

MY METAMORPHOSED FASHION DESIGN PRAXIS

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This report explores the ever-changing identity of fashion which is constructed through various subjectivities that determine dressed bodies. Designers are now working with not just the commercial realities of the fashion world, they are also questioning its role and how it can educate both the designer and the consumer. While fashion participates in the pursuit of bringing new 'looks' seasons after seasons, it also exhibits itself as an object of desire and criticism. In her article "Slow + Fashion – an Oxymoron – or a Promise for the Future...?," Hazel Clark subjects the fashion system to a new critique. She argues that "in this refocusing, 'fashion' is presented as an individual creative choice rather than as a group mandate. Slow + Fashion refocuses our attention on earlier definitions of the term 'fashion' to do [with?] making – clothes and identities, rather than only with looking."¹ She presents the debate around the slow approach to fashion, where clothing demands a considered, thoughtful, meaningful and sustainable consumption.

It is the art of making rather than the designing of consumption that is drawing the attention of many creative endeavours. Many designers are finding their practice at the interface of art and design. It is this relationship between fashion and art that has found relevance in my practice of fashion design. It is informed by childhood memories of my mother working with creative media such as painting, sculpture, dressmaking and embroidery. These media in conjunction suggest that my work often finds a place between fine art and applied design. My approach to my work is strongly contextualised by my personal background and hence reflects an individualised aesthetic. This combination is evident in my work – the fine arts component resides in my approach to creating clothing that brings past and present, known and unknown, my culture and memories from the past into context; the applied design aspect is evident in challenging conventional methods and using unconventional methods to create designs for fashion.

'Art-fashion togetherness' is being celebrated by the avant-garde designers who are now questioning the role of fashion. Rei Kawakubo's first show in Paris in 1981 conceptualised fashion as more than a social construction of 'woman' as the beautiful, graceful gender. Barbara Vinken elaborates on Rei Kawakubo's collection as an artist's response to the old "monopoly of [the?] French in matters of elegance, and the expertise of French couture." With her Lace Collection, Rei Kawakubo pushed the boundaries and conventions of fashion and rapidly entered into the realm of art. The Victoria and Albert Museum in London now houses this famous collection. According to Vinken, "her aesthetic is, in the end, not an aesthetic of poverty, even if much of the provocative effect of her work comes from this direction. Rather it is a negative aesthetic, based in a contestation of the idea of fashion itself."² The *International Herald Tribune's* fashion journalist said of her work: "[her?] show was the first that made a big impact in Paris; when the clothes were destroyed, when there were sweaters with big holes in them ... The whole idea that there could be beauty in the unfinished was very extraordinary."³

Many other designers are seeing sense in how Rei Kawakubo works with her creative vision to give clothing its long-desired freedom. As photographer Paolo Roversi puts it: "I consider Rei Kawakubo to be an artist. Because she always bets everything in [on?] the outcome, and she always follows her own instincts, imagination and spirit. And all the rest is made to contribute to her own free creativity. She continues to defend at all price the liberty and independence that oppose the commercial aspects of the fashion industry ... and she does that in order to defend her artistic spirit. And that should be the first priority within an artist's work."⁴

Rei Kawakubo is a prime example of a designer who embodies visual artistic references in their clothing designs. Martin Margiela could be considered another fashion designer who exhibits his work in the sphere of art. Martin Margiela explains that, besides direct references, the designer's approach to their practice can embody artistic qualities: "the more individualistic the approach in relation to the current climate of the overall aesthetic referred to as 'in fashion,' the more that approach may be linked to art."⁵

For many designers, the fashion process comes in contact with the subjectivities of the designer and is born out of an intangible resource of personal experiences particular to their cultural bank of memories and emotions. As a designer, I have been working with elements of clothing that I have experienced through my Indian culture. An example is *pajama* – a kind of trouser made from a bias bag or a tube with fabric walls that stretches with the movement of the body, commonly worn as a component of an Indian ensemble. The seams creating the bias bag appear in different areas of the garment, with the designer having only partial control over their placement. It brings into play the known fit with the unknown placement of the seams in a garment, as shown in Figure 1. Here the dress is created using the constructed bias bag.

