to protest signs. The project pays homage to protesters who are committed to creating a better future around the world.

Lent by the artists
L2019.39.3ab
5. Margaret Busche
“Parallel,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
The purpose of this garment is to show the parallel between the events of May 4 fifty years ago and the current school shooting crisis throughout the United States. This garment was digitally printed at the TechStyleLAB on linen.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.4
6. Chanjuan Chen
“United in Love,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
“United in Love” is inspired by the existence of the United Nations organization and the aim of its members to foster cooperation and maintain worldwide peace and security. The UN’s directive is to act as a united people; to put aside cultural and linguistic differences in recognition of larger, unifying characteristics for the betterment of the world. I constructed the top in sections with each piece the same silhouette of people holding hands to represent social equality. The color blue symbolizes this unity and peace. The skirt is in multiple colors to represent the rainbow of races and cultures around the world.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39-5a-d
7. Courtney Lin Donnelly
“Rosie’s Rivets,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
This piece celebrates women’s paths to empowerment, acknowledging the many barriers as women break down stereotypes. I used an old couture pleating technique to represent society’s dated views of what a woman should be and contrasted this with a silhouette inspired by a man’s welding coat. The pleats are created with a jersey knit and the coat is of stretch denim. “Rosie’s Rivets” is a visualization of women breaking boundaries and social expectations in order to gain the justice they deserve.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.7a-c
8. Tameka N. Ellington
“This is to All Who Refuse to Get Involved!: The Vortex of Black Protest Propaganda,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
The muse for this work is a photograph by Emeritus Professor, Timothy Moore. The photograph is of KSU alum, Silas Ashley (’74), who was standing in front of Rockwell Hall protesting the Vietnam War. I manipulated the photo via Photoshop to create a vortex-like print. The message on Mr. Ashely’s tombstone/protest sign along with the Black Power icon was developed into a repeat pattern that was then printed on silk georgette. I used a 1970 Vogue dress pattern by Jerry Silverman, one of the founders of the Fashion School and Museum. This work commemorates social justice protests and signals a renewed identity and purpose for Blacks.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.6
9. Trista L. Grieder
“Hearts of Justice,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
For generations, the roles of husband and wife have been scripted along gender stereotypes. I question the impact of such clichés on the individuals within a marriage by creating a dress that symbolizes the “fantasy” of marriage. The sweetheart neckline and silhouette evoke a stereotype of the youthful bride, which is then countered by text on the underskirt that addresses marital issues.
10. Kim Hahn & Evelyn Rossol
“Weaving For Justice,” 2019

Artists’ statement:
“Weaving for Justice” is a two-piece, 1970’s inspired look, designed to honor those who were killed and injured in the May 4 shooting on the Kent State University Campus. The crop top and bell bottom pants have a hand woven, triaxial surface design. The strips of fabric which make up the weave include two sets of color gradients inspired by the 70’s-- yellow to purple and teal to red. And the black and white strips contain the names of the individuals who were killed and injured that ominous day, along with a quote from the Scranton Commission calling the event “unnecessary, unwarranted, and inexcusable.” The surface of the finished garments has a three-dimensional optical illusion appearance.

Lent by the artists
L2019.39.20ab
11. Sue Hershberger Yoder & Melissa Campbell
“Kindred Bloom,” 2019

Folk art is of, by, and for the people; all people, inclusive of class, status, culture, community, ethnicity, gender, and religion.
- The International Folk Art Museum

Artists’ statement:
Digitally generated images are often the primary communication vehicles for today’s youth: in ways they parallel activists of the past whose hand work and crafts communicated their fight for justice. The impulse for creating identifiers and showing support is the same, but now the symbols are more likely to be made digitally. We are imagining a scenario in which today’s young activists create digital embroidery patterns as a visual connector to past kindred voices who shared their passion for social justice. Specifically, we see these young activists using folk art inspired, embellished clothing to communicate to us as they lead the way toward common sense gun laws.

