

TEACHER GUIDE

FASHION AND IDENTITY

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INTERVIEWEES

1. **Stephan Schneider**

BIO: In 1994, German born Stephan Schneider graduated top of his class from Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp. Unlike many designers, Schneider doesn't pluck his canvas from a bolt in a factory. He designs each fabric himself. "I spend half of my time with the textile and half with the silhouette," he says. "When your textile is strong, you don't have to invent trousers with three legs." Stephan Schneider uses its own production facilities in Belgian factories, where pieces are cut by hand and time can be spent on the finest finishing.

Professor Stephan Schneider currently teaches at Universität der Künste, Berlin.

LINKS: <http://www.stephanschneider.be/#/collection/>

2. Elena Nancu

BIO: "Style is the perfection of the point of view"

Poet Richard Eberhart's phrase expresses Elena Nancu's philosophy of making clothing: what's important is the way we say it. ELENA NANCU makes clothing for women who seek to refine their style without being obsessed by fashion.

Elena studied art history and was a painter working with the Beuys-scholar Heinrich Koch. Yet soon afterwards, realizing that she was more fascinated by expressing and refining one's style through clothes, she studied fashion design in Düsseldorf. Before creating her own brand, Elena worked with designers in Germany and Romania.

Her subtle style with clear cuts and hidden details follows Federico Fellini's insight that art is all about craftsmanship. The design process is inspired by historical and conceptual research; and every single piece is handmade in Germany, following the highest artisan standards.

LINKS: <http://www.elenanancu.com/>

3. Fritz Eschenbach

BIO: Berlin's vintage cloths collector and expert. Person who plays with the identity by cloths in everyday life. On the street you can see him in uniforms, cloths from old decades and even... aliens' or cartoon characters' costumes.

4. Ben Klunker

BIO: He graduated the prestigious Berlin design school ESMOD and founded his eponymous fashion label on graduating in 2006 with cooperation with his friend Julia Heuse. The collaboration proves that two minds are often better than one; they channel their respective influences into a menswear and womenswear label

that continues to strike a balance between commercial and conceptual, classic and avant-garde and mixes glamour with a unique Berlin street style. The interaction of abstract and conceptual ideas between the designers is symbiotic and fuels designs that both challenge conventionality – such as boxy, oversized cuts or draped fabrics in both their designs for women and men - but, importantly, their creations are also flattering. Many of the materials they use have been tie-dyed, bleached, moon-washed or aged to create different effects.

LINK: <http://www.juliaandben.com/about/>

5. Johanna Sophie Spichalsky

She graduated Universität der Künste, Berlin. Her diploma fashion collection examines the possibility of no-gender clothing.

DICTIONARY

Androgenic- adjective form of the noun "androgen," a word refers to any of the male hormones, including testosterone and androsterone. The adjective used commonly to accent that something is masculine.

Fad- intense but short-lived fashion trend. Fads are also by their nature at the extreme range of currently acceptable style, which means they commonly cross the line from the sublime to the ridiculous. Fashion victims can be seen to have crossed this line.

Fashion- a general term for a currently popular style or practice, especially in clothing, foot wear or accessories. Fashion references to anything that is the current trend in look and dress up of a person. (source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fashion>)

Fashion victim- term claimed to have been coined by Oscar de la Rental that is used to identify a person who is unable to identify commonly recognized boundaries of style.

Fashion victims are vulnerable to faddishness and materialism, two of the widely recognized excesses of fashion, and consequently are at the mercy of society's prejudices or of the commercial interest of the fashion industry, or of both. According to Versace, "When a woman alters her look too much from season to season, she becomes a fashion victim." Fashion victims, by their characteristic inability to recognize boundaries, may aspire to the extreme end of what is available, seeking expensive products (or copies of these products), believing that the outward display of such items will draw admiration in proportion to their actual or apparent cost. Because of this, the term 'fashion victim' became the ultimate insult to the aspirational.

(the source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fashion_victim)

Identity- self-image (a person's mental model of him or herself), self-esteem, and individuality. An important part of identity in psychology is gender identity, as this dictates to a significant degree how an individual views him or herself both as a person and in relation to other people, ideas and nature. In cognitive psychology, the term "identity" refers to the capacity for self-reflection and the awareness of self.

Psychologists most commonly use the term "identity" to describe *personal identity*, or the idiosyncratic things that make a person unique. Meanwhile, sociologists often use the term to describe *social identity*, or the collection of group memberships that define the individual.

Metrosexual- neologism derived from *metropolitan* and *heterosexual* coined in 1994 describing a man (especially one living in a post-industrial, capitalist culture) who displays behavior stereotypically associated with homosexual men (such as a strong concern for his appearance), although he is not homosexual.

(the source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metrosexual>)

“someone who is **metrosexual**:

1. You just can't walk past a Banana Republic store without making a purchase.
2. You own 20 pairs of shoes, half a dozen pairs of sunglasses, just as many watches and you carry a man-purse.
3. You see a stylist instead of a barber, because barbers don't do highlights.
4. You can make her lamb shanks and risotto for dinner and Eggs Benedict for breakfast... all from scratch.
5. You only wear Calvin Klein boxer-briefs.
6. You shave more than just your face. You also exfoliate and moisturize.
7. You would never, ever own a pickup truck.
8. You can't imagine a day without hair styling products.
9. You'd rather drink wine than beer... but you'll find out what estate and vintage first.
10. Despite being flattered (even proud) that gay guys hit on you, you still find the thought of actually getting intimate with another man truly repulsive.”

(source: <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=metrosexual>)

QUESTIONS:

The main issue:

WHAT KIND OF LINK CAN WE FIND BETWEEN FASHION AND IDENTITY?

Target group: students in the age 13-18

I think this is the age when people are the most vulnerable to being manipulated by fashion trends, they also build their own identity and style so it is crucial to act consciously in the self-creation field.

Discussion building questions:

- ❖ What do clothes say about that person's body image?
- ❖ How do people use their clothes to change the social perception of them?
- ❖ What does clothing say about its wearer's interests, social standing, or current activities?
- ❖ How does the way we dress communicate messages about our identity?
- ❖ Is the desire to be "in fashion" universal, or is it unique to Western culture?
- ❖ What does it mean for you: "Style is the perfection of the point of view"?
- ❖ How do you understand the statement that 'the modern trend is no fashion' ?
- ❖ How do you understand the statement that 'the new trend is no gender in fashion'?
- ❖ What kind of link do you see between fashion and gender identity?
- ❖ What do you think about unisex clothing idea?
- ❖ What does it mean to dress feminine/masculine?

LINKS:

http://www.custom-essays.org/samples/Fashion_and_Identity.html **interesting essay about fashion and identity (culture and communication perspective)**

<http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/philosophy/203/fourth%20reading.htm> **Charles Taylor's essay (one of Canada's best-known philosophers)**

<http://www.goodlifer.com/2009/05/fashion-and-identity/> **fashion globalization versus individualization**

fashion puts into culture perspective:

<http://islamfashionandidentity.blogspot.com/>

http://www.yementimes.com/defaultdet.aspx?SUB_ID=35248

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2. “Fashion and Identity: A Multidisciplinary Approach” Ana Marta González (University of Navarra) and Laura Bovone (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore), Social Trend Institute
3. “Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing”, Diana Crane, University Of Chicago Press; 2000