This technique uses elements of sculpture to create forms for which fabric is the main material. Sometimes it is hard to predict the true form of the sculpture before its completion. Working with a known body form, but also with the unknown sculptural elements of fabric has been explored in the garment shown in Figure 2. While the bodice is fitted on the body, the flow of the garment around the abdomen and legs creates concealment of the actual form within the layers of fabric of the bias bag.



Figure 1. Rekha Rana, *The Purple Dress*, made from bias bag; the seams appear in unanticipated areas of the dress, 2007.



Figure 2. Rekha Rana, *The Purple Dress*, layers of fabric around the skirt area formed with a bias bag, 2007.

Living in Western cultures over a number of years, my Indian cultural identity has encountered an acculturation process. Fashion springs from the pluralities that characterise postmodernist society. My practice is based on a reflective studio practice engaged in fashion-creation around the plurality surrounding the relationships between dress and wearer; wearer and society, the signifier and the signified. Elements such as memories, cultures and identities can be contextualised and materialised through clothing signifiers. While similar contexts become the basis for interaction, differences in contexts facilitate dynamic negotiations between relationships. In line with this idea, my studio work is actuated in a multicultural environment which mixes the familiar with the unfamiliar; the past with the present, the known with the unknown. My work is born out of lived differences examined and expressed through a narrative of identity.

While clothing elements can construct cultural meanings, they can also constitute fashion when they signify a sufficient level of change as sought after by fashionistas. However, in my practice this quest for significant appreciation by fashionistas has given way to an exploration of identity created through the dialogue between internal and external worlds. This dialogue involves both differences and similarities, as both are important to our being – this is what is significant, central and essential to my artwork practice. This process of *decentering* as an artistic technique of

postmodern culture has been included in the discourse of many analysts. According to Marcia Morgado, decentering is a "technique [that] involves reconfiguring relationships within and beyond a work, so as to devalue what has previously been central, to call attention to what has been ignored, and to force reconsideration of the place and significance of previously marginalized elements."⁶ Ethnographic clothing is a part of my fragmented, postmodern experience and hence essential to my study. An appreciation for clothing signifiers originates from the intangible design process which involves our past memories and emotions as embedded in our cultures and identities. These go deeper into one's being than might be imagined by the uninitiated, as they elicit fashion statements that speak of innate values and not just of the desire for a beautified appearance.

The Indian fashion context embraces key elements such as drape, jewellery, embellishment and embroideries, and these have influenced my fashion practice as well. Embroideries have lived with me since childhood and, more recently, as past memories have surfaced again in my present practice. The embroidery in Figure 3 was created with herringbone stitch. The linear pattern is worked in a specific way on sheer fabric and forms the boundary of the design on one side of the fabric, and a criss-cross pattern on the other side. The sheer fabric allows the crossed yarn to show through on the surface as its shadow. In an Indian context, this type of stitch is termed 'shadow work.' In this piece, the stitches travel between the inward and outward curved lines, expanding and contracting to fit them, reflecting the crossing over of various journeys I have taken so far in my life. Even though each 'journey' has been bordered between the curved lines, the entire piece is not seeking any borders or boundaries. Its trajectories are fluid, feeding into each other and changing with no finality of interpretation.

Vilém Flusser describes human beings as more restless than other animals, and explains that "not only are they constantly on the move, but they gather and transmit experience."⁷ The longest curve, that passes through all the other curves in the embroidered work, evokes the first 27 years of my life lived in India, when I was single.