Lent by the artists
L2019.39.24.1a-m, L2019.39.24.2a-h
12. Ja Young Hwang & Sue Hershberger Yoder
“Etched Justice,” 2019

Artists’ statement:
“Etched Justice” is a multi-layered dress symbolic of May 4. The bottom layer represents the youthful spirit through the bright floral colors combined with the innocence of a shift dress that does not reveal contours of the female body. The top layer of organza is printed with lines to give the fabric an etched effect. The printed lines shroud the flowers, and yet the flowers continue to shine through the veil. This represents the history of May 4 and supports today’s youth and their activism against gun violence.

Lent by the artists
L2019.39.23ab
13. Colin Isaacs  
“Make Amerikkkka Great Again,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
I designed the pattern for the pants and then created the custom print by sourcing articles and newspaper headlines from 1960s to current day that featured the complex issues of equality. The newspaper pattern was then applied to Cotton Sateen by the TechStyleLAB.

Lent by the artist  
L2019.39.1a-e
14. Helen Legg
“The Cycle Of Life And Death With Nothing In Between,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
This ensemble is inspired by Don Drumm’s sculpture, Solar Totem #1, which was irrevocably scarred by the violence that occurred on May 4, 1970 when a bullet pierced the surface. Drumm’s sculpture after May 4 and my design address the never-ending cycle of mass shootings in the U.S. In spite of these frequent occurrences little legislation has passed to reform gun-ownership laws. The organic shapes of the outer garment represent the physical violence and inner conflicts that haunt present society and the memory surrounding the Vietnam War. The materials represent the complexity of these events: the Piñatex* symbolizes the skin covering our bodies and the knitting signifies the anger and confusion that covers us as we grapple with such horrific events.

*Piñatex is leather made from Pineapple.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.11
15. Sophie MacNeil
“Doomsday,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
This dress is from a collection inspired by today’s Doomsday Preppers subculture and takes inspiration from the idea of living in the post-apocalyptic world. It’s made of jersey knit and nylon with nylon webbing and plastic buckles.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.12ab
16. Michelle Park
“Grains Of Truth,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
Masquerading as grain sacks, these tote bags provide commentary on the agricultural industry and the unseen costs or “ingredients” of our food. Wheat, corn, and rice are staple grains, each acting as a symbol for a clandestine component of the agricultural system that is calling for justice. In the wake of the largest wave of farmer suicide in history, wheat brings attention to the worker. Many cannot bear the financial strain as they are exploited by agricultural and agrochemical companies. These corporations and the political grafting that occur are represented by corn. Finally, rice calls attention to pesticide usage and environmental exploitation that affects our bodies and our world.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.8a-c
Artist’s statement:
Brotherly Love: The love for family, community and the duty to “love thy neighbor as thyself.” Unconditional kindness that offers a hand in friendship, that loves when not loved back, that gives without getting, and that looks for what is best in others.
As a Female Officer serving in the Ohio Army National Guard, I understand the balance between war and peace. As a graduate from KSU Fashion School and a current KSU Masters student, I create quilts to bring meaningful memories into home décor by recycling military uniforms and mixing colorful fabrics to balance patriotism and peace.
18. Kristin Reynolds
“Divided,” 2019

**Artist’s statement:**
This dress focuses on the divide that took place on May 4, 1970: a division between good and bad, peace and war, order and chaos, and even life and death. The garment consists of a structured asymmetrical collared top that is contrasted with a gathered, ruffled skirt. The top represents the National Guard on May 4 and references the structured elements of a military uniform. The ruffled skirt, on the other hand, represents the free-spirited students on this day. While the garment is considered to be a dress, it is split into two pieces. The space between the top and bottom of the garment is held together with rope and symbolizes the divide between the two sides that day. Even though they are separate parts, they are connected as one.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.14
19. Tatum Reusser
“Scarlet is She,” 2019, three from a series of six

Artist’s statement:
The theme of this collection is inspired by the battle of Coon Creek during the American Indian War. I use this history to address perceptions about women then and now, pushing against stereotypes. The fabric manipulations of gathering and layering symbolize the complexity and struggles of the battle. The exaggerated silhouettes, volumes of fabric and stitching create seductive, delicate, and edgy details. I am portraying the woman in scarlet who brought hope to the hopeless, showed strength during a dark time, and compassion to the wounded. Scarlet is She.

