

Faculty Development Research Grant Report by Philippa Lindenthal

Exploring the impact of music on fashion design

Below please find a synopsis of my research at the following institutions.

- 06/06/2016 Conducted research in the *Lipperheidsche Kostümbibliothek* in Berlin, the world's largest special library and graphic collection on the cultural history of clothing and fashion.
- 06/09/2016 Visit to the *Hamburger Kunsthalle* and meeting with curator Dr. Annabelle Görgen-Lammers.
- 06/11/2016 Conversation with JIL SANDER directrice Angela Lange in Hamburg.
- 06/17/2016 Meeting with Sabine Waidenschlager, Head of Textile Collection at the *Kunstgewerbemuseum*, Berlin.
- 06/20/2016 *UdK Bibliothek* (University of the Arts Library) Berlin.
- 06/20/2016 Meeting with Dr. Adelheid Rasche, chief curator since 1990 of the *Sammlung Modebild* at the *Lipperheidsche Kostümbibliothek*, Berlin.
- 06/22/2016 Visit to *Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe*, Hamburg. Meeting with Dr. Claudia Banz, Head of Collections: Art & Design, for a conversation on the impact of music on fashion.

Driven by personal experience, I focus on the influence of music on the creative process. Within this mindset, I see a strong connection to my draping classes, often starting with the square. This basic shape and the experimentation with fabric qualities and color nurture creativity through repetition and variation to create multifaceted three-dimensional shapes like a sculptor. Music is an integral component in this creative process and offers opportunities for further practical research. The sense of experimentation and careful testing of variations with the interest of changing habits of perception is a key element within my practice as an artist as well as a faculty member at FIT.

In the Nineties absolute silence during the creation was a dogma at JIL SANDER. In the 2000's under Raf Simons' direction, who constantly played rare electronic music as well as various music genres the impact of the visionary collections was getting stronger. Even the element of distraction was an experiment for the look of the new collection.

The main source of my research is based on the international and interdisciplinary approach of Bauhaus artists, exemplified by the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (universal artwork). One artist who embodied this concept was Kandinsky, who as a teacher at Weimarer Bauhaus launched a questionnaire searching for dissonant combinations and perceptions of color and shape. He took three geometric basic shapes (circle, square, triangle) in conjunction with the three primary colors (red, yellow and blue) and surveyed participants to determine which combinations were the most harmonious. Kandinsky's research in dissonant perception extended to his *Farbklang* (color tonality) research of paintings in relation to music was unique for his work. I even discovered a computer program named after Kandinsky for the translation of audio input into visual output. Another artist is the synaesthete Skrjabin; in the book *Die Farblichtmusik* I explored detailing studies on the translation of color into sound. Also Sonia Delaunay's book *La prose du transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France*, was essential for my color concept research. The interdisciplinary approach was

brought to America by the fleeing Bauhaus artists, who launched a new teaching model at the Black Mountain College. When John Cage started teaching there he opposed duration to harmony. Performance art and dance collaborations became a central element.

Through the conversations with experts in their fields the relevance and richness of the impact of music on fashion design was confirmed, deepened and broadened. I developed a body of knowledge that may be of significance for various fields in Art & Design.

The *Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe* – featuring a Central Saint Martins class this year – extended an invitation to exhibit works of students from FIT.