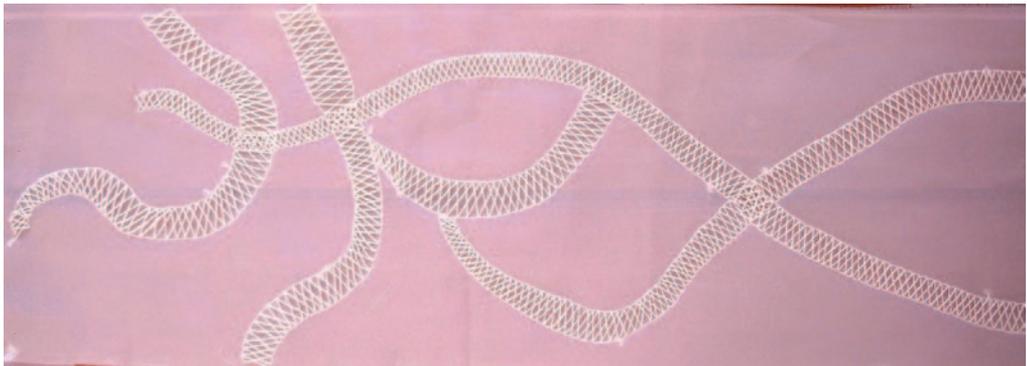


Figure 3. Rekha Rana, *Journey of Life*, synthetic screen mesh, embroidered with off-white pearle yarn using herringbone shadow work, 116 x 16.5 cm.

This was the time when I felt most rooted and settled. Since then I have not felt settled, as I have been on the move, like a restless animal. Maurice Merleau Ponty described his own early experience:

It is at the present time that I realise that the first twenty-five years of my life were a prolonged childhood, destined to be followed by a painful break leading eventually to independence. If I take myself back to those years as I actually lived them and as I carry them within me, my happiness at that time cannot be explained in terms of the sheltered atmosphere of the parental home; the world itself was more beautiful, things were fascinating, and I can never be sure of reaching a fuller understanding of my past than it had of itself at the time I lived through it, nor of silencing its protest. Tomorrow, with more experience and insight, I shall possibly understand it differently, and consequently reconstruct my past in a different way.⁸

I understand this process as a mixing of contexts which can lead to expressions of creativity as contexts collide.

In my embroideries and embellished work, situated within a palimpsest of cultural encounters, neutral colours have replaced bright colours. There is now a strangeness I feel in using colour as it has become exotic, the other; in my current cultural context, living with mostly European people in New Zealand. What colour brings out, black and white diffuse and soften. The use of neutral colours has provided me with the possibility to explore the form, shape, shadows and the occupied space of the embroideries without being distracted by colour. As my work progressed, the word 'shadow' started to appear to an increasing extent, as well as in my thinking. While shadow needs a physical form – object, person, form – to cast it, I wanted to 'cast' shadows of my past memories and experiences, thereby materialising them. The *kurta* (Figures 4 and 5) has been in the repertoire of Indian clothing for a long time, and I recreated its form as a flat drawing using a soldering iron to burn holes where embroidery had once been. This process has given visibility to the garments which I wore growing up in India.



Figure 4. Rekha Rana, *Memories of the Past Rooted in Today*, beige crepe wool, burnt-out holes using soldering iron, 90 x 23 cm.



Figure 5. Rekha Rana, *Memories of the Past Rooted in Today*, beige crepe wool, burnt-out holes using soldering iron, 90 x 23 cm.

These miniature embellished pieces were transposed onto a huge scale by being projected onto walls. Their presence was materialised through the play of light passing through the transparent fabrics and holes created in the fabrics. These images were then projected digitally. The narrative of a past interacting with a present was shaped further as my daughter moved with these projections and I recorded her movements through digital video captures (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Rekha Rana, projections of embroideries with artist's daughter interacting with them.

My metaphorical shadows question the historical iconographic status of shadows elaborated by Nancy Forgione as merely ephemeral, fragile and secondary to the light source.⁹ For my work, the relative permanency of these captured shadows suggest the endurance of past memories that live in the subconscious, shifting between transient and stable frames of mind. Memories are embedded in associations; they are reminders, awakening our subconscious mind, triggering access to our inner subjectivities. Shadows offer a means of making past memories of creation more visible for me. The embroideries here are not used to embellish the garment. Instead, the garments with their projected embroideries are worn by the performer to allow for a dialogue between the body of the wearer and the history of the signifiers of garment, embroidery and shadow.