Lent by the artist
“Don’t Hurt Us ,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
“Don’t Hurt Us” consists of three different outfits inspired by the 1970s. These three dresses represent the everyday American who was affected by the horrific shooting that happened on May 4. The first dress is made of white denim with an invisible zipper and darts. The second outfit is a button-down shirt and an A-line skirt both made of linen. The third dress is made with a white knit jersey. Projected onto the garments is video footage from The Kent State shootings that took place on May 4.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.15-1-15.4
21. Megan Rodgers
“Veil of the Draft,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
I designed a sheer army jacket to represent the veil of war and the uncertainty of the draft that surrounded the male students of Kent State. I was inspired by an image I found in the May 4 Visitors Center of Kent State. It is a photograph of fraternity brothers holding up their draft numbers. You see the faces of young men who were at the mercy of the draft lottery during what would otherwise be an exciting time of their college life. On the jacket, I embroidered the birth-dates of the four students who were killed on May 4 and an anti-war black armband.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.9
22. Rekha Sharma & Gargi Bhaduri
“‘The Khadi Revolution: Spinning, Weaving, And Wearing Homespun Cotton To Promote Social Justice,’” 2019

Artists’ statement:
Khadi (homespun cotton cloth) was integral to India’s quest for independence from British rule. The material and associated practices symbolically communicated tenets of Gandhi’s nonviolent push for social justice. This exhibit features a khadi sari (a draped garment traditionally worn by women on the Indian subcontinent) printed with significant words from the independence movement. These words—satyagraha (adherence to truth), swaraj (self-rule), swadeshi (self-sufficiency), and ahimsa (non-violence)—as well as the motif of the charkha (spinning wheel) unified the diverse population in a collective struggle for equality and freedom. Even today, as India negotiates its governance and position on the global stage, khadi has provided avenues for articulating a national identity and creating sustainable employment in rural communities.

Lent by the artists
L2019.39.21ab
23. Jaihe Tong
“Stop The War and Remember The History,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
This tapestry is inspired by the horrors of the Vietnam War and how it also created other battles, such as Kent State’s May 4 tragedy. The depicted figures don’t have faces because they could easily be anyone. However, the faceless figures also show that regardless of what side you are on, death is death. The ring on the soldier’s hand and the envelope laying in the bloodied earth, remind the viewer that when there is a loss, someone is suffering.

Lent by the artist
L2019.39.16
24. Rachel Williams
“Protection,” 2019

Artist’s statement:
My design pays homage to the students who lost their lives on May 15, 1970 at Jackson State University in Mississippi. The students’ names are Phillip Gibbs & James Earl Green. Another 12 people were injured. This shooting came 11 days following Kent State, but is not as well known, which could be due to the fact that these men were Black. The outfit is a layering of different materials to underscore contrasts; organic gray twill for the pants; black, crocheted lace turtleneck sweater and a jacket of both canvas and silk. I printed the victims’ faces on silk organza to honor their memory. They may be physically gone but remain visible.
25. Eleonore Zurawski & Maame Amoah
“All We Are—Injustice Of Deprivation,” 2019

Artists’ statement:
Depriving people of water, food and shelter is an injustice against human kind. The jumpsuit and knit structure are inspired by the basic human necessities for life and growth through water, food, and shelter. The jumpsuit fabric design, created by Eleonore Zurawski, was made from collaged photographs of food and water, then printed in the TechStyleLAB. The knit sculpture, created by Maame Amoah, represents shelter and was designed and knit on the Stoll knitting machine.

Lent by the artists
L2019.39.18abc