In the process of connecting with like-minded designers, it is important for me to understand how design is born within their own particular contexts. Yohji Yamamoto's designs often embody human elements that are important to me. Vinken provides a marvellous account of his work:

Yamamoto's clothing seems to be based on a poetics of memory that has remained untouched by the shocks and traumas of the modern period. His work mutely collects and registers the affective traces which make up the individual. What is important is the individualised sum of experiences which are collected in its course. For him, the ideal look is that of the vagabonds, the gypsies, the travellers, those who carry their life on their back, everything that they possess, their memories, their treasures, their secrets.¹⁰

Much lies in the process and how it connects with your inner self. Reflecting back in time, I can recollect how my mother would stitch garments for us during summer vacations. She worked straight on the fabric, marking key vertical and horizontal measurements for fit, and her scissors never experienced any doubts concerning their track. I would watch with amazement, trying to understand the art of making. These experiences are part of who I am today. As a designer, I want to start with a clean slate for making sculptural clothing objects. However, the acquired knowledge underpinning the making of these objects will always inform the results, and most of the time my method of working takes into account the impulses inherited from my early memories. My garments are made not just to clothe a body, but also to communicate a world of experience materialised through them. Again, the design of the garment in Figure 7 has been informed by the process of marking and cutting openings for neck and arms, as used by my mother in the past.



Figure 7. Rekha Rana, *The Red Dress*. This garment transforms and moves with the wearer: 2008.

Figures 8 and 9 show how the tube is drafted by stitching the two parallel sides of the rectangle marked as 'B,' and how the circles and oblongs are cut from the tube for neck and arm insertion. The body then passes through the long tube, creating excess folds in the fabric for movement. The garments shown in Figures 7 and 11 have been designed using this technique. Such a garment transforms as the body moves and interacts with it, bringing out the mood of the wearer. These garments (and the one discussed previously) are 'historical' in the sense that they contain traces of my past experiences. They create a fluid space that allows the wearers to express themselves through movement.

As a designer, I have been working with elements of clothing experienced through my Indian culture. I have gone back to my home address D-73 where I grew up, and gained the lived experiences of clothing myself in Indian

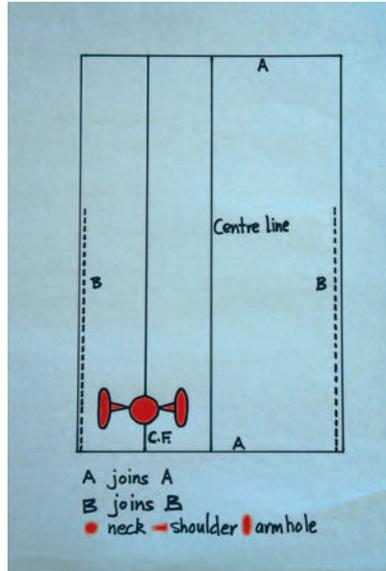


Figure 9. Rekha Rana, fabric tube made using pattern as in Figure 8, 2008.

Figure 8. Rekha Rana, pattern for a garment made out of fabric tube, stitched to a level indicated by dashed line B, 2008.



Figure 10. Rekha Rana, *The Purple Dress*, This garment transforms and moves with the wearer: 2008.

garments. The *kurta*,¹¹ *dhoti salwar*,¹² *churidar pajama*,¹³ *angarkha*¹⁴ and *abho*¹⁵ (some of the traditional garments worn in India) that I wore have come back to me as garments that seek to find visibility in the Western context.

My lived experiences have accumulated, manifesting as the depth and variety represented in my clothing designs. Today, articles of clothing such as trousers, jackets, blouses, vests and pants which can be categorised as Western form the repertoire of my design. At the same time, clothing articles from an Eastern aesthetic such as *kimonos*, *kurtas* and *abhos*



Figure 11. Rekha Rana, *The Charcoal Dress*, with back and front pouch. This garment transforms and moves with the wearer: 2008.

are part of who I am as a consumer and a producer of design. I have interpreted these Western and Eastern aesthetics in a collection of six outfits entitled "D-73: Homeward Bound". This was shown at the 2010 fashion show at the School of Fashion, Otago Polytechnic, and then exhibited at the Dunedin School of Art Gallery. In this body of work, Eastern and Western identities have come together as a harmonious entity. The collection is based on a number of key concepts: hidden structures, multiple identities, body and shadow, different positions and the *kurta* as a monumental piece. Fabrics such as leather and fur, which are not traditionally used in India, have been mixed with Indian silk and organza fabrics. The collection is characterised by a bricolage of unusual fabrics and different aesthetic codes. Minimal, simple, clean and sharp cuts have been used with overindulgent, rich fabrics, hence bringing minimalism and opulence together in a dialogue. Handcrafted, layered, ethnographic garments have been compiled into feminine shapes, providing a subtle realisation of the body inside the garments.

Within the spectrum of minimalism and opulence, West and East, fitted and loose, geometric and draped, fashion has the strength to manifest subjectivities and create multiple identities in various contexts. My collection has resulted from a study of such varied spectrums, bringing the past into the present. According to Susan Kaiser, Richard Nagasawa and Sandra Hutton, "postmodern culture offers new opportunities for individuals to 'construct an identity' and 'invest' (their lives) with meaning and that postmodern culture holds out the possibility of greater acceptance of others, based on cross-cultural exchange and appreciation of others' material artefacts."¹⁶ Having confidence in this aspect of postmodern culture, I want to work between art and design to explore the potential of presenting and perpetuating culturally diverse experiences for my audience. The collapse of the distinctions between *élite*, mass, and street fashion (as stated by Morgado) has opened new possibilities for a scholarly critique of fashion which I want to term 'postfashion' (a term coined by Barbra Vinken): raising awareness of fashion beyond consumerism.



Figure 12. Rekha Rana, *The Bubble Dress*, 100% wool, 2010. Photographed by Simon Swale. Modelled by, Eva Duncan at Ali McD modelling agency.



Figure 13. Rekha Rana, *The Pleated Dress, The Abho and Kimono Jacket Outfit*, 2010. Photographed by Simon Swale. Modelled by from left Georgia Ferguson, and Eva Duncan at Ali McD modelling agency.

The Bubble Dress shown in Figure 12 conceals its structure which is based around a fitted garment called a *choli* combined with a *kurta* which lends sensuality to the body. These hidden structures also operate in other garments in the collection. *The Pleated Dress* in Figure 13 is another adaptation of the *kurta*, where horizontal seams have been hidden in the constructions of pleats.

It has been vital for me to explore alternative methods of creating garments, challenging the methods that I have learnt while studying for the Bachelor of Design (Fashion) in order to extend the boundaries of my knowledge outside its comfort zone. Using unconventional pattern shapes brings an element of interest and a twist to what can be produced as a garment. This is a process which trusts the designer's understanding of body, form and fit. Many Indian garments – and, broadly speaking, many Eastern garments – originate from geometric shapes. The assembly of different rectangular patterns to form a *kurta* is the method used in the construction of the leather jacket in Figure 14. In the exhibition space, this monumental piece hung like a relief sculpture, becoming the interface between fashion and art, construction and sculpture. The visual seam lines have been emphasised with topstitching to draw the viewer's attention to the angularity of its rigid form. Suspending the garment and stripping the body from it also brought out the strong sculptural elements.



Figure 14. Rekha Rana, *The Leather Jacket*. The seams echo the structure of a *kurta*, 2010. Photographed by Ted Whitaker.

The exhibition “D-73: Homeward Bound” sums up the several processes that have informed the making of these garments. There is a space between the making, wearing, exhibiting and viewing of the garment which needs to find visibility. While the garment on a body has movement, once exhibited it becomes a sculpted object. Its complexity can be deciphered by means of a closer view.

The exhibition space was divided into seven sections:

- a row of four outfits with spotlights
- a long *kurta* dress against a backdrop of a *kurta* pattern image
- a leather jacket
- a sheer top hung from the ceiling, projecting shadows on a wall
- a video of projected embroideries
- projections of modelled outfits
- a window with image and text.

The collection of four outfits exhibited in a row in the gallery space had previously been shown on the catwalk (Figure 15), and now found visibility as sculptural pieces in their own right. These pieces have movement when modelled on the catwalk and, as sculptural pieces, they feed the interest of the viewer, who can now focus on the

details within the material selection and construction, and on the surfaces and construction of the pieces. Displaying them in a row formalised them into an order which the viewer unravelled through an inquisitive engagement with materiality and detail. These dressed body forms were lit up to cast shadows behind them, thereby echoing multiple identities (Figures 16 and 17).

The long *kurta* dress stood alone by itself. It had as a backdrop a large pattern drawing of a *kurta*. It is usually worn knee or calf length; however, this garment touches the floor. This particular garment shows my ethnographic context very clearly, and hence its placement within the gallery space needed isolated attention. In a sense, it provided a key to the reading of the other garments in which the flow of Indian dress mutates under the influence of Western elements and overtones. The opaque fur with sheer panels shows hints of a body inside, like a shadow (figure 18).

While the leather jacket is rigid and not open to distortion with movement, its opposite in the exhibition was the drift of the sheer shirt, which has hidden parts in its construction. These were made visible with the play of light. This garment blurs its origins as a shirt, *kurta*, *kimono* or *abho*, as all are interpreted in it as an expression of multiple identities. The garment cast its shadow on the wall as one, a shadow which changed as it moved in a circular track on its own axis.

While the shadow of the drifting sheer shirt highlighted the details within the shirt, the shadows of the embroideries captured in the video next to it embraced my childhood memories of dress within my practice. The embellishment which is crucial to



Figure 15. Rekha Rana, *D-73 Homeward Bound*, shown at School of Fashion, Otago Polytechnic 2010 fashion show.

Figure 16. Rekha Rana, *D-73 Homeward Bound Exhibition* shown at The Dunedin School of Art Gallery, 2010. Photographed by Ted Whitaker.

Figure 17. Rekha Rana, *D-73 Homeward Bound Exhibition* shown at The Dunedin School of Art Gallery, 2010, showing shadows of garments worn by body forms. Photographed by Ted Whitaker.

Figure 18. Rekha Rana, *D-73 Homeward Bound Exhibition*, *The Fur Kurta Dress* with side panels in sheer fabric, 2010. Photographed by Ted Whitaker





Figure 19. Rekha Rana, D – 73 *Homeward Bound* Exhibition, *The Sheer Shirt*, 2010. Photographed by Ted Whitaker.

Figure 20. Rekha Rana, D – 73 *Homeward Bound* Exhibition, embroideries projected on the wall, 2010. Photographed by Ted Whitaker.

Figure 21. Rekha Rana, D – 73 *Homeward Bound* Exhibition, model wearing *The Bubble Dress* and *Kimono Jacket* projected on the centre wall, 2010. Photographed by Ted Whitaker.

the Eastern aesthetic had been captured in a video of projected embroideries (Figure 20). These embroideries had a journey starting with real embroidered samplers, magnified through projections and then deconstructed into other forms of surface embellishments such as knitted bubbles, pleats and slashes.

These garments are now shown as sculptural pieces. However, they need to be worn in future to further maximise their aesthetic and functional aspects. Their use on the model is made visible through ensembles shown through projections (Figure 21). The scale of these digital projections had a substantial presence in the exhibition, and this reflected the dynamic effect of the work as seen on the catwalk.

Fashion has its own journey, which I have tried to understand through observation and scholarly activity. Vinken talks about the era of 'postfashion,' which has arrived after the completion of the 'hundred-year fashion' era – where designers, instead of inventing and reinventing woman, are now deconstructing 'woman.'¹⁷ Such a deconstruction seems also to be critical of a previously unitary notion of Western fashion. My own work challenges this notion as it deconstructs it through the inclusion of elements from my own non-Western past, elements signifying cultural difference, albeit now incorporated into my current hybridised culture. Through my work I am deconstructing a woman who is a narrative of my own being, created from lived differences and commonalities. I understand that my two worlds cannot always be reconciled, nor do I want them to, but their encounters can be innovatively presented through creative attempts. Cornel West claims that "a new kind of cultural worker is in the making, associated with a new politics of difference The new cultural politics of difference consists of creative responses to the precise circumstances of our present moment."¹⁸ My studio work will be challenging, and also be challenged by, the multiple positions presented through my circumstances.

For me, the 'postfashion' era defines a time where designers are conscious of a new space, wherein fashion is not just for the mere gratification of physical appearance, but for evoking and connecting to the inner self and its cultural values, emotions, memories and experiences. The postfashion era validates the complex design processes through which I want to

establish a bond between the garment, body and space. While I can say that fashion design has allowed me to express my social and aesthetic needs, it has also made me explore new methodologies of work which are going beyond consumerism and questioning the very notion of fashion design. In response to this, my exhibition *D-73: Homeward Bound* has been presented within a visual arts context. This is a new form of empowerment that needs to be tapped into in order to bring change to contemporary culture and contribute to the discourses of fashion, clothing and art.



Figure 22. Rekha Rana, *D – 73 Homeward Bound* Exhibition, Panoramic View. Photographed by Emily Hlavac Green.

Rekha Rana Shailaj graduated with a Diploma in Design (Fashion) in 1997 from Otago Polytechnic. In 2004 she translated the diploma into a degree with a research paper on embroideries from the western region of India. In 2011, she completed her Masters of Fine Arts (Design) at Otago Polytechnic. As a conceptual designer, Rekha's research is situated in a diverse multicultural environment where social enquiry is tolerant of social differences, ambiguity and conflicts in the creation of identities. Presenting her work regularly at national and international conferences and in exhibition spaces has allowed her to contribute to current debates on fashion.

- 1 H Clark, "Slow + Fashion – an Oxymoron – or a Promise for the Future ...?," *Fashion Theory*, 12:4 (2008), 445-54.
- 2 B Vinken, "Yohji Yamamoto: The Secret Sewn In," in her *Fashion Zeitgeist: Trends and Cycles in the Fashion System* (New York: Berg, 2005), 110.
- 3 "Revolution," in *Unlimited: Comme Des Garçons*, eds S Shimizu and 'NHK' (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005).
- 4 "Body," in *Unlimited: Comme Des Garçons*, eds S Shimizu and 'NHK' (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005).
- 5 *The Fashion Business: Theory, Practice, Image*, eds N White and I Griffiths (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000), 82-3.
- 6 MA Morgado, "Coming to Terms with Postmodern: Theories and Concepts of Contemporary Culture and their Implications for Apparel Scholars," *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 14:1 (1996), 41-53.
- 7 V Flusser, *The Freedom of the Migrant: Objections to Nationalism*, trans. Kenneth Kronenberg (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 25.
- 8 M Merleau-Ponty, "Other Selves and the Human World," in his *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1962), 405-25.
- 9 N Forgione, "The Shadow Only: Shadow and Silhouette in Late Nineteenth-century Paris," *Art Bulletin*, 81:3 (September 1999), 490-512.
- 10 Vinken, "Yohji Yamamoto: The Secret Sewn In," 110.
- 11 Ritu Kumar explains that "Kurtas are made up of straight panels of fabric stitched together at the selvedge to form a tunic to which wide sleeves are attached at right angles." R Kumar, "Women's Garments," in her *Costumes and Textiles of Royal India* (London: Christie's Books, 1999), 246.
- 12 The *dhoti*, an uncut draped garment (menswear in India), has been converted into a stitched trouser called *salwar*.
- 13 *Churidar pajamas* are trousers fitted around the lower legs and loose around the waist, tied with a draw string. They were traditionally worn in Mughul courts.
- 14 The *angarkha* can be broadly defined as a long-sleeved gown or coat. The key distinguishing feature of the *angarkha* is the round-edged, sometimes triangular opening and the inner panel known as the *purdah*, which is inserted into the cut-out portion of the yoke to cover the chest.
- 15 The *abho* is a variation of the *kurta* that appears like a dress which is gathered into the waist.
- 16 Morgado, "Coming to Terms with Postmodern."
- 17 B Vinken, "What Fashion Strictly Divided," in her *Fashion Zeitgeist: Trends and Cycles in the Fashion System* (New York: Berg, 2005), 3-36.
- 18 S Seidman, *The Postmodern Turn* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